

City Neighborhood Council Minutes
July 30, 2007

CNC members In attendance: Robin Sizemore (Northeast District); Malaika Lafferty (Lake Union District); Pete Spalding (Delridge District); Katie Comer (Downtown District); Robert Drucker (Ballard District); George Counts (Magnolia/Queen Anne District); Cheryl Klinker (North District); Paul Stoms (East District); Chris Leman (Lake Union District and CNC Chair); Adrienne Bailey (Central District); Pat Murakami (Southeast District and CNC Vice Chair) Judith Edwards (Greater Duwamish District and CNC Secretary); and Cindi Barker (SW District and a member of CNC's neighborhood planning committee).

Department of Neighborhoods Staff: Scott Minnix; Darby DuComb

Others: Carol Simon, Historic Madison Park; Dennis Saxman, POWHAT Neighborhood Association; Bea Kumasaka (Downtown District and Pedestrian Master Plan Advisory Group) and Charles Redmond (Delridge District and Pedestrian Master Plan Advisory Group).

Roundtable of district councils on organizing successes and challenges:

- Agreed at previous meeting to start with this segment
- Suggestion to move this discussion at future meetings to the end
- Suggestion to schedule this networking period for after or before the regular CNC meeting to allow less formal conversation
- Suggestion that CNC meetings, being open, are a better forum for dialogue among districts and with DON than the invitation-only meeting that DON officials had with district chairs on June 22
- Suggestion to have CNC meetings begin with each representative mentioning a couple of sentences about their district at the beginning of the meeting.
- As was tried in the past, different Districts could be spotlighted in depth at different meetings
- A round robin at each meeting could address a different issue common to district councils

Report on the Delridge Stewardship Forum. 11-member panel had a diversity of ages, residents, businesses, etc. Focusing on getting youth involved and holding a Youth Stewardship Forum this fall. Also will be holding the annual Gathering of Neighbors event in November. Delridge District Council allows 45 minutes to one hour for updates from members. Delridge is working with the Seattle Housing Authority around representation at new High Point development.

The Delridge and SW District Councils held an Emergency Preparedness Forum this spring. Information and Power Point presentations are available if other groups would like to use. Presentation was also videotaped and could be used. Looking at breaking into pieces that could be on You Tube. Flyers were

translated into different languages by Red Cross. Service providers spread word on the program.

Discussion of the “credentials committee” of the SW District Council that recruits, screens and mentors groups for possible membership in the Council. Duwamish Tribe was added in this way.

There was also discussion of some controversies over who has voting rights in district councils and neighborhood associations. An ongoing issue is whether social service agencies should have a vote in the SE District Council. CNC chair Chris Leman reported that after CNC received a March 23 letter co-signed by five members of SE District groups requesting CNC (and Mayor, City Council, and City Attorney) intervention regarding governance of the SE District Council, CNC Vice Chair Pat Murakami (as a co-signer of the letter) recused herself and the rest of the CNC executive committee invited involvement by the Dispute Resolution Center of King County. Pat and her coalition agreed to participate in a voluntary conflict resolution process but CNC has not heard back from the other side on its willingness to participate.

Malaika Lafferty also reported on a controversy that the Cascade Neighborhood Council faced over voting by multiple non-resident employees of the same businesses, some of which did not have an office in the neighborhood. The by-laws were revised to make clear that a business must have an office in the neighborhood, not just a project; and there would be one vote per business.

Darby DuComb, new Director of DON’s Customer Service Bureau

Darby began her career with the City of Seattle in the City Attorney’s Office. Helped to clear 500+ case backlog and streamlined processes. Then worked for the Department of Planning and Development. Hopes to improve the Customer Service Bureau in same ways. Department name change earlier this year from “Citizens Service Bureau” was due to immigrants not realizing they could utilize its services if they were not citizens, and also mistakenly thinking that it was the place to get green cards and deal with immigration issues. Darby is guiding the Bureau to be more customer-driven/focused, and welcomes the opportunity to speak at District Council meetings.

