COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT COMMISSION (CIC)

June 21, 2021

6:00 – 7:30 pm

Zoom Meeting

**Commissioners present:** Carol Redfield (she/her), Robin Kim (they/she), Martha Lucas (she/her), Jasmine Aryana (she/her)

**Commissioners not in attendance:** Bill Southern (he/him)

**City of Seattle Staff present**: Laura Jenkins (DON, she/her), Angela Rae (DON, she/her)

***(Transcriber’s Note: The notes shown below are summaries of statements provided. They are not transcriptions and have been shortened and edited to include the major points raised. Full comments are retained in the files in voice recording and available upon request.***

# Public Comment

There were no public comments.

# Presentations from Seattle Department of Neighborhoods staff

Reconnect West Seattle by Kristian Alcaide, Strategic Advisor with Seattle Department of Neighborhoods

* Strategic Advisor Alcaide presented background information on the Reconnect West Seattle program and out & engagement efforts.
  + The program has two visions:
    - Allow similar levels of travel across the Duwamish to those seen before the closure of the West Seattle High-Rise Bridge and reduce the impact of environmental injustice in the Duwamish Valley.
  + Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) and Seattle Department of Neighborhoods (DON) came together when the bridge closed to figure out how to fulfill the vision [listed above].
    - SDOT and DON wanted to get feedback from community – those experiencing the impacts from the closure.
    - There was a two-part engagement effort that included the Neighborhood Prioritization Process Ballots and the Reconnect West Seattle Survey. Both processes were open until July 31, 2020.
      * Reconnect West Seattle Survey was a broader outreach method for those traveling in and out of West Seattle.
        + SDOT and DON mainly wanted to know how people got around before and during the closure of the West Seattle Bridge and how would they like to get around once the bridge is open.
        + There was a focus on providing long-term solutions by coordinating and listening to community needs.
        + Transportation modes covered in the survey were buses, water taxis, bikes, carpool, vanpool, and employer shuttles.
    - Neighborhood Prioritization Process used a racial equity lens to prioritize neighborhoods disproportionately impacted by the closure of the West Seattle High-Rise Bridge and corresponding detour routes including: Highland Park, Roxhill, South Delridge, Riverview, South Park, Georgetown, and SODO.
      * The City prioritized these neighborhoods also because of injustices prior to the closure including lack of transportation services. SDOT and DON wanted to be proactive in listening to these neighborhood’s concerns.
      * Neighborhoods prioritized community-driven transportation projects that would cost less than $100,000 and would take under 12 months to build.
    - Targeted outreach included partnerships with community organizations like the Georgetown Community Council, Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition, South Park Neighborhood Association, Highland Park Action Coalition, and SODO Business Improvement Area.
      * SDOT and DON worked with these community organizations specifically because, again, these were the neighborhoods most impacted and many Black, Indigenous, & People of Color (BIPOC) live in these neighborhoods.
      * By partnering with these community organizations, the City learned who lives in these neighborhoods, what languages they speak, how they like to receive information, and would they even like to be involved in the prioritized community-drive transportation project process.
      * Kudos to the partner community organizations!
      * Community Liaisons conducted outreach in multiple forms:
        + Virtual meetings
        + Posting on social media platforms
        + Door-to-door business outreach
        + Face-to-face meetings

Example of one organization that meets over the phone

* + - * + Ethnic Media ads (print and digital)

Worked with the Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs (OIRA)

Radio and TV are a couple of the best ways to reach immigrants and refugees

Informal outreach methods were also used including WhatsApp conversations, etc.

* + - * + Materials in seven languages: Spanish, Khmer, Somali, Vietnamese, Oromo, Korean, and Chinese
    - Ballots and Surveys
      * Mobility Action Plan Surveys: 15,194 (127 surveys completed in language)
      * Neighborhood Ballots: 1,750 (97 ballots completed in language)
        + Highland Park, Riverview, South Delridge, Roxhill: 1,074 (2 in language)
        + Georgetown: 209 (2 in language)
        + South Park: 398 (3 in Somali, 63 in Spanish, 27 in Vietnamese)
        + SODO: 69 (0 in language)
      * DON advocated for in-language paper ballots/surveys:
        + Online surveys vs paper ballots/surveys

Online surveys – 73% white participants online, majority above age 40

Paper ballots/surveys – non-English speakers and People of Color

* + - * + City collected demographic information from survey participants to make sure they were reaching BIPOC neighbors.
        + Most people who filled out ballots/surveys live in West Seattle and learned about it through social media.
        + In the following order, overall people are most concerned about/interested in:

Traffic & Congestion

Pedestrian Safety & Accessibility

Speeding

Environmental Impacts & Pollutions

Increased interest in carpool, vanpool, employer shuttles after social distancing.

