

## **CITY NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

### **Minutes for the January 25, 2010 meeting**

District Council representatives in attendance: Dan Wasell, (North District); Donn DeVore, (Delridge District); Dick Burkhardt (Southeast District and Transportation Co-chair); Robert Drucker, (Ballard District); Ref Lindmark, (Transportation Co-chair); Nicole Franklin, (Magnolia/Queen Anne District); Dennis Ross, (Southwest District); Jim Del Ciello, (CNC Vice-chair), Janis Maloney, (East District); Chris Leman (Lake Union District and CNC Budget Chair); Laine Ross, (Downtown District and Neighborhood Matching Fund Chair); Chas Redmond (CNC Chair); Pete Spalding, (Delridge District)

Guests in attendance: Veronica Sherman King, DON; Stella Chao, DON; Esther Handy; Mike O'Brien, Seattle City Council

#### **Agenda and December Minutes**

Were approved

#### **Mike O'Brien Seattle City Council-newly elected**

Mike is a former CFO of a law firm so is familiar with accounting and finance. Also, former chair of the Sierra Club so he is familiar with environmental activism. On the Council, he is the chair of the Utilities and Neighborhoods Committees. He stated that his overall priorities are to (1) increase Seattle's role in combating global warming and greenhouse gas emissions; (2) continue to work on how we can engage the citizens of Seattle in important city-wide topics; (3) continue to grow the Race and Social Justice Initiative. He is excited to be working on Neighborhoods and notified the body that the three choices for the 2010 Neighborhood plan updates will be announced at the end of the week. On the audit, he looks forward to using it to engage in meaningful dialogue with the CNC and District Councils.

Q: On the tunnel/viaduct, would he consider a 'red-team' or an outside private body to critique the State's numbers re: financing?

A. There are some big questions remaining regarding financing and engineering regarding the tunnel. He likes the idea of an independent analysis, but emphasized the importance of the entire Council coming together on the issues regarding the tunnel. He is optimistic that the Council can consider such an idea.

Comment: The audit conclusions were a bit skewed toward one District Council (referring to the Southeast District Council) and would like Councilmember O'Brien to know that there are good things happening in other district councils.

Q. The neighborhoods that were chosen for the 2009 Neighborhood Plan updates were chosen with the idea of transit-oriented development in mind. Can you give an idea on what thought process will go into selecting the 2010 Neighborhood Plan updates?

A. Did not outline any particular theme, as has only been in office a couple of weeks. Expressed that the plans do have to be clear and explicit on what types of things to look at and be open on how the Council is prioritizing criteria. Still need to pay attention and provide some funding to neighborhoods that will not get plan updates.

Comment: Councilmember O'Brien's first vote was seemingly not good for neighborhoods and is incongruent with the neighborhood plan in the Eastlake neighborhood. This was in reference to the recent vote by the Council to approve a land use amendment that allows construction of three medical research buildings in the South Lake Union neighborhood at Mercer Street and Dexter Avenue North. This lowered the maximum height limit on the parcels that were rezoned to 120 feet, plus up to 15 feet for rooftop mechanical equipment. Unhappy that Neighborhood Matching Fund and Neighborhood Projects fund process will be limited this year due to loss of staff.

Response: Unfortunately, due to financial situation, cuts have had to be made. Agreed that the rezone may not parallel neighborhood plan, but pointed out that the Council wants to bring investment into the area, which will help create jobs.

Q. How do you expect to make in-roads with combating climate change with the economy being so bad?

A. Pointed out that climate change is a long-term problem and we do not have a good way to address long-term problems. This is a moral issue and wrong for us to not address it. Does not have the answer, but knows that we must figure out a way to bring back the decisions that affect us long-term. Some investments could improve the economic situation and the long-term climate issues.

Councilmember O'Brien urged the body to tell him what he can do to help them and said that he plans to visit all of the district councils in his first year.

### **Electric Trolley letter**

To King County Council and Regional Transportation Committee

Urging to support Metro's popular electric trolley buses over diesel electric coaches. Metro should not take audit at face value; many issues were ignored.

