

## DRAFT MINUTES OF MARCH 31, 2008 CITY NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL MEETING

Present: Peter Aberg (NE District), Chris Leman (Lake Union District), Nicole Franklin (Magnolia/Queen Anne District), Kathy Nyland (Greater Duwamish), Laine Ross (Downtown District), Dennis Ross (SW District), Robin Sizemore (co-chair of CNC's NMF Oversight Committee), Paul Stoms and Andrew Taylor (East District), Sarah Valenta (SE District), Irene Wall (Northwest District). Guests: Bill Bradburd (CANDC/Jackson Place), Justina Guyott (Dunlap Neighborhood, SE District), Quang H. Nguyen (WAVA Chamber/VAEDA/Little Saigon), Ken Okuma (Brighton Neighborhood, SE District), Brian Ramey (Eastlake), Dennis Saxman, (Pike/Pine).

Neighborhood Leadership Training Program. Kimberlee Archie was unable to attend or to send anyone in her place to brief CNC on the Department of Neighborhoods' proposals. City Council resolution 31044 required the Department of Neighborhoods by Feb. 15, 2008 to provide a plan for how to spend the \$100,000 in the current budget for this program; DON will miss this deadline by about two months. In the meantime, as authorized at the Feb. 25 meeting, CNC sent a March 18 letter (available at <http://seattle.gov/neighborhoodcouncil>) to the City Council and to DON. The letter asks that the district councils be included in planning and overseeing the training, and recommends: (1) that the training be of practical value to those building neighborhood organizations; (2) that funds build a training program that is sustainable for future periods when funds may decline; (3) that a peer-to-peer model be used that ensures practicality and sustainability; and (4) that the funds not be focused primarily on the update of the neighborhood plans.

At the March 31 CNC meeting, the following additional points were made about the training initiative: (5) A major component should be web-based, allowing people to learn without being in a meeting, and in the coming years even if on-site trainings are reduced or eliminated; (6) that the web site include organization-building resources such as sample by-laws, etc.; and (7) that the City require in its request for proposals and in contracts that the materials provided by the consultants become property of the City so that they continue to be available to the public (rather than being privately withheld from the public, as has been the case with some past curricula that the City has paid for).

Organizing multilingual neighborhoods. CNC hosted a roundtable on how neighborhoods can address language and translation barriers to allow people on the same block to discuss common concerns such as crime, graffiti, litter, traffic and parking, youth needs, community-building and neighborhood improvement. The Department of Neighborhoods was more active in the 1990s in helping organize neighborhood residential and business associations than it is currently. City funds are available to provide written translations of public notices put out by neighborhood organizations, but are not available for interpreters at community meetings, even though interpretation (oral translation) is generally cheaper than written translation. It was suggested that CNC request that the

City budget provide more funds for this purpose. Some suggested that a more cost-effective approach would be instruction in English as a foreign language instruction, which they say is under-used. Another possibility is for the City or a non-profit organization to maintain a roster of volunteers who, for free or for a nominal fee, will provide interpretation or written translation assistance. There is also the possibility of relying on the paid staff of the various social service organizations that assist various linguistic groups, although it was pointed out that these groups generally are organized on a citywide basis and are not designed to facilitate communication across linguistic groups at the neighborhood level. CNC welcomes suggestions from the district councils and others regarding any initiatives in assisting multi-lingual neighborhoods.

Organizing neighborhood business districts. Also at the March 31 meeting, CNC hosted a roundtable on organizing neighborhood business districts led by Quang Nguyen of the Vietnamese American Economic Development Association. While residents often think that businesses are highly organized, actually it has proven difficult for many neighborhood business associations to form and keep together. Small business owners are extremely busy, find it difficult to attend meetings, and can be skeptical of requests for funds. Organizers need to make contact with them on their own turf, via e-mail and the phone, and through various innovations. (For example, Kathy Nyland, volunteer head of the Georgetown Merchants Association, holds early-morning and late-night office hours.) Organizers need to be realistic about the issues and projects that businesses are willing to support, and to recognize the different cultural experiences of each ethnic group.

Given the difficulties of organizing neighborhood business districts, the thirteen district councils need to find ways to include their concerns. The district councils are official City advisory bodies governed by City resolution 28114, whose Attachment A provides: (b) "Each neighborhood district shall have a District Council consisting of representatives of all community councils and neighborhood business organizations within the district who wish to participate. Other representatives may be added at the discretion of the District Council. The District Council will seek to reflect the geographic, racial, cultural and economic characteristics of the district." If there is no neighborhood business association in the district, or those that exist are not attending, the district council should find other ways to ensure that the concerns of neighborhood businesses are represented in the district's discussions and decisions.

It was also noted with concern that, as the City has reduced the size of the Neighborhood Matching Fund and taken away from the district councils their former role in allocating the Neighborhood Street Fund, businesses and others are finding less incentive to participate in their district councils.

Neighborhood Matching Fund. CNC approved the following appointments to the Citywide Review Team (a CNC committee): Antoinette Angulo, Malaika Lafferty, Thao Tran, Elisa Del Rosario, Robert Drucker, Mako Fitts, Susan Harmon, Laine Ross, Kristin O'Donnell, William P. Mallow, Richard Selin, Mike Warren, Robin Sizemore, Christie Coxley, Jackie Ramels, and Vic Minor. It is hoped that the currently unfilled slots from the North and Northwest districts will also be filled; if so, they would be brought to CNC

for retroactive approval. The April 8 meeting of the NMF Oversight Committee will focus on planning for the 20th anniversary of NMF.

Neighborhood planning. Neighborhood Planning Committee chair Irene Wall reported on planning for CNC's April 19 workshop on neighborhood planning. Also, she presented the committee's recommendation for CNC support of two Comprehensive Plan amendments regarding neighborhood planning (see below). It was decided to ask for further district council input before CNC takes a position on the amendments.