

Community Engagement Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 8, 2022, 6:30-8:00 pm
Zoom Digital Meeting

Attendees: Nick Hutchinson, Jo Ann Musumeci, Amy Stephan, George Rishmawi, Peter Rychlicki, Daniel Hansen

Staff: Kaley Brown

Presenters: Aisha Chughtai (Council Member Ward 10), Dan Pfeiffer (Zan Associates), Bria Fast (City of Minneapolis)

Introductions & Meeting Overview

- Welcome at 6:32pm by Nick Hutchinson.
- A round of introductions is done.
- The Standard of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policies are reviewed.
- The agenda is reviewed.
- The minutes from March are reviewed. They will be formally approved if quorum is reached during the meeting or at the next meeting.

WA Community Engagement Committee Chair Election

- Following the Annual Meeting each spring, the established Acting Committees of the Whittier Alliance elect a new Chairperson to set agendas, lead meetings, and guide committee project work.
- Nick Hutchinson is interested in running again for another term.
- To formally elect the Chair, we need to have a quorum of at least 10 voting members of the organization; we will circle back to this agenda item if others are able to join the meeting today or conduct the election at the next meeting, if not.

1st Ave Reconstruction Project - Dan Pfeiffer, Zan Associates

- Goals are to design safe, permanent biking infrastructure on 1st Ave for all ages and abilities; improve stormwater management features; add green space; align with City policies
- This project will formalize the 2 way Whittier-Lyndale bikeway currently there (temporary bollards)
- Different street designs options are presented and discussed with attendees
- Questions are raised and discussed regarding long-term maintenance of native plantings, improved signage for bike safety, and project timeline

2116 Nicollet Ave Redevelopment Considerations & Community Priorities

- WA just launched a community survey for folks to help determine how to prioritize different community needs and benefits in the new development.
- There are different concepts with definitions for each that can be ranked into first, second, and third choice priorities, as well as a space for people to add additional thoughts and submit a nomination for the new building name.
- We will be doing pop-up tabling throughout the neighborhood over the coming months, sending a postcard out neighborhood-wide, and promoting the survey on digital channels.
- It can be accessed at whittieralliance.org/2116nicollet

Ward 10 Updates - Councilmember Aisha Chughtai

- Just finished 2nd allocation round of ARPA money (federal pandemic relief funds)
- Trans Equity Advisory Group has worked with the Council to change single stall restrooms in City Hall to gender neutral signage, and they have also secured a stock of gender neutral restroom signage that

businesses and organizations can access for free while supplies last

- Council was able to move \$700,000 into the B-TAP and C-TAP programs to help small businesses with technical assistance and ongoing pandemic recovery programs
- Hennepin Ave S Reconstruction Project - Hennepin is a fully City-owned City street, which is rare for a major corridor in town to not have partial or full County or State ownership, as well.
 - Worked with the State to get \$40m investment in bus rapid infrastructure (E-Line)
 - Have held a huge number of community conversations with constituents on this project
 - CM Chughtai and other council members will be offering an amendment at tomorrow's Council meeting to seek a different avenue
- Closed the rent stabilization workgroup application period on Monday; the number of renter seats on the workgroup was doubled thanks to renter and housing advocates engaging early in the process
 - These meetings like other Council and Committee meetings will be live-streamed on the City's YouTube channels

Activating MnDOT Right of Ways in Whittier - Kaley Brown, WA

- MnDOT is finishing up the 35W reconstruction project and is planning to install resident-focused landscaping on the neighborhood side of the sound walls at 26th St & Clinton Ave, 27th St & 3rd Ave, and Green Crescent on 29th St / Greenway & Stevens Ave
- Project will go out for bid this fall, and installation will happen in spring 2023
- Committee discussed ideas such as planting indigenous plants and pollinators, public art and murals to deter graffiti, and lighting and branding for entrance to Whittier
- MnDOT is trying to explore avenues with the City's public works department for ways to activate the space with new elements beyond just landscaping with City staff agreeing to maintain it on a regular basis
- WA is looking for anyone interested in helping to guide this project and help us talk to more neighbors to determine what folks who live nearby would most like to see happen with that space

Former Kmart & New Nicollet Ave Community Engagement Team - Kaley Brown, WA

- The City of Minneapolis has selected a consultant team to design and help lead the community engagement process around the former Kmart site and reopening of Nicollet Avenue.
- The consultant team includes a coalition of community organizations led by Whittier Alliance and a real estate consulting firm based out of St. Paul called NEOO Partners, Inc.
- The engagement process with community will be getting underway later this summer, and folks can sign up to receive the City's project updates on their gov delivery platform at the following link:
<https://www2.minneapolismn.gov/government/programs-initiatives/new-nicollet/>
- Stay tuned to Whittier Alliance communications to be informed of future activities and events to join in.

Upcoming Meetings, Events, & Opportunities

- Whittier Alliance is hosting a Spring Fling Arts Fest on Saturday, June 11th from 2-6pm at 2116 Nicollet Ave
- Calvary Church is hosting a community block party from 5:30-7:30pm in their parking lot on Thursday, June 16th
- WA Housing & Land Use Committee Meeting & Chair Election is on Tuesday, June 21st from 6:30-8pm
- Whittier Really Really Free Market is returning July 2nd from 1 - 4 PM in Whittier Park

Meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Kaley Brown.