

CITY NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
Draft Minutes for the September 29, 2008 meeting

District Council voting representatives in attendance: Peter Aberg (Northeast and CNC Secretary), Nicole Franklin (Magnolia/Queen Anne); Chris Leman (Lake Union and CNC Chair) Janis Maloney (East) Kathy Nyland (Greater Duwamish); Pete Spalding (Delridge and CNC Vice Chair); Sarah Valenta (Southwest); Irene Wall (Northwest), Dennis Ross (Southwest); and Laine Ross (Downtown).

Guests in attendance: Dwight Dively (Department of Finance); Ted Divina (Department of Neighborhoods); Mickey Fearn (Department of Parks and Recreation); Bassim Dowidar and Pat Murakami (SENDC); Vlad Oustimovitch (Southwest); Dennis Saxman (POWHAT); and Andrew Taylor (East)

Agenda and Minutes.

Chair Chris Leman called the meeting to order at 6:35pm. On a motion by Pete Spalding, CNC voted to revise the agenda to move a discussion of the SENDC at-large application ahead on the agenda, to be just after the budget presentation. Minutes from the July 28 meeting were approved, with correction that the motion passed was to “Support that the Executive Committee receive the application and all supporting documentation from South East Neighborhood District Council for their at-large membership to the CNC.”

Budget Presentation

Department of Finance Director Dwight Dively distributed budget information. The Mayor’s budget speech was earlier in the day. The City’s financial health is in better shape than the state’s and the national economy. The recent turmoil of financial markets is not reflected in the proposed budget; Dwight is uncertain what effect that may have. There is a 50/50 chance of a recession in the Seattle area in the near future.

Highlights:

- Sales tax revenue has been good due to construction
- 2009-10 revenues are expected to be flat
- Proposed Seattle Public Utilities rate increases will increase revenues
- Looking at raising parking rates to increase revenues
- Police and Fire growing and public safety share of budget growing – now over 47% of the budget
- Parks budget increasing
- Human services budget increasing
- Employee health care costs increasing – have doubled since 2001
- Additional funding for emergency shelters/homeless housing/food programs
- Potential King County cuts not reflected in the budget—City does not have money to pick up lost County services
- No cuts to library hours/enhancement for library security
- Additional money for sidewalks

- 2007 was the highest REET (real estate excise tax) income ever – expect it to be much lower this year – hence less funding for capital projects
- No change in community center hours
- Matching Fund funding going up a small amount –to \$4.0 from \$3.8 million
- Viaduct/Seawall money included in budget
- Jail planning money included – construction costs are a concern for 2011-12 budget (note: City is also looking at sharing jail construction with other municipalities)
- City has invested very conservatively – has not lost money on stocks. Borrowing impacted as interest rates on loans have skyrocketed.
- Management of City pension and employee health funds receives better oversight than in San Diego, which is now repaying a huge overrun from prior mismanagement

The Chair asked if there was interest in authorizing a budget letter to follow up CNC's June 25 budget letter. This question was deferred to a future meeting.

CNC At-Large Membership Application from SENDC

CNC has received an application from a non-profit group called the SE Neighborhood District Council to join CNC as an at-large member. This is the first such application ever received. Vice Chair Pete Spalding and Adrienne Bailey suggested that the application be sent out to the various district councils for discussion and be brought back for a vote at the October CNC meeting. Objection was raised that this was not the correct process for decision. Application was received on September 25. The Chair read from section 2.3 of the CNC bylaws: "Upon review of the application by the Executive Committee to ensure that all minimum requirements for membership are met as set forth in Section 2.3 below, this Committee will promptly make a recommendation to the full CNC for action. Any proposed recommendation for an at-large membership shall be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote at a CNC regular meeting following introduction of such proposed recommendation at a prior regular CNC meeting."

There was a question on how funding would be addressed if SE had two district councils. There was also a question of whether SE would have additional votes or would combine votes. [After the meeting, it was pointed out that by-law section 6.2 provides that "Each District Council and each at-large membership shall have one (1) vote."] Irene Wall requested that the Executive Committee take necessary time to develop thorough recommendations bringing it back for a vote. Vice Chair Pete Spalding stated his view that the CNC Executive Committee's responsibility was to ensure only that the application met minimum requirements for membership. Janis Maloney stated that the situation in SE needs to be addressed by the Department of Neighborhoods, not CNC.

Committee Reports

Education Committee (Peter Aberg, Chair) One of the major current issues is the lack of school building capacity for a burgeoning population in the north end, especially as Seattle Public Schools is in the process of selling buildings. There are also concerns over absenteeism, juvenile justice, and other youth issues. CNC Chair Chris Leman suggested that the committee be renamed the Schools and Youth committee, but CNC took no action on this proposal.

Neighborhood Plan Committee (Irene Wall, Chair). It was moved and passed that a letter (a draft of which had been sent out with the agenda materials) ask the City Council to schedule an additional hearing and more public process before acting on the incentive zoning proposals, to ensure that neighborhoods are sufficiently educated on the issue. The committee will organize a workshop on Oct. 21.

Neighborhood Matching Fund Committee (Laine Ross, Chair). Committee has been working with DON to plan celebrations in honor of the 20th anniversary of the Neighborhood Matching Fund.

Transportation Committee. (*Ref Lindmark, Chair*) Chris reported that the committee is looking at a proposal for the revenues from parking meters and pay stations to be spent within the neighborhood where they are collected.

CNC Nominations and Elections Process

Chris Leman stated that, after two years as CNC Chair, he is not a candidate for this or any other office. CNC unanimously appointed the following to serve on the nominating committee for CNC officer and committee chair positions: Peter Aberg, Chris Leman, Andrew Taylor, and Irene Wall. They will present their recommendations at the October meeting, with a vote at the November meeting.

Neighborhood Summit

Last Neighborhood Summit was held in January 2006, and holding another one has been on this year's adopted CNC work plan. The Mayor has accepted CNC's invitation to keynote on Oct. 28, and has arranged for use of the Bertha Landes Room. Need volunteers to help lead and chronicle the focus groups. CNC reviewed the draft program, and at Pete Spalding's suggestion, reduced from three to two the number of break-out sessions, to allow more time for the two remaining sessions. Also, Pete suggested that to reduce noise, we locate the focus groups at some distance from each other, including away from the Landes Room.

District Council Enhancement Funds

District coordinators have \$1000 each again this year for enhancing their district council. Possible use of the unspent dollars might be web sites/web assistance. Some district councils have had success with web sites/blogs, but find the need for a template and help in keeping the web site updated.

Plans for Performance Audit of District Councils/CNC System

The Chair has tentatively invited representatives of the Office of City Auditor to the October CNC meeting to speak about planning for a performance audit of the district councils/CNC system. CNC members agreed that this invitation would be desirable.

Other:

Major Institutions process—in keeping with the CNC work plan, it was suggested we hold a special roundtable on this topic at a future meeting.

Oct 25 – Southeast District Council and Greater Duwamish District Council will hold a forum on Station Area Planning at the New Holly Gathering Hall.

Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.