

DRAFT City Neighborhood Council Minutes
October 29, 2007

In attendance: Janis Maloney and Paul Stoms (East District Council); Dennis Ross (SW District Council); Judith Edwards (Greater Duwamish District Council and CNC Secretary), Irene Wall (NW District Council), Robert Drucker (Ballard District Council), Jeannie Hale (Northeast District Council), Cheryl Klinker (North District Council), Laine Ross (Downtown District Council); Pete Spalding (Delridge District Council); Pat Murakami (Southeast District Council and CNC Vice Chair); Malaika Lafferty and Dick Selin (Lake Union District Council); Chris Leman, CNC Chair. Guests: Lisa Taylor-Molitch, Madison Park; Carol Simon, Madison Park; Dennis Saxman, POWHAT (Pine, Olive Way, Harvard Avenue Triangle), Pat McCoy, Lower Queen Anne. DON Staff: Scott Minnix.

Agenda and minutes

The draft agenda was adopted after being revised to move immediately to welcoming the Parks Department representatives. The September 24 minutes were adopted as proposed.

Parks Department

Christopher Williams, Acting Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, introduced Tim Gallagher, the Mayor's nominee to become Superintendent. Gallagher recently completed a hike of the complete length of the Pacific Crest Trail, and awaiting his confirmation, is now in residence as a consultant. He expressed the importance of including the community in Parks Department processes, especially developing a vision for the department. Gallagher is placing particular priority on the forthcoming Strategic Business Plan. He feels that the many different Parks Department plans do not add up to a coherent vision, and wants the Business Plan to provide this vision along with specific objectives and a system of measurements to judge performance. Among the questions asked, there was concern that the Business Plan could become a means for turning the parks over to corporations and non-profit organizations. There was also concern over inefficiency, a lack of maintenance in parks, and a lack of response to complaints. Another question had to do with Parks Department discouragement of a Neighborhood Matching Fund application that would have brought new money into the Parks budget for replacement of deteriorating playground equipment and new restrooms in Mount Baker Park, when a similar application in another part of the city went ahead with Parks Department support. There was also discussion of security issues in Downtown and other parks. Gallagher has been attending various community meetings, and is available to speak to district

councils and other groups. He can be reached at 684-8022 or timothy.gallagher@seattle.gov.

City Council President Nick Licata

Licata reported on City Council decision-making on the budget, which must be approved by December. Payroll represents 80% of the General Fund, so only a fraction of the budget is easily changed. The Council is considering cuts in the 311 call center and the neighborhood planning updates proposed by the Mayor in order to find money for pedestrian safety, especially sidewalks. The Council is asking many questions about the proposed \$9 million 311 call center, and is inclined to budget much fewer funds so that a pilot study can be conducted. The Council is also likely to hold much of the money for the proposed "updates" in neighborhood plans until there is greater reassurance that the existing plans and their approval and adoption matrices will be respected. Licata is also working on possible legislation requiring lobbyists to register. He responded to various questions from CNC members. One was about removal of crosswalk markings, such as on 35th SW. Licata feels that the thresholds that SDOT is using to deny marked crosswalks and traffic signals are unrealistically high. He also responded to questions about funding for the proposed zoo garage, and for various projects in the South Lake Union area.

Continued roundtable on District Council success and challenges

There was discussion about the value and the difficulties of creating and managing web sites and blogs. This is very difficult without some staff support. Delridge is planning a community-building workshop, but the third annual Gathering of Neighbors will not be held. The Northeast District distributed a two-page summary of its successes and challenges. It issues many resolutions and letters commenting on City issues and programs, and in 2006 it conducted a survey of public opinion on parks and how they can best serve their neighborhoods. The district holds an annual food drive, and it has a public comment period at each meeting and ground rules for meetings to ensure an orderly process and respect for each others' views. A current challenge is to find ways of encouraging the re-involvement of member organizations that are now inactive.

Neighborhood Plan Committee

The draft letter regarding neighborhood plan update process that was authorized at the Sept. 24 CNC was distributed for further comment. After revisions, it was reauthorized, with one abstention, and can now be found on the web site at <http://seattle.gov/neighborhoodcouncil>.

Neighborhood Matching Fund Committee

At its July 10 meeting, CNC's Neighborhood Matching Fund oversight committee, with two DON staff members present, unanimously recommended that CNC restore the system under which the Citywide Review Team, as a group, interviews those who are presenting the application. The CNC discussed adopting the following: "The City Neighborhood Council recommends that the Citywide Review Team return to the use of interviews with the applicant representative(s). During most of the history of the Neighborhood Matching Fund, interviews were the format, but were dropped a few years ago in favor of an 'open house' format in which different members of the Citywide Review Team visit the different applicant representative(s) at different locations throughout a larger room. The 'open house' approach has proven more time-consuming for the Citywide Review Team as well as for the applicants, and has introduced the potential for inconsistencies. An interview by all Citywide Review Team members in common is most likely to ensure consistency and fairness in how applicants are treated." There was an active debate in which some suggested that the interview process can be intimidating for the applicants. Under CNC by-laws section 6 (which encourages consensus), CNC chair Chris Leman suggested that further work was needed, and CNC voted to send the proposal back to the NMF Oversight Committee.

Nominating Committee

Judith Edwards, reporting on behalf of herself and fellow committee members Cheryl Klinker, Dennis Ross, and Andrew Taylor, presented possible names to serve as 2008 officers:

Chair: Chris Leman and Pat Murakami
Vice chair: Pete Spalding
Secretary: Dick Selin
NMF Co-Chairs: Laine Ross and Robin Sizemore
Neighborhood Planning Chair: Irene Wall
Budget Chair: Ron Boddie
Transportation Chair: Ref Lindmark

Nominations will be accepted until election time, with the election to occur at the November 26 CNC meeting.

Department of Neighborhoods Survey

On Oct. 29, the Department of Neighborhoods began distributing by e-mail a web-only survey [at http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/DON_survey.htm] that purports to

evaluate CNC, the district councils, the district coordinators, the Neighborhood Service Centers, and the neighborhood planning program, among other programs. The survey will close on Nov. 30. CNC members expressed various concerns, among them the lack of consultation in its design, that the survey does not give the City Neighborhood Council's correct name, that there is little opportunity for written comments, and that the surveys are being distributed by U.S. mail only in Delridge and Lake City.