* + - * + City is moving forward with pursuing these community priorities and consistently check in with community to make sure they are on track.
  + Questions from Commissioners:
    - Commissioner Aryana: Were these surveys administered during COVID? Answer from Kristian Alcaide: Correct, it was during COVID. It was very complicated. We tried to make sure that we were very careful (masks, social distancing, phone calls, etc.). There were other pressing issues going on besides the West Seattle Bridge closure (how am I going to pay my bills, etc.).
    - Commissioner Aryana: What were major hurdles during your outreach? Answer: There were three:
      * Reaching community members who English is not their first language and they had other priorities besides the West Seattle Bridge closure. We had to make time to reach those folks – Community Liaisons had to be creative.
      * A lot of the project ideas were very high-level that were received from community. Sometimes the City had to go back several times to ask community about specifics. Helped to ensure that that we were working as a team and coordinating.
      * Having a sense of safety. People were scared about COVID.
    - Co-staff Liaison Rae: Director Mantilla is always saying that we cannot have transactional relationships with community, relationships that are not ongoing. What you talked about was the importance of continuing to return to community to see if you are still on the right track in relation to what they need. Answer: Yes, another thing my coworker Danielle and I did is advocate for the community groups to be compensated for their expertise and outreach because they are trusted advocates – they have that relationship with community. DON and SDOT came up with a Memorandum of Understanding to be able to compensate community organizations for their time.
    - Commissioner Kim: That was going to be my question if there was any compensation for community-led groups. That is awesome.
    - Commissioner Redfield: Is the compensation to the liaison or the members who are really in the community? Answer: Both actually. The Community Liaisons are compensated for their time. The community organizations decide how they want to compensate people: it could be gift cards, money, etc.
    - Commissioner Redfield: Now that things are opening back up, will you be back to community in a different format? Answer: We met with community two months ago, both those listed in the PowerPoint and other community organizations, and asked them how they want to see information provided if things are opening up. Community answered that they would like to see the City at community events. City is playing it safe and also listening to community needs.
    - A neighbor from South Park who joined the call thanked Kristian. This commenter said they did an excellent job on the Home Zone walks. The amount of communication has been perfect.

Seattle Department of Neighborhoods Funding Programs with Daniel Sims, Community Grants Supervisor

