

March 31, 2009

Question: Why do you live here?

- Available property
- Convenient access to work

Concerns

- Sidewalks – lack of – no place for kids to safely walk- not pedestrian friendly - South Meade street needs to be paved
- City did not seek input during first process
- Continuation of gentrification
- African Americans have been treated as second class
- Diversity levels need to return to previous numbers
- Affordability of housing/economics

Question: In what ways have your area changed?

- New young, affluent couples

Concerns continued –

- Density
- Rainier Ave – 18 wheels to skateboards – too busy
- Reduction of lanes to one each way
- Grants for minority businesses (need new)
- Metro facility on McClellan and Rainier
- Congestion (pedestrian and vehicle)
- Othello@MLK & Graham and Brandon will be renovated (?)
- Parking in the city is hard
- Housing congestion

Question: What kind of impact will Light Rail have on the community?

- Too far to walk to the Light Rail from home
- How easy is it for developers to get a permit?
- Sidewalks on 48th street
- Bus routes disappearing
- Emergency response time inadequate
- What trends and impact has light rail had on other cities?
- Security at transit center
- Safety concerns
- Shuttle people down to light rail because of the discontinuation of bus routes
- People parking where they don't live
- Future cost of transportation
- There will be a backlash – people will start driving again

Other Comments

- Is there going to be discounted rates for students, seniors, etc?
- What is the customer service system will be in place?

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Desired goods and services

- Sidewalks – condition or lack of
- 48th (hint, hint!)
- Lifts morale
- Skating ring
- Employment for residents that live in the area
- Community ownership in the development of the area.
- Extension of the core of Columbia City
- No taverns, no alcohol, no Microsoft unless they employ neighborhood folks.
- Trade schools, private
- Fabric store
- