**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT COMMISSION**

September 21, 2020

6:00 – 8:00 pm

Zoom Meeting

**Commissioners present:** Chris Maykut, Thais Marbles

**People in attendance waiting for official commission appointment:** Martha Lucas, Felix Chang, Alison Turner, Bill Southern, Carol Redfield, Emily Kim, Julie Pham

**People not in attendance waiting for official commission appointment:** Karyn Kubo Fleming, Robert White, Jasmine Aryana

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

***(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.***

**Check-in**

Alison Turner informed the Commission about the remaining sets of meeting minutes that need to be approved. An edit to the 8/17 minutes was asked to omit any gender titles and a call out to the Commissioner title instead to make it easier for the public to understand what the role is.

Commissioner Chris Maykut introduced a motion to approve all the previous minutes including edits to the 8/17 meeting and it was seconded by Bill Southern. The Commission voted, and all the minutes were approved.

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**Preview of remaining CIC meetings in 2020**

Alison Turner informed the Commission that the co-chairs collaborated and conversed about the plan for the rest of the year. A group activity was proposed for the October meeting that will be facilitated by Martha Lucas.

At the November meeting, a representative from the Office of Economic Development (OED) will be attending and speak. Julie Pham is working and contacting other City Departments to come. A representative from Seattle IT may also be available to come and speak.

Alison Turner also invited other community groups to come and discuss how they are doing their community outreach during the pandemic. The co-chairs also discussed postponing the planned retreat and work plan and collaborate on a new work plan for the rest of the year.

Bill Southern would like to see as many City Departments to come to this meeting and talk about their outreach programs during this time. One topic of particular interest is community outreach on the homeless.

DON Staff Liaison Laura Jenkins noted that they could reach to the Human Services Department (HSD), DON Homeless Outreach, Seattle Parks & Recreation, and Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) about their homeless community outreach during the pandemic.

Julie Pham asked the liaison if they could help the Commission reach out to these City departments and invite them to this meeting to provide an update about the homeless community outreach efforts.

Bill Southern would like to know about what these City departments are in charge of about the homeless outreach and how can this Commission provide any assistance to these efforts.

Alison Turner likes this idea and it will be great to know how these City departments implement their outreach methods so this Commission can assist and provide feedback and connect them to the available resources.

Alison Turner asked if the minutes from the SPD’s presentation is available for the Commission to review and provide feedback before inviting them back for an update about their community engagement outreach efforts.

DON Staff Liaison Jenkins will reach out to the Mayor’s Office External Relations Liaison Sonny Nguyen for a follow-up.

Martha Lucas would like to read the 8/17 minutes from SPD to provide their feedback.

Alison Turner suggested inviting the representatives from SPD and the Mayor’s Office and provide an update about their last presentation at this Commission.

**Presentation from Phinney Neighborhood Association**

Commissioner Maykut introduced Cecily Kaplan of the Greenwood Senior Center of the Phinney Neighborhood Association to talk about the excellent work the senior center is doing during this challenging time. Commissioner Maykut added that the center has been very instrumental in providing relief and much-needed resources to the seniors in the community.

Cecily Kaplan mentioned that it was a very difficult decision to close the senior center to the public. It was an emotional experience because they will not be able to serve the senior community. She noted that it was hard, but it was the right thing to do to ensure the health and well-being of their customers are being taken care of.

The Senior Center assessed the most essential need and did brainstorming on what can they do to reach the community during this pandemic. She noted that there were about 3,200 individuals who come to the center multiple times for assistance. The center looked at their list and came up with a field and range of connections and identified who needed the resources especially food items.

The center began a transition meal program to provide delivery. This program garnered enough volunteers to deliver food to the senior village members and participants. They delivered 40-45 meals three times a week. This was the Center’s number one program. The center also began setting up phone tree calling and weekly e-newsletters to the members.

The center kept a decent level of staff to continue to provide programming and classes available and any state and city funding remain stable to keep the center open.

Cecily Kaplan noted that the decision not to open the center was a relief and many of the surrounding centers are also doing the same thing not to reopen until the City or County reached Phase 4. She acknowledged that the center will be closed for a while.

Cecily Kaplan mentioned that they are currently working on their 2021 budget, although it was challenging, the center will continue to do as much outreach as they can.

Felix Chang asked about what advice she can give to other organizations to practice and be engaged in the community outreach efforts during this challenging time and any support that the City can provide.

Cecily Kaplan commented that it depends on the organization and doing a partnership to reach out to the seniors is the best way to approach it. Identifying the senior center location and their needs are very important. Cecily Kaplan added that she is happy to make those connections and become a partner. She identified the Seattle Parks and Recreation has been an excellent partner in reaching out to the senior centers.

Regarding City and County assistance, Cecily Kaplan commented that she hopes the current their current contracts with them are confirmed through 2021. The City aids the senior center via contracts through the Aging and Disability Services with the non-profit’s organizations.

Felix Chang acknowledged Cecily Kaplan’s work and advocacy and thanked her presentation and providing information to this Commission about their continued outreach efforts.

**Connection Exercise (Breakout)**

Julie Pham introduced a Connection Exercise and breakout sessions to discuss, share and collaborate about the current challenges facing the community involvement during this pandemic and identify any innovative ways and methods to continue the community involvement and outreach to the communities.

Current Challenges in Community Involvement

* low trust in government and news on tech platforms (credibility)
* Most communities that are underserved are more high-touch communities >> isolation
* how do we reach who we're not already reaching?
* Not everyone is coming in with the same tech knowledge
* technology access and literacy
* It's hard to dive deep in zoom
* hard to get equivalent social connection
* It's hard to figure out what's going on. Lots of confusion and trust is an issue
* understanding City strategy and ensuring the CIC is keeping up with the mission
* Zoom / meeting fatigue
* People are not used to the online environment
* the digital divide is exacerbated - not everyone has a smart phone or internet access
* City policies are quickly shifting due to COVID - communities often last to know
* Many pressing issues that require engagement
* It takes more bandwidth to try new things and they often don't work
* Time it takes to test tech
* How to prioritize with limited resources?
* people don't know where to get information
* replicating in person outreach virtually
* ADA accessibility of tech platforms
* Translations
* Security concerns
* No online platform is perfect

Examples of New Ways of Community Involvement (can be from any sector)

* meet people where they are: food programs, grocery stores, etc.
* including information with meal deliveries
* Outreach at grocery store parking lot with food
* Partner with religious organizations
* socially distant picnics
* expanded outdoor areas
* outreach at COVID testing sites
* text message check-ins
* digital conventions
* tik tok challenges
* Online gaming
* pen pals
* Virtual concert - promoting local artists
* webinars - not working
* virtual happy hours
* virtual / drive-through birthdays / celebrations / gatherings
* People have tech buddies to call when they have tech issues
* Street closures and patio cafes are cool
* Include Zoom toolbar in agendas
* using city programs that have allowed for outside seating
* Using a suite of online options engage neighbors
* Deep dive in small groups of 5 or less in person
* West Seattle Junction newsletter - has done a great job with online engagement
* Sandwich boards with online engagement opportunity info
* Still trying to figure it out
* businesses collaborating
* in the beginning a lot of good fundraisers that brought people together and raised money for community groups
* more social media use

**Update from Commission Staff Liaisons**

DON Staff Liaison Angela Rae introduced herself and her role to support the Commission. Her role is to better understand, communicate, and track any open vacancies for the Commission. She will be in contact with the Mayor’s Office and the City Council and she will be working with them to ensure that any vacancies and bottlenecks are addressed.

She asked each of the Commissioners if they could send her an email and provide information about the duration of their term so she could track and update their information.

DON Staff Liaison Jenkins commented that they have been interviewing a Get Engaged candidate and they will provide more additional information about the status, vacancies, and next steps at the next meeting.

Carol Redfield commented that due to these challenges about open vacancies, status, and an elongated process, the Commission has lost some of its members.

Commissioner Maykut commented how impressed he was with the communication by the liaisons to the co-chairs and he would like to acknowledge them for their work during this transition process.

Staff Liaison Jenkins noted that Angela Rae will be the contact person for all open vacancies and appointments, and she will handle all the agenda settings, and meeting updates.

When contacting the staff liaison to continue and address both liaisons.

**Public Comment**

Cindy Barker commented that it was an excellent meeting and session and she was glad that she was able to participate in the breakout session.

**Adjournment**

No business held before the Commission; the meeting was adjourned.