

**Community Issues Meeting**  
**Monday, July 13, 2015 — 6-8:30pm — Whittier Park**

**Attendees:** Tom Alexander, Bill Blanski, Kyle Burrows, Felino de la Peña, Brian Foster, Jeffery Helser, Jen Kader, Dave LaViolette, Marie Listopad, Ryan McGee, Max Musicant, Chris Popowski, Greg Schmidt, Natascha Shawver, Brad Schaeppi, David Schroth, Billy Werb, Kati Wirkkula,

**Staff:** Marian Biehn, Paul Shanafelt

**Presenters:** Chelsea Adams-CCP Specialist-5<sup>th</sup> Pct., Ben Somogyi-10<sup>th</sup> Ward CM Aid, Emma Struss-Lake St Energy Challenge, Daniel Oberpriller-Reuter Walton, Scott Nelson-DJR Architects, Cameron Conway-Bike Corral

**Welcome**

**Call to order at 6:10** by Brett Vandenbussche. Reminder given that agenda and minutes are posted on our website a week in advance of the meeting; different opinions are welcome – reminder to follow code of conduct and respect other’s opinions. A **Motion** to approve agenda as written **Carried**. Attendees were asked to review the June 10, 2015 minutes. A **Motion** to approve June 2015 minutes adding to the Cuningham discussion the exploration of partners for the Kmart visioning. **Carried**. Attendees introduced themselves.

**Announcements/Community Comments & Discussion**

**10th Ward – Councilmember Aid Ben Somogyi** CM Bender attends when she can to give an update on the 10th Ward activities but she sits on the Planning Commission and there are sometimes meeting conflicts. There is some news specific to Whittier: Cheapo Records will be moving on to Eat Street at 26th and Nicollet in the former Butler Drug building and a Jamaican restaurant is also moving in. NNO is on Tues Aug 4 C if you are hosting a party if you register by July 21 you can close your street with no fee. Can do it on line at the city website

Hennepin County is sponsoring a free hazardous waste drop off at 3607 44th St E from 9-4 Thurs to Sat Aug 20-21. Check the Hennepin County website for what is considered a hazardous waste.

CMs Bender and Gordon are exploring changing the emergency Shelter ordinance. They talked with shelter providers and are now getting good feedback from residents. One meeting was already held and there will be another one on Mon July 27 at 5:30 1350 Lowry Ave N. Lots of Whittier people attended the 1st discussion at the AM Indian Center on Franklin Ave. Last Friday was a busy council meeting. Several ordinances were passed: The council unanimously adopted a policy to reduce the off-street parking requirement. New residential developments within a transit area (.25 mile or 15 min walk) of 50 or fewer units have no parking requirement. 51+ units will have a 50% reduction of parking requirement. They view it as having 3 major benefits: will lower cost of housing, open up areas for housing not currently being considered, and open up building design options. The parking reduction is applied to residential development only. Commercial space will still need to supply parking. Metro Transit was involved in the discussion of the parking reduction. The council also adopted the protected bike way --added 48 miles--bikes will have physically protected space. The bike lanes will be added over the next 5 years. They also voted to strengthen regulations on flavored tobacco restricting the sale of such tobaccos to tobacco shops only –brings the availability down to about 25 outlets. Jan 1 in effect. An attendee asked why Menthol flavored tobacco is exempted from the flavored tobacco ordinance. It is a particular problem with the African American community. Unknown as to why but will find out. The Complete Street policy is being updated --guidance for public right of way for transit, bikes, pedestrians, etc. will all be considered.

**5th Precinct Report, Chelsea Adams**

Chelsea distributed information about homicide, rape and robbery. A person has been arrested in the homicide that happened in June. It is widely believed that women are victims of robbery more often but it is actually men. There is misinformation about rape and assault also. Chelsea distributed data --more known victim/perp than otherwise. Be aware of a guy who is scamming asking to use your phone to call "Cathy" at a shelter. He asks \$35 to get into a shelter has the person call "Cathy, Kate" to verify which she does. "Cathy" is in on it. Shelters don't charge. Do not give him \$\$ or talk to him. He has stolen people's purses. Natascha was approached by him at 26th and Pillsbury. He is about 5'6" asked to use phone, wanted \$ for shelter—just as Chelsea explained. He can be brazen. The 5th pct. now has a little library with kids' books. Let people know. Speed up Harriet is really excessive. Concerned about speed of cars with kids at the park. Other traffic issues were also sited such disregard for the stop sign at Pillsbury and 25th. If there is repetitive traffic problems in a specific area, call 311 so that a traffic study can be complete

