

CITY NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
Minutes for the April 28, 2008 meeting

District Council voting representatives in attendance: Peter Aberg (Northeast district representative); Adrienne Bailey (Central district representative); Robert Drucker (Ballard district representative); Nicole Franklin (Magnolia/Queen Anne district representative); Chris Leman (Lake Union representative, and CNC Chair); Janis Maloney (East district representative); Dennis Ross (Southwest district representative); Laine Ross (Downtown district representative); Philip Shack (North district representative); Pete Spalding (Delridge district representative, and Vice Chair); Sarah Valenta (Southeast district representative); Irene Wall (Northwest district representative).

Guests in attendance: City Councilmember Jan Drago; Dan Nolte (office of Councilmember Sally Clark); SDOT deputy director Anne Fiske-Zuniga; Mary Catherine Snyder (SDOT), Kadie Bell and Ted Divina (DON); Suzanne Anderson (vice chair of CNC's transportation committee, and one of CNC's representatives on the Pedestrian Master Plan Advisory Group), Michael Dobbie (Olive-Denny Neighbors), John Coney (Queen Anne), Dennis Saxman (Pike/Pine), Robert Stephens, Jr. (Central), Paul Stoms (East district chair), Peggy Sturdivant (Crosscut.com). Guests from the SE District, along with how they identified themselves on the sign-up sheet (note: anyone not mentioned here is not on the sign-up sheet): Ray Akers (Columbia City Community Council), Doug Cargill (Columbia City Community Council), Denise Gloster (SEDC), Pat Murakami (SE District/Mount Baker Community Club), Yalonda Gill Masundire (Rainier Beach Joint Block Watch Groups), Patricia Paschal (SE), Janet Spindler (Pritchard Beach), Jena Walden (SE District), and Nancy Wagner (Othello Neighborhood Association).

Minutes. The March 31 draft minutes were approved, with the addition of Janis Maloney as representing the East District. Vice Chair Pete Spalding remembered the dedication of former CNC member Doug Lorentzen, who died March 4. Former CNC chair John Coney's tribute in the Queen Anne News is available at http://www.pacificpublishingcompany.com/site/index.cfm?newsid=19382161&BRD=855&PAG=461&dept_id=517907&rfi=8 CNC and the district councils would not be the independent, vital advisory bodies they are without volunteers like Doug Lorentzen. His work is all around us, and he will be greatly missed.

Councilmember Jan Drago. Councilmember Drago recalled her years on the City Neighborhood Council, representing the Downtown district council, which used to meet in her ice cream shop. Drago chaired the CNC at a time of difficult debates about the boundaries of the district councils, which were then being set up. She successfully lobbied City Councilmember Jim Street for inclusion of a Downtown District, which was not initially included in the legislation that he sponsored creating CNC and the district councils.

Drago now chairs the City Council's Transportation Committee, and the rest of her appearance before CNC addressed transportation issues, in partnership with the SDOT speakers, SDOT Deputy Director Anne Fiske-Zuniga, and SDOT staff person Mary Catherine Snyder. The discussion is summarized below.

Bridging the Gap transportation levy. SDOT Deputy Director Anne Fiske-Zuniga outlined spending and results under this program, including maintenance of bridges and arterial roads, large projects, and the Neighborhood Street Fund. Information is also available at <http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/BridgingtheGap.htm>.

The City Council is considering the Mayor's proposal to use levy funds for the Mercer corridor. There was active discussion at CNC on whether funding for Mercer is as important as for the Spokane Street Viaduct, the Magnolia Bridge, or the sidewalks, none of which are fully funded as yet.

Neighborhood parking studies and Residential Parking Zone policy review. Mary Catherine Snyder outlined SDOT's neighborhood-by-neighborhood consideration of changes in parking regulations and charges. She also discussed the current policy review of the RPZ program, which helps residents find on-street parking that would otherwise be occupied by non-residents. Advisory committees have been created of residents, businesses, and major institutions. See http://www.seattle.tov/transportation/parking/rpz_policy_review.htm for the existing policy and process, examples of different approaches to RPZs in other cities, a subscription form for updates, and a comment form to fill out on-line. To receive the materials on paper or in an alternative format, call (206) 684-3025 or jennifer.hayes@seattle.gov.