* Daniel manages a team of seven people who work on the Neighborhood Matching Fund, Duwamish River Opportunity Fund, Emergency Resource Hub grant program, and development of the Healthy Food Fund
* Neighborhood Matching Fund (NMF)
  + Background & History
    - Created in 1988
    - Match part of the program has been around since the beginning. Every dollar awarded through the program, there is the expectation of a $0.50 match.
    - NMF is an iterative grant. It has gone through a lot of tweaks and changes to keep up with the times and get in front of coming trends/circumstances.
    - Since NMF’s creation, more than 5,000 community projects have received over $64 million in funding and generated $72 million from community match.
    - The grant originally had three tiers of funding: small grant of $0-$5,000, medium grant of $5,000-$50,000, and a larger grant of $50,000-$100,000.
    - There used to be a Neighborhood District Council review process up until a few years ago. Now, the review process is more internal but the program is looking at bringing the community review component back.
  + Current Status of NMF
    - There are two fund types: Small Sparks and Community Partnership Fund
      * Small Sparks covers projects from about $250-$5,000
        + Applications are open on a constantly rolling basis (end of January through end of October). Any organization can apply any time during that cycle.
        + Each individual project application is judged on its own merits and not in comparison to any other projects.
        + Award rate for Small Sparks is very high.
        + Small Sparks does have the match condition – a $5,000 project would require $2,500 in community match.
      * Community Partnership Fund covers projects from $5,001-$50,000
        + More of a competitive process
        + Two application rounds for the Community Partnership Fund per year. NMF typically receives about 30-35 applications per application cycle (they received 54 applications in September 2020 and 44 in April 2021).
        + Reviewed in comparison to other project applications, scored and reviewed.
    - What Neighborhood Matching Fund funds:
      * NMF is a broad funding source compared to a lot of other community grants provided by the City. NMF will fund anything from a speed bump on a street to a cultural event to a comedy virtual tour.
      * Key pillars of deciding if a project can be funded through NMF are:
        + Does it have a community benefit?
        + Is it free and open to the public?
        + Does it involve community members?
    - During the past two cycles (which closed in Sept 2020 and April 2021) the program has been working in the same environment as everyone else in having to observe COVID public health restrictions for projects.
      * Asked that project applicants kept in mind the changing public health guidelines. The guidelines could change between when an application was submitted and when the project would take place.
    - Neighborhood groups, community organizations, and ad hoc groups can all apply for NMF funding.
      * NMF does not fund independent individuals. The program encourages community collaboration on projects.
      * NMF does not fund businesses.
    - The NMF team scores on these two main categories when reviewing potential project applications:
      * Does it build community partnership?
        + Community benefit
        + Community involvement
        + Volunteer opportunities
      * Project readiness
        + Property owner permission
        + Leadership committee (of 7-10 people)
        + Workplan
        + Budget
    - NMF funding can be used toward personnel, professional services, supplies & materials, and construction & capital.
    - NMF match can be matched with volunteer time, donated professional services, cash, and/or donated materials & supplies.
      * One hour of volunteer time is worth $30.
    - NMF Project Managers can assist potential applicants through workshops, Webgrants assistance, City department liaisons, and review of applications prior to submittal.
    - Examples of projects awarded in 2021:
      * **$50,000 for Tasveer** for *Desi Girls Comedy Project*, a four-week virtual workshop series focused on serving South Asian women in Seattle. The project will include one session per week and one-on-one mentoring to nurture participants' confidence and skills. All events and sessions will be available for free online. (Community match: $25,000)
      * **$8,550 for Black and Tan Hall** for development of *The Green Book Tour*, an app that celebrates the historic local businesses that paved the way for the entrepreneurs of frontline communities living in Seattle today. A community outreach campaign will engage local artists, historians, community members, and businesses to expand the app’s features to include audio content, community input, enhanced accessibility options, and additional sites. (Community match: $8,550)
      * **$50,000 for Seattle Repertory Theater** for *The Winter’s Tale Virtual Event,* a virtual production that focuses on using theater as a tool for equity and inclusion and providing access to communities historically excluded from the arts. Working in collaboration with up to eight community partners, the project will showcase the talents of both community and professional actors, a professional design team, the theater’s leadership committee, and a professional theater director. The event will be free and open to the public. (Community match: $650,623)
      * Broad range of activities and projects funded through the program.
  + Where the program is headed:
    - The NMF team is trying to be more intentional in how they reach out to BIPOC communities, how they work with BIPOC communities, and how we help build capacity within organizations applying for NMF.
    - Engaging with the City’s Reimagination Framework
    - Bringing community review back into the program
      * Duwamish River Opportunity Fund and the Food Equity Fund (formerly the Healthy Food Fund) have community review panels built in.
  + Contact information for program staff:
    - Neighborhood Matching Fund Staff206.233.0093  
      [NMFund@seattle.gov](mailto:NMFund@seattle.gov)
    - Project Managers:
      * Juan Martinez [Juan.Martinez@seattle.gov](mailto:Juan.Martinez@seattle.gov)
      * Yun Pitre [Yun.Pitre@seattle.gov](mailto:Yun.Pitre@seattle.gov)
      * Karen Selander [Karen.Selander@seattle.gov](mailto:Karen.Selander@seattle.gov)
    - Contract Specialist: Sharon Star [Sharon.Star@seattle.gov](mailto:Sharon.Star@seattle.gov)
    - Administrative Staff: Esprit Autenreith [Esprit.Autenreith@seattle.gov](mailto:Esprit.Autenreith@seattle.gov)
    - Program Supervisor: Daniel Sims [Daniel.Sims@seattle.gov](mailto:Daniel.Sims@seattle.gov)
* Questions/comments from Commissioners:
  + Commissioner Redfield: When the Community Involvement Commission (CIC) was first started, one focus was how to make grant writing easier for communities who may not have the skillset. There was also concern around advocates applying on behalf of a neighborhood who are not a part of the neighborhood (accountability/fact-checking). There was a subcommittee that was able to make recommendations. Did DON take some of that information and integrate it into practices? Answer: I know I just spoke about NMF but, in creating all of these other grants, we are looking at all of the information the CIC has provided in relation to Duwamish River Opportunity Fund, Food Equity Fund (formerly Healthy Food Fund), and then as we are making changes in NMF we are looking to bring in information from CIC.
    - Commissioner Redfield was not part of that subcommittee but remembers hearing their report outs. Someone from the Ethiopian community commented that there were a lot of things they would like to get done but there were barriers that made it hard within the NMF program. Answer: That is always good for NMF staff to know because we are always trying to reduce these barriers. We are looking at how to make it an easier process for communities. It is hard to be an organization and NMF is your first grant. There is a little rigidity to it. It makes sense for us to lower some barriers. For Duwamish River Opportunity Fund we are asking if we need to ask all the questions we are asking in the application to be able make decisions? We are able to take lessons from our other grant programs as we are building the Food Equity Fund (formerly Healthy Food Fund) in collaboration with other departments who also have lessons learned. Examples of ideas for changing it up include video applications instead of written applications.
  + Commissioner Redfield: I see the Seattle Repertory Theater was funded. You have mentioned that you don’t fund organizations. Answer: No, I had said that we don’t fund for profit businesses. Non-profit folks can apply.
  + Commissioner Redfield: Do you have a table with information on how many organizations apply, how many actually got awarded, and the nature/type of those of projects? Answer: I have that information and can prepare and send that to the co-staff liaisons to send to the Commission.
  + Commission Aryana: What has been the trend for Neighborhood Matching Fund applications? Has the project type differed from pre-COVID? Answer: We are not receiving as many applications for events. Since COVID started, we have a lot less applications for events coming in. This year, there have been more applications for virtual events. NMF is seeing a lot of applications for traffic mitigation (feasibility studies on speed bumps, etc.) and trail improvements. Small Sparks was paused all of 2020. This year, Small Sparks is open, but NMF is not seeing as much interest. A majority of applications for Small Sparks have been for events and projects where people gather (mural painting, etc.).
  + Commissioner Lucas: This grant was beyond difficult for a small Community Based Organization. It really turned me off from trying to do any governmental contracting. NMF has an archaic reporting method. When people ask me, I say well I wouldn’t do it. Answer: What you have said, I have heard in other spaces as well. We need to look at legacy programs, be innovative, and adjust the form. To work for community, you need to meet community where community is.
  + Commissioner Lucas: There was no flexibility with the pandemic. There was a difference of experience by Project Manager.
  + Commissioner Redfield: Have you had any applications from folks who are concerned about homelessness and cleaning up their community? Answer: We have not received an application about it. We have received an inquiry about it but not an application.
* When Daniel comes back to speak with the commission again, he hopes to see if people would like to be involved in community review for NMF.