## **Additional Community Announcements were deferred to Allow Emma Struss to present early due to a previous commitment**

### **Lake Street Energy Challenge: Emma Struss**

Emma is the facilitator on the Xcel & Lake Street energy challenge partnership project. The Midtown Greenway and Xcel called together the neighborhoods along the Greenway which have been convened since last fall in workshops to develop strategies for n'hood to reduce energy consumption. 3 strategies were developed focusing on small business, residential and the development of a solar garden. The n'hood needs to decide what level of involvement they want to commit to. The residential side will host n'hood house parties in 1-4 unit buildings for energy efficiencies. Xcel will participate by offering a \$300 energy use assessment for \$70. A program that will engage renters is being introduced as well. Small Business: an energy resource team is doing outreach to small business to implement renewables. N'hood has been signing letters to commit to the effort. Emma read the vision and mission statements. A question was asked about how many 1-4 units in Whittier have flat roofs? Marian said there are 7800 structures and estimates that 70% are flat roofs. There is potential for alternative renewables and energy efficiencies. Community members are driving this initiative. A question was asked if there would there be resilience built into the system if, for example, a n'hood had a solar system that would hold up against a power outage. Emma announced a meeting on Wed July 15 at 3:30 at the Midtown Exchange building to talk about how. To get this launched, there needs to be enough participation to show a difference.

### **Community Announcements:**

**Paul Shanafelt:** Paul was introduced as the new Community Engagement Manager. He will be doing community outreach & events, taking on parts of the strategic plan. He gave a background on his previous work and some of the initiatives that he is working on at the WA. He used to live in Whittier for a brief time and has worked with youth at Family Means.

**Whittier Events:** Ice-Cream Social is Fri July 24 from 4-6pm Clinton Field Park. All are welcome. This will be a social. No other deal but to enjoy the park, ice cream and socializing.

**Youth Field Day:** Saturday Aug. 8 from 1-3pm Whittier Park. The Whittier Alliance has done this event for about 6 years and it is very popular. Last year about 150 Whittier kids participated. It is for youth 5-14. They participate in simple field day competitions. At the end of the event, participating Whittier kids get backpacks with school supplies. We are asking for some assistance: We need donations of school supplies and a lot of volunteers for this event. Please consider helping. Fliers for the ice cream social & field day and a volunteer sign up were circulated

**National Night Out:** Tuesday, Aug 4. If you want to block your street, you can do so through the City for free until July 21. Last year we had 18 NNO parties in Whittier.

**Summer Youth Programs:** The Whittier Alliance has compiled a list of the summer youth programs in Whittier with dates, fees and age ranges. If you know of kids in the n'hood who need this info, please take a copy of the information. It is also on our website.

**2016 Calendar:** The Whittier neighborhood is invited to submit photos for a photo contest for the 2016 Whittier Favorites calendar. Photos should be submitted by Sept 1, 300-700dpi, any season/new or old photo. The photos will become the property of the WA and could be used in another print or electronic publication. Possible ideas: favorite photo, neighborly porch chats, building detail, a person (need photo release), an event, the moon over Washburn Fair Oaks Park. The photos will be chosen by a panel of people. Be a part of another successful Whittier calendar.

### **26th St & Stevens Ave Proposal: Scott Nelson - DJR Architects & Dan Oberpriller- CPM Companies**

Dan Oberpriller and Scott Nelson presented the design of the proposed building for 26th and Stevens. The proposal is preliminary and they are soliciting comments. Dan has been working with the owners of the site for 6 months. The environmental issues on the site have been addressed. CPM Companies has been in business since 2005 and most of what his company has done in Mpls is student housing, retail. This will be a project that will be in their portfolio. In his experience n'hood input has made the project better. Scott has worked in Marcy Holms, Prospect Park, East Isles neighborhoods. They have not had an official meeting with the planner but they have met with CM Bender. The proposal was also presented at the Whittier BA. This is a preliminary presentation. There will be modifications. They plan on coming back to the August CI meeting.