Friendly amendments were made to the letter amending the phrase electric trolley system to electric trolley buses. A phrase was added to bullet-point #3 in the second paragraph to add "of diesel electric hybrid buses in comparison to the electric trolley buses"

Motion was moved, seconded and approved to adopt the letter as amended.

The Transportation Committee co-chair, Dick, noted that the body may want to resend the letter to Councilmember Phillips who is creating the Regional Task Force.

Stella Chao announced that Neighborhoods is now split between councilmembers. Sally Clark will continue with regulatory/land use issues. Mike O'Brien will head neighborhood planning. Richard Conlin will be in charge of P-patches and food policy. Food policy concerns transportation of food, gardening, food banks and ensuring food policy aligns with environmental concerns and equal access. Tim Burgess will oversee Youth Violence and Immigrant and Refugee work.

### **CNC 2010 Work Plan**

Chas pointed out that the draft is a work in progress and was to serve as a guideline for topics at future meetings. CNC members discussed inviting Mayor McGinn to speak to the body in the spring or early summer. He will be invited to the May, June, or July meeting. The Mayor will be speaking at the Budget Conference on Jan. 31. Another important topic on the work plan is the audit, which should be discussed prior to the time period that DON has to reply, which is May 31, 2010. Chas will meet with Veronica Sherman King to work on the audit response and workplan.

The group discussed whether the CNC should have a theme to the agenda. Ideas for the theme included: restoring the role of the CNC, which was the 2009 theme; and strengthening citizen involvement.

It was proposed that the body accept this as a working plan and the Executive Committee return to the Work Plan, with input from Veronica and Stella, and discuss themes, etc at the next meeting.

### **Round Table Discussion on 2010 goals and approaches**

Chas outlined four areas to potentially explore this year. First, the relevance of the CNC was discussed with an eye on the audit, which showed some issues with the implementation of the CNC and concern regarding the efficacy of the CNC.

Second, the audit raised a concern about the diversity of the district councils and CNC with some districts having more diversity than others. Chas wants to visit each district council twice this year in order to learn

more about the happenings of each council. Pete Spalding pointed out that the SW District is seeking to bring more diversity to its Council by engaging unrepresented regions of the district. The general sentiment was that the CNC and District Councils should strive to increase participation across the board.

Third, discussion was had about the relationship between the CNC and City Council and other governmental departments. The North District Council indicated it had more of a communication problem with the School District and Post Office, rather than City agencies. The SW District indicated that it felt that the City and departments are responsive to its requests and concerns once informed of them. The East District chair indicated that it struggles with SDOT not responding to its concerns.

Fourth, Chas informed the body that the Executive Committee would be reviewing the CNC enabling legislation with the hopes of adding consistency within the legislation. This can also help provide more authority to go with the CNC's responsibility.

DON has a new blog that will allow posting of items by the District Councils and the CNC. The new blog is called "front porch." Can also post items to a calendar on the website.

A discussion was had about DON's desire to have the CNC and District Councils increase participation in the Historic Properties and Districts Preservation Program. Stella Chao pointed out that most of the money for the historic preservation inventories was cut from DON in the budget. She wants to encourage people to use the Neighborhood Matching Fund to do historic inventories. Karen Gordon of Historic Preservation would like to begin attending District Council meetings beginning in February. Stella addressed the idea of adding a category for historic preservation to the NMF, but explained the difficulty in adding another category to the NMF to an already overloaded DON.

## **Committee Report**

**Budget/Chris Leman:** The Budget Committee meets on February 10 in Room 370 at City Hall. Budget Conference will be held on the main floor of the Seattle Center on January 31, 2010, from 12:00-5:00 p.m. The conference is a kick-off for the City's biennial budget process. There will be a total of six (6) breakout sessions at the conference, which will be in the third floor conference rooms. The Mayor will make his address at 12:30 p.m. Hope that there is a good turnout in order to shape the Mayor's priorities. Seattle Channel will be covering the conference. Members who attend the event were urged to take pictures.

## **Additional:**

The Ballard Council sent a letter to DON and the Auditor regarding the audit, stating that it was incomplete.

Department of Neighborhoods should be encouraging Gathering of Neighbors events, similar to those held in West Seattle, and sponsored by West Seattle and Delridge District Council.

Meeting adjourned.