# Update from Commission Staff Liaisons

Staff Liaisons Rae and Jenkins:

* Recruitment
  + Staff Liaison Rae: We have extended the recruitment. The first round ended June 14. The new deadline is June 30. We have around half a dozen applications. We want to make sure we have a robust a process as possible. I appreciate what the commissioners have done to help spread the word. Please share the SurveyMonkey application form. We have five commissioners currently on the commission.
    - Commissioner Kim: Is the SurveyMonkey the same link we got sent in our email? Answer: Yes, it’s the same SurveyMonkey link and we will post it in the chat.
  + Staff Liaison Rae: Congratulations to Martha Lucas who was confirmed and will be serving her first full term. Glad to have you back!
* Member Orientation Series
  + Staff Liaison Jenkins: The New Member Orientation Series is a way for new commissioners to learn about ethics and elections, public disclosure requests, and about the City of Seattle. It is required for all commissioners to go through those trainings because it is great background knowledge to have. I will send that link out again for anyone who has not completed that yet.
* July meeting topic
  + Staff Liaison Jenkins: We heard from the commissioners that they are interested in hearing about COVID-19 related outreach. We are planning on reaching out to folks at the City of Seattle and Public Health around this but want to make sure it is something commissioners are still interested in hearing about. Do any commissioners have any thoughts on that?
    - Commissioner Aryana: I will send thoughts by email.
    - Commissioner Lucas: Sounds great.
    - Commissioner Kim: Sounds great to me and I’ll send you an email.
  + Staff Liaison Jenkins: Alright, we will move forward with reaching out and let us know if you have any specific requests around that. (Please note: the Community Involvement Commission did not meet in July 2021)

# Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The May 2021 Community Involvement Commission meeting minutes were approved by a quorum of commissioners.

# Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.

Chat from the meeting:

18:15:34: From Laura Jenkins: For anyone who joined a little late, we're hearing from Kristian Alcaide with the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods about Reconnect West Seattle outreach.

19:01:02: From Laura Jenkins: DROF = Duwamish River Opportunity Fund

19:04:23: From Laura Jenkins: OSE = Office of Sustainability & Environment

19:16:13: From Laura Jenkins: <https://frontporch.seattle.gov/2021/05/03/city-of-seattle-seeks-community-members-to-serve-on-the-community-involvement-commission/>

19:17:26: From Laura Jenkins: CIC Application: <https://seattle.surveymonkey.com/r/CIC-2021>