A major new initiative is a proposed 311 call center that would be available 24/7 to respond to citizen calls for help with City services. Forty-five cities currently have 311 systems in place. Need to be able to track the calls on a regular basis, allowing the City to know what issues are of concern to citizens, and how service requests have been followed up. Noise issues are a major source of complaints.

The Bureau's web site is <http://www.seattle.gov/CustomerService>), and DuComb asked that we circulate the following links to an article and two videos about how 311 central call centers work in other cities:

<http://www.abqtrib.com/news/2007/jul/09/when-you-want-scoop-albuquerque-311-agents-are-rea/>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/6272982.stm>

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/311/>

Pedestrian Master Plan

Bea Kumasaka (Downtown) and Charles Redmond (Delridge) reported on the Pedestrian Master Plan Advisory Group, of which they are members. The Master Plan will be an 18-month long process, and is now at three months and counting. The Advisory Group is organizing to ensure control over its own agenda and an active role in guiding the Master Plan. The Advisory Group sent SDOT a July 11 letter which, like the March 27 CNC letter, opposes removal of the levy-funded Neighborhood Street Fund from "the established district council review and ratings process," opposes its restriction to large projects, and opposes "the proposed move from a one-year funding cycle to a three-year funding cycle." Information on the Pedestrian Master Plan process is available at http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/pm_pmpag.htm. Also, the public is welcome at the Advisory Group's blog/list-serve, <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/seattlepedestrianmasterplan/>.

Neighborhood Planning Committee

Cindi Barker distributed copies of the Mayor's proposal on neighborhood plan updates and a draft CNC letter of response recommended by CNC's neighborhood planning committee, and based also on discussion at a sounding board that the City convened. There is concern that the process is too top down and that neighborhood issues won't be top priority, and that the Mayor's proposals have not benefited from early and continuous notice to and dialogue with CNC and its neighborhood planning committee. Concern also that the sounding board does not include representatives of most of the neighborhood plan stewardship groups. While acknowledging the value of updates in some cases, the CNC discussion emphasized that a partnership of neighborhoods and the City successfully fashioned the existing neighborhood plans to reflect local conditions, that the plans emerged from an unprecedented level of outreach and buy-in, and that changes should be made only with great care, and with the same high standards of grassroots involvement and validation.

It was noted that the CNC draft letter was proposed to be addressed only to the City Council, and that the Mayor should also receive a similar letter. A proposal to allow neighborhood planning groups to raise outside funds for adding optional elements to a plan was deferred for additional work to improve its implications for citywide equity.

Referring to article 6 of the CNC by-laws, which directs that CNC "reach decision by consensus through a process of open dialogue," the Chair asked if there was any objection to CNC adopting and sending the letter. No one objected. A vote then was held on authorizing the letter. Except one abstention from the SE

district representative, all those present voted yes. (In addition, the Greater Duwamish representative, who was unable to stay for the conclusion of the discussion, had asked to be recorded as abstaining, but not against CNC sending the letter.) Districts are free to write their own letters. As the Mayor's proposals on neighborhood planning evolve, CNC will probably develop future letters on this issue.

Transportation Committee

SDOT is asking for nominations to the Bridging the Gap Large Projects Review Team. As CNC is not meeting in August and the names are just now coming in from the districts, CNC unanimously authorized its Executive Committee to write to SDOT with the names, conditional that the Executive Committee limit itself to names that it has received from the district councils, along with at-large nominations that CNC has previously approved; and that it share the letter with the districts.

Neighborhood Matching Fund Committee

At its July 10 meeting, the committee reviewed suggestions from the Citywide Review Team regarding the NMF process, and adopted recommendations, which were circulated for possible CNC action at a future meeting. Next meeting is August 14 at Magnolia/Queen Anne NSC; no meeting in September.

City Council Candidates Forum

CNC's fifth biennial City Council candidates forum is now in planning. Chris and Pat are working on it, and welcome assistance. [Note: the forum will be held Friday, Sept. 21 in City Hall's Boards and Commissions Room. Video taping begins promptly at 5 p.m.]