The underground contamination prevents the parking from being underground or having living space on the ground level. Parking will be grade level but camouflaged. Entry to the building will be off

Stevens. Front of the building along 26th St will have a commercial space on the corner, common area in the center and 2nd commercial space on the 26th/alley end. Upper level is a mix of studio-36 one bdrms and 2bdrm units. There will be 5 stories- 60' high--taller than the 109 E 26<sup>th</sup> which is 42'. They took some design cues from MCAD--white brick, recessed 1st floor entries, hardi panels, and loddie(?). There will be additional operating cost on this building due to ongoing treatment of the pollution. The current treatment garage on the site might have to be installed into the new building due to space. The garage houses the carbon filtration system that continually cleans the site. The cost will be 1.60 per sq ft right now--trying to appeal to a population that is being left out of the market now. Incomes from \$30-50k \$800 for 1bdrm. Dan's company did the Ellipse and the River Commons developments. The quality of the building materials was questioned. Another attendee commented that the North side apartments are not good. Would like to see more southern exposure apts--the lot calls for the orientation. Large windows will be installed. A comment was made indicating that reducing the amount of parking for residential and commercial might be an option.

There are currently 61 parking spots for 64 units. Can't do more commercial space due to the confines of the site. They will provide bike racks as well. It was noted that there is a need for n'hood housing for larger families. Dan thinks that the housing mix is right for the neighborhood. Going to 3bdrm, they must provide a playground and other ordinance requirements. Plan on breaking ground in Nov. and complete by next June. One of the suggestions to camouflage the on grade parking is to have window boxes or art in open spaces. An attendee asked about building townhomes on the 1st floor rather than the parking garage facing Stevens? A concern was stated about filling the commercial space noting that the Le Parisien has been empty for some time. Response: there is only 3400 sqft for commercial space so it not likely going to be a chain but a small local business. Bill Blanski -the owner of 109 E 26<sup>th</sup> St next door noted that: massing responds to the neighborhood. The balconies and size of windows are good but identified some concerns: the site plan needs to be accurate—his building is not shown on the plan-it should be to give an accurate street scape; push the NW corner as far as possible from the alley—the alley is used a lot and the new building as proposed will block the visibility coming out of the alley; the materials should be more varied as well as the scale; there should be a more distinctive treatment (several people supported a more creative design and color). What is storm water treatment- don't have a civil engineer on board yet to know answer--maybe rain garden, holding tank, how is the façade of the garage being handled. Overall: more color; add more green; incorporate storm water manager; make the building a statement, use the top corner apt as a roof top garden & common space; consider townhomes with tuck under garage. The allowable height is 56' —they will be asking for a variance to add a floor. Bill recommended not allowing the variance for height. They hope to include greening and environmental amenities and bike coverage. Create a place around the character and culture of the neighborhood —make it interesting. They said it will be a work in progress for another month and they will be working with their city planner.

**Hennepin County Midtown Community Works:** This agenda item was cancelled.

#### **Bike Corral-Cameron Conway**

Cameron is the VP of Calhoun Area Resident Assn. board. He has been looking at bike parking. The city has a cost-sharing program for bike corrals. The bike corral would take up one parking spot and park 10 bikes. To finance the corral a onetime investment from the 4 n'hoods is being sought. It will be in front of Lyn Lake brewery who will take on the annual costs. Daro is the bike company that would do the bike rack. The cost per n'hood would be about \$142. The city will pick up and store the rack in the winter-- and reinstall in the spring. Cameron has contacted many of the neighboring businesses--recommending some signage for the rack that would identify the supporters. Lyn Lake will pay entirely for the 2nd spot. Just want to get the 1st one in and show how much it is used.

**CI Motion 1:** The Community Issues Committee supports the installation of a bike corral in Lyn Lake and recommends that Whittier contribute funds to support it. **Motion Carried. 13-1-0**

**Motion to Adjourn: 8:00pm**

**Old/New Business**

**Adjourn: 8:34**