

CNC February Meeting Minutes

February 28, 2011

District Council representatives in attendance: Chas Redmond, (Southwest District and CNC Chair); Jody Grage, (Ballard District); Dick Burkhart, (Southeast District and CNC Transportation Committee Co-chair); Dan Wasell, (North District); Nancy Bolin, (Northeast District); Philip Shack, (North District); Chris Leman, (Lake Union District and CNC Budget Committee Chair); Irene Wall, (Northwest District and CNC Neighborhood Planning Committee Chair); Laine Ross, (Downtown District and CNC Neighborhood Matching Fund Committee Chair); Ref Lindmark (CNC Transportation Committee Co-chair); Janis Maloney, (East District); Paul Stoms, (East District), Sharon Sobers, (Central District)

Others in Attendance: Maurice Clausen, City Council candidate; Ed Pottharst, DON

Guests: Christopher Williams, Eric Friedl, Parks and Recreation

The agenda and the January meeting minutes were approved.

Committee Reports:

Transportation Committee – Ref Lindmark, Dick Burkhart, Co-Chairs

Dick went to Olympia twice to testify on transportation issues related to funding cuts and finding ways to raise revenue for transit.

City is currently working on the Transit Master Plan update. A briefing book is available on-line, offering the most complete information about transit in Seattle. Specific corridors will be looked at to identify the best mode of transit for each.

CTAC III Advisory Committee is looking at how to spend the \$20 license fee imposed by Council in the fall and potentially putting another license fee or other tax on the ballot to fund transit projects. Concerns that the Family and Education Levy will be on the November ballot, lessening the chances for passage of an additional transit tax. The timeline will make it difficult to get everything to sync up.

Regional Task Force recommendations are being implemented by Metro. Moving away from “sub-area” terminology and moving toward data supported system. Service may be moving from East Side to West and South King County.

Q: The \$80 license tab, could you explain?

A. Taxing authority comes from state. City of Seattle created taxing authority (Transportation Benefit District) which resulted in a \$20 vehicle license fee without a public vote. Collection will start in May. City can also up to \$100 total, but this would need to be put up to public vote. Council asked the CTAC III to look at other funding opportunities as well. Still need to find source of funding for bike/pedestrian work. Bridging the Gap funding is mainly roads, bridges. Bridging the Gap passed at the same time Metro's "Transit Now".

Neighborhood Planning Committee – Irene Wall

Comp plan amendments public hearing March 7. There are some issues being raised around planned communities. Question around 7-year Comp Plan Update process. Cindy Barker has been keeping a chart of growth targets and how various neighborhoods have met and/or exceeded the targets. Would like to see the neighborhoods more involved in setting the targets. Current targets are largely set without any community input.

C. Could consider a CNC letter regarding moving growth targets, process, setting growth limit, etc.

Neighborhood Matching Fund Committee – Laine Ross

36 LOIs were received. This is similar to last year's 34. A variety of project types is represented. Patricia Lopez e-mailed out the information to District Coordinators and Chairs.

Budget Committee – Chris Leman

CNC has role in budget recommendations to the City Council and Mayor. It is important to send letters early in the process. Budget Committee will be meeting in April; would like to have a letter ready to adopt in May or June. Jean Godden attended February meeting. Reduction in parking fees will result in further cuts mid-year. Concern that budget has not yet been published, nor have the SLIs. Concern that some of the wording in the SLIs seems to have been changed from the original. Might want to ask for an extension of the deadline to July 1.

Youth and Education Committee – Chas Redmond

Committee has not yet met formally. Chas met and spoke with Sol Villareal of the Mayor's Office to see if Youth Commission could be engaged in the work of the Committee.

Superintendent Christopher Williams, Parks

Parks took a 13% cut in the last budget. The good news is that 26 community centers are still open and offering services, although some with shortened hours. Were able to retain 90% of staffing. Parks is ½ way through 53 projects and are transitioning the aquarium to a non-profit operation by the Aquarium Society. Parks acquired 24 acres of Capehart Housing at Discovery Park which will be used for natural area. City's first urban wildlife sanctuary has been created at Kiwanis Ravine (great blue heron rookery in Magnolia), and parks will manage this site.

Greatest challenges Parks continues to face: Continuing to deliver services to a variety of people with further budget cuts. Will need to look at possible partnerships and think out of the box. Parks employees are passionate about their work and the people they serve. Challenge to keep morale up. Have lost 20% of maintenance capacity. Parks will not be kept up as well, or as quickly as in the past.

Looking at how other cities partner with agencies to offer services and other models that may work for Seattle. Parks is responding to a City Council SLI about the role of community centers in Parks' core mission. People like the community centers and think they should be allowed to set individual open hours; not all be the same. People volunteering to help out at centers. Website now links to a portal for partners to join up with parks department. Urging the parks foundation to shift funding from bricks and mortar projects to day to day support.

Q. Twenty percent reduction in maintenance seems large

A. Cuts in staff affect amount of reduction in maintenance that can be done.

C. Was less community push-back around maintenance cuts, vs. programming, community center cuts

Q. Thanks for opening up closed wading pools! Can revenue generated by Parks be kept in Parks, rather than going into General Fund? What do other cities do? What about private/public partnerships? What is oversight component?

A. Most cities keep some portion of their revenues. Seattle only allowed one-year public/private partnerships. Need to work with Mayor and Council to reset parameters around how this can work. As partnerships are written and renewed, we are increasing our oversight of operations.

Q. Will need to have talks around what employees do and what volunteers can do. This is a union issue that will need to be clarified. Liability issues will also need to be addressed. Citizens will need to pitch in on maintenance and other work. Other departments need to look at this issue as well.

A. Belltown is taking on a large part of work in regard to its community center. This may provide a pilot project using citizen volunteers to do large part of work in running the center.

C. Can use arts group, etc. to offer programming. Is Parks Board taking part in this discussion?

A. Parks Board is a citizen's advisory committee that advises the department. They don't get involved in day to day operations. Mostly deal with land use issues, big policy issues.

C. Request that Christopher come back and report on naming rights and naming policies.

CNC 2011 Draft Work Plan, Chas Redmond, Chair

Chas distributed work plan with edits. Laine reported on the process for recruiting CRT members. Information has been sent out to District Councils on the process and procedures. March 11 is deadline for CRT reps to be appointed. NMF staff is reaching out to last year's members to see if they are interested in serving again. Large Project applications are due April 14. Districts receiving applications will also form District Council review panels. Next Tuesday at 6 p.m. is next NMF Committee meeting at Uptown Espresso.

Large Project Appeals Process: Efforts to clarify the criteria and steps involved in the process for applicants still under way. Various methods of vetting appeals were discussed in meetings with Matching Fund Staff and NMF stakeholders, including the possibility of convening an independent review team to assess appealed projects. The goal is to finalize steps at the next Matching Fund Committee meeting.

Chris Leman raised concerns over wording and omissions in the memo e-mailed to district councils earlier in the month.

Laine thanked Chris for his comments and reminded him that much work had gone into the memo and proposed appeals process updates.

Work Plan was adopted with two abstentions.

Chas asked CNC members to look at SLI and advocacy letters document and come back with comments to next meeting. Chas will also forward a document created by the Portland Department of Neighborhoods developed model used to measure community engagement.

Meeting adjourned.