

**Whittier Alliance Board Meeting Minutes**  
**June 28, 2018 6-8:30 PM**  
**Calvary Church**

**Present:** Erin Sjoquist, Scott Melamed, Michael Perez, Angela Ritchie, Jen Kader, Christina Le, Crystal Audi, Araceli Perez, Christine Popowski, Jeff Cowmeadow, Aldona Martinka, Stephanie Brown, Michael Malone, Mary Gazca, Martha Nemesi, Cyndi Hovey

**Absent:** Viswa Challa, David Bagley

**Late:**

**Staff:** Kaley Brown, Dan Stanton

**Guests:** Greg Schmidt, Laura Jean

**Call to Order** at 6:07pm by Jen Kader, Vice-Chair. Introductions. We have a new board member, Stephanie Brown -- go through the room with name and your hope for the conversation.

Standard of conduct and conflict of interest policies were reviewed.

Jen notes that we will be having a conversation about how we want to work together as a group; how we want to interact together -- a community agreement -- gives everyone a chance to voice what's important to them

We all have something to learn; we all have something to contribute

Weigh everyone's opinions before

Open up conversation to everyone involved

Step back & create space for others

Raise hands

Start & end meeting on time

Everyone arriving prepared to discuss the meeting's agenda items

Group will operate with an open mind

Active listening - don't interrupt

Seek understanding before agreement

Openness to contribute & share opinions

Come from a place of understanding -- everyone wants something better for this neighborhood

Community-first focus

Be succinct

Have fun!

Amendments to agenda: N/A

**Motion** to approve agenda. Seconded. **Motion Carries.**

**Secretary's Report**

Erin Sjoquist

As of June, everyone is at 0 misses, besides Michael Malone, who has missed 1.

Review last month's meeting minutes.

Amendments:

- Scott's name isn't on the list for "Present"

**Motion** to approve minutes with proposed changes. Motion **seconded**. Motion **Approved**.

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**Next Board Meeting:**

July 26, 2018

**Executive Committee**

Jen Kader

**Finance - Christina Le:**

Last month, normal expenses.

**Motion to Approve May Financials. Seconded. Approved.**

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**Acting Committee & Task Force Reports & Motions**

**Community Issues**

Viswa Challa

Viswa is absent.

Kaley overviews - presentation from the City clerk about LIMS - Legislative Information Management Systems

- City's way of sharing access to agendas, meetings schedules, City Council votes
  - If you see something that it can't do, contact them through the "Contact" form to work towards more user-friendliness

**Business Association**

Araceli Perez

Met at Icehouse

Main topic was the Eat Street Festival

- Craig from Brave New Media is working on all the design and branding
- Icehouse has a music lineup slated for the event
  
- WA has secured Aztec dancing group to have at the event
- Went over marketing plan; goal is to drum up sponsorship from other businesses

Franklin Ave bridge is now open

Support local businesses

Johan from Wesley Andrews stopped in WA office & noted their sales have decreased 35% since 26th Street closure

**Housing Issues Committee**

**Stephanie Brown**

4 goal areas developed out of this meeting

Second meeting will be July 16th, 6-7pm @ TBD

How do we hear from developers & influence them

Thank you to Stephanie for stepping up to take on this role

Stephanie goes to church at Calvary, was working as a consultant on infrastructure & economic development issues, but now she's here

Urban Planner by trade, working currently with McKnight on affordable housing issues, wants to use these findings/learnings to inform the work of HI Committee

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## MPLS 2040 Comp Plan

Will be shaping City's growth over the course of the future

8 amendments between 2030 plan & current plan -- focusing on establishing small area plans

Different areas of Plan:

- Goals
  - Generally speaking, this is where we want to be going
  - Under these are many Policies
    - Underneath Policies are Action Steps, and that's the how to achieve the Policies outlined in the document

City has been getting a lot of negative feedback from people; we can give a measured response

Also, encourage everyone to go through the document and do this individually in one's own time → send to the office

This conversation is about processing & talking, then send notes to Kaley & she will put together a document, send it back to the board for vetting

Since housing has come up a lot in these conversations, thought we could start with Affordable Housing as a beginning example

- Reactions to Housing component
  - It makes sense to make things affordable, but one thing missing is oversight when it comes to developers creating affordable units
    - No 15-year limit, for example
  - Looking through Housing 1, one thing that felt clear is that arguing against density will not make a lot of headway with the City right now, but the goals they have around housing are not necessarily tied to density
  - Worth it to look at Policy 41: Tenant Protections, given the amount of people in this neighborhood that rent. If prices go up, it will hit our neighborhood very hard.

What do we want to get out of this plan as a board?

- For our purposes this evening, connect everyone on the board to the plan so that we can issue something concisely from the Whittier Alliance to the City
  - What can we come together on?