Letter to County Councilmembers on Seattle/suburbs bus funds allocation. As recommended by CNC's transportation committee and after a month of district council input, CNC unanimously adopted a letter to the Seattle members of the King County Council, asking them to correct a bias against Seattle in the allocation of new transit service dollars from the County's transit sales tax. The letter that had been circulated was adopted, with this sentence modified as follows: "Please work to change the 20:40:40 ratio for distributing new service dollars into a more equitable ratio (for example, 33:33:33), with Seattle receiving at least as large a share as the North and South county areas." Once it is sent, the letter will be available on the web site at seattle.gov/neighborhoodcouncil.

Neighborhood leadership training program. The City is deciding how to spend the \$100,000 for training of volunteers. After CNC sent a March 18 letter (available at <http://seattle.gov/neighborhoodcouncil>) and discussed the topic further at its March 31 meeting, the Department of Neighborhoods sent to the City Council an April 2 proposal (available at the same web site). CNC chair Chris Leman reported that the DON proposal appears to miss much of what CNC recommended, and is not inclusive, in that much of the training would be limited to 25 to 30 selected individuals rather than being open all.

Parks levy panel and public meetings. Four district council chairs are among the 29 appointees to the City Council's Parks and Green Spaces Levy Citizens' Advisory Committee, which will be meeting in May and June. CNC Vice Chair Pete Spalding, who is one of them, encouraged members of the public to attend the committee's outreach meetings: Monday May 12, 2008 - 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. in City Hall's Landes Room; Wednesday May 14, 2008 - 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. in the Northgate Community Center - Multi-Purpose Room, 10510 5th Avenue NE; and Thurs., May 15, 2008 - 6:30 - 9:00 p.m. in the Rainier Community Center, 4600 38th Avenue South. For information: http://www.seattle.gov/council/issues/parks_levy.htm.

Committee Reports

Neighborhood Matching Fund Oversight Committee. The committee is actively planning for NMF's 20th anniversary, while another CNC committee, the Citywide Review Team, is reviewing the 2008 round of NMF applications. Members of these committees, and of CNC and of some districts, have been invited to participate in focus groups for an evaluation of NMF that the Department of Neighborhoods is conducting with the help of a consulting firm. The CNC chair has requested on behalf of CNC the scope and request for proposals, and that CNC and its committees be involved in the evaluation.

Budget Committee. The committee is developing a draft letter to the Mayor on the 2009-10 biennial budget. District councils are urged to send their own budget letters to the Mayor and to suggest content for CNC's letter, a draft of which may be ready for circulation at the May 19 CNC meeting and possible action at the May 19 or June 30 CNC meetings.

Transportation Committee. Vice Chair Suzanne Anderson reported on the committee's April 18 meeting, which featured an SDOT presentation on the Residential Parking Zone policy review, and discussions on pedestrian issues and Bridging the Gap transportation levy priorities.

Neighborhood Planning Committee. With momentum from the 110+ attended April 19 workshop, this committee's April 22 meeting had perhaps its largest-ever attendance. The committee is working especially to get details on the administration's proposal for updating the neighborhood plans (including continuing attempts to obtain a reply from the Mayor to the questions in CNC's August 10 letter to him), and to advise the CNC on further recommendations to the City Council.

Roundtable on district council challenges and opportunities. The agenda had stated that "volunteers from three SE District organizations have asked to make a presentation about the value to district councils of putting a limit on the number of voting seats held by social service agencies." Of the nine guests from the SE district who signed in (see list above), five (Pat Murakami, Ray Akers, Doug Cargill, Yalonda Gill Masundire and Patricia Paschal) spoke at some length, expressing concern that in the voting seats on the SE District Council, residential neighborhood associations were now greatly outnumbered by other groups, especially social service agencies and others either led by paid staff rather than volunteers or lacking a representative structure. SE District Council representative Sarah Valenta questioned the tone and substance of their arguments, raising questions of balance and representativeness. CNC chair Chris Leman emphasized the importance of CNC making time to hear from the current leadership of the SE District Council. It was moved, seconded, and unanimously passed after discussion and acceptance of friendly amendments, to encourage the district councils to discuss voting membership in districts and possible remedies for the SE District situation, and to come back for a City Neighborhood Council discussion on these topics. As assistance in the discussions, CNC asked the parties in the SE District Council dispute to submit one-page statements