

**Whittier Alliance Board Meeting Minutes**  
**May 26, 2016 6-8:30 PM**  
**Whittier Park Community Center**

**Present:** Fadumo Abdinur Anab, Osman Abo, David Bagley, Erica Christ, Andy Cohen, Mary Gazca, Laura Jean, Geri Jerez, Christina Le, Marie Listopad, Michael Malone, Jesse Oyervides, Christine Popowski, Daphna Stromberg **Absent:** Sarah Estey, Araceli Perez, Natascha Shawver, Brett Vandebussche, Kenya Weathers **Staff:** Ricardo McCurley, Lucy Lawson **Guests:** Emanuel Tekle, Preservation Alliance of Minnesota; Alicia Sojourner, YWCA Minneapolis  
**Call to Order** at 6:10pm by Erica Christ, Board Chair. Standard of conduct and conflict of interest were reviewed. Guests were welcomed. **Motion** to approve the May 26 agenda **Carried**.

**Comments from the Chair**

Erica Christ

The All N'hood Associations meeting last Sunday was a great success. The focus of conversation was on what people had in common, what their concerns were and what could be done together.

**Secretary's Report**

Erica Christ

Attendance was reviewed. Minutes from April 28, 2016 were reviewed and a **Motion** to approve with some minor changes **Carried**.

**Finance Committee**

Andy Cohen

**March and April Financial Statements:** Andy presented the financial reports (and explained the layout for the benefit of new board members). It is important to have a store of unrestricted funds as most of our work we do on a reimbursement process from the City. The reimbursements for the calendar year cannot take place till we provide an Annual Report to the City, which is different to the one presented at the Annual Meeting, so WA's owed reimbursements go back to October 2015. The balance sheet was reviewed and budget performance was reviewed.

**FC Motion 1:** The Finance Committee accepts the Whittier Alliance March and April 2016 financial reports. **Motion Carried.**

**Board Appointments**

Erica Christ

Ted Irgens has been on the board for the last 4 or 5 years, and did not run for re-election because he will be moving out of the neighborhood in a year. He could serve an 11 month term. He would very much like to serve on the board; he has some important things he would like to finish out. Ted has been an excellent neighbor and instrumental in historic preservation in the n'hood.

**Ted Irgens was appointed to the vacant 2017 board seat.**

**Board Training: Diversity & Inclusion**

Alicia Sojourner

Alicia conducted board training session after giving some background on YWCA's work to promote racial justice & eliminate poverty. The organization works to eliminate racism, on an individual, systemic and policy, and institutional basis. Board members did some training exercises reflecting on identity and what identities and perspectives people bring to their role as a board member. Board members had a guided discussion about equity, diversity, inclusion, and the difference between equity and equality. In relation to examples of n'hood groups being more inclusive, Alicia mentioned having multiple ways for the community to give input, such as focus groups, coffee groups and calling people. Can examine internal and external policies and procedures, and develop an equity toolkit that can be used when doing strategic planning.

**Community Issues**

Ricardo McCurley

Board members discussed the Rex 26 development proposal (SE corner of 26th & Lyndale). It was not popular with the CI meeting, and the City doesn't seem to like the project either. Board members expressed concerns with the massing at the site, the height of the project and that the setbacks are pushed to the very limits of the property on the ground floor. Board members also raised the existing traffic issues on Lyndale and 26th that would be exacerbated by the development.

Board members expressed concerns that the sixth motion regarding the development would not make it clear

that the neighborhood does support French Meadow, which is a good neighbor in the area. They would hate to see the site turned into a surface parking lot, but would welcome parking provisions for French Meadow as part of another development project more suitable to the neighborhood. Nevertheless, it made no sense to vote for a surface parking lot in a building that the Board would not like to see exist.

**CI Motion 3:** The Board does not support rezoning the lots in question at 2601-2621 Lyndale Avenue South from C1 and OR2 to C2. **Motion carried: 11-0-2**

**CI Motion 4:** The Board does not support the conditional use permit to increase the maximum height from 4 stories/56 feet to 6 stories/67.5 feet. **Motion carried: 9-0-4**

**CI Motion 5:** The Board does not support the variance to increase the maximum floor area ratio (FAR) from 2.4 to 3.24. **Motion carried: 11-0-3**

**CI Motion 6:** The Board does not support the variance to reduce the southern interior yard from 13 feet to 5 feet. **Motion carried: 11-0-3**

**CI Motion 7:** The Board does not support the variance to reduce the eastern interior yard setback from 13 feet to 0 feet at its closest point for the upper floors. **Motion carried: 12-0-2**

**CI Motion 8:** The Board does not support the variance to allow off-site parking for French Meadow, which has C4 zoning. **Motion carried: 7-3-3**

At the previous Board meeting the board referred the appointment of a representative to the Midtown Greenway Coalition to the CI Committee.

**CI Motion 1:** That the CI Committee supports the appointment of Joann Musumeci to the board of the Midtown Greenway Coalition. **Motion received and filed.**

The other CI motion regarding installing additional stop signs at the intersection of 22nd & Clinton was deferred to the next board meeting.

#### **Business Association**

Andy Cohen

Andy recapped the BA meeting.

#### **Staff Reports:**

Staff reports are in the board packets. Two interns have started work; they are working on the website, design and filing. We are discarding documents according to our record retention policy.

#### **Old & New Business:**

- Kenya will be running for NCEC.
- Re the next All N'hood meeting: hoping to get a Northside n'hood to host it. The City is applying for a grant for n'hoods to be trained in a facilitation style called the 'Art of Hosting', which will be useful. Two threads are emerging – the value of n'hoods getting together, and where our funding is coming from, including engaging the City about funding.
- Re Blaisdell mansion historic preservation application, Historic Preservation Minneapolis unanimously approved sending to Zoning & Planning. There was opposition: Nuway objected to it and brought lawyers. Board members can raise it with other zoning and planning members and our City Councilmember, who recommended the historic designation, saying it should be a slam dunk.

**Meeting adjourned 8.35**

**Minutes respectfully submitted by Lucy Lawson.**

Meeting Minutes Approved on \_\_\_\_\_

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Erica Christ, Board Chair

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Erin Sjoquist, Board Secretary