More Reactions

- Worried that it's painting a restricted picture regarding traffic, bikes, etc.
- Expected volume increase: half a million
- Increasing density, access and affordability are main points that carried over from 2030 Plan
- Transportation Plans
  - Unrealistic to assume people can go down to one car
- Increase in rent and property values
  - Unsure if there is a way to affect this; we've seen it happen before
- City is being dishonest on how much they don't control transportation policy in the neighborhood
- Density
  - Are high rises healthy for our neighborhood & City & future?
  - However, population is increasing; people are moving here and having children here →
  - Globally, trend towards more and more people living in urban areas
  - Single-family homes are not for everyone
    - Making way for more community, public & green spaces
  - Money is the driver; more money for a large, high-unit building vs. a fourplex
  - Push for parks & their required density

#### Recap of main talking points

- How can we work with developers to work on what type of development is going in
- Tenant protections, displacements & rising rents → implications of those policies
  - How this is impacting our neighborhood
- Livability/Community Life
- Transportation, transit, getting around in general
- Equitable Civic Participation

#### **Policy #41: Protect Tenants' rights, improve living conditions in rental housing, and ensure renters can fully participate in community life.**

- Action Steps - Comments
  - What isn't being addressed?
    - Far too few housing inspectors → many aren't getting addressed
    - Hard as a renter to get information on landlords → you can get some info but it's a tricky process/not very transparent
    - Do they currently actively support organizations that support tenants (for example: HomeLine)
    - Item G: → have more inspectors and make sure they are trained and knowledgeable
  - Connection to things that are determined by state - make sure the City isn't talking about things that aren't in their control
  - Item E → need a plan
    - What happens to public housing
  - If it's going to end up this vague, we can think about

#### **Policy #43: Housing Displacement - Minimize the involuntary displacement of people of color, indigenous people and vulnerable populations, such as low-income households, the elderly...**

- Action Steps - Comments
  - Ensure there are policies that make it so that people that are already here can stay here
    - Imperative that something is done → many people are getting evicted
  - Add a policy about just-cause evictions
    - If you paid rent, didn't cause disruptions, then you get to serve out your lease
    - No protections for month-to-month
  - Add a policy about notice of sale - SLP just passed an ordinance that tenants need 60-day notice if there will be no option to renew in the event that the property is sold
  - Tenant opportunity to purchase legislation - (in DC)
    - If an offer is put up on the building, but tenants can put together the money to buy it, then they can put together a COOP instead
  - Item D - expand programs that support existing homeowners
    - "Elderly" - we have plenty of older landlords that keep the rents naturally low
    - Keep homes affordable for the elderly in general
  - We do not have enough units for rental
    - Need restrictions on Airbnb
      - A lot more profitable to do an airbnb than to rent
      - This has been tried in other cities, so Minneapolis would have a lot of examples to look at
        - For example, New Orleans
    - We also don't know how many units are remaining vacant in the neighborhood
      - Is there a way the City can incentivize renting?

#### **Wrap Up:**

Under "How to Navigate" → "Topics" are the big buckets

If you have time, go through and take a look at the topics discussed tonight

**Send comments to Kaley by Friday, July 13th. Also, send comments on your own.**

**Accounting & Finance Section**

Kaley has been meeting with CPA, Mike Wilson, does Audits for all the neighborhoods for many years  
Very familiar with NO's & operations

The City is exploring this as a substitution for regular audits → agreed upon procedures is the name

- Go through all procedures of organizations (for ex, what do financials processes look like)

He's working on first draft of that now & the goal is to have that ready for the July board meeting → will present what we should adopt/tweak

Will be helpful for organization moving forward/helpful for training new board members

**Eat Street Fest**

Craig from BNM has been working on branding

Eatstreetfest.com is in the works now as a domain

Brave New Media is footing the bill for that

Press Release, website, final branding, social media campaigns will start week of July 9th

Facebook event is live

**What we need:** volunteering, Sponsors, vendor outreach and recruitment

Block off September 15th now. We'll need lots of volunteering help.

Zero waste event? Eureka Recycling is an option right now

One of our sponsorship opportunities is to sponsor zero waste effort

Farmers Market Sign Up - please sign up

- Brian Foster said he will do part of this Saturday8

**Old & New Business:****Strategic Plan Process - Scott**

- Since last board meeting, been moving the ball forward
- Focusing on getting a solid draft for the board
- Next steps: talking process moving forward, timing, role the board plays
- More to come at July board meeting

**Development Project Updates**

- WA went to planning commission on Monday to put in word on Good Grocer project
  - Asked for more time; wanted to collaborate more to make sure community's concerns were being addressed; wanted to incorporate an affordability aspect
  - Morgan Luzier spoke on improving the public realm
- Many of these concerns were not really addressed; WA will continue to talk to Kurt and hopefully make an impact with different approaches

318 W Lake got approval at Planning Commission, just needs to be approved at the Council

Working on coordinated approach for Lisa Bender to require new developments on lake to set back to make way for more green space

Letter of support for Loring Park re: 1400 Nicollet Ave

- Kaley will send this out for voting & email of approval

**NCEC District 6 Elections & Recaps**

Of the 3 candidates put forward, all three were rejected by vote of no confidence → never happened before  
Deadline has been extended to July 13th

Michael Malone will be running for that position

Application is online; Kaley will send out

Applications are due 13th, depending on when election is, WA board will vote on who to approve, then we need elector to go to meeting

**Motion to adjourn. Seconded. Approved.**

**Adjourn            8:32 PM**

**Minutes submitted by Dan Stanton.**

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

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David Bagley, Board Chair

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Erin Sjoquist, Board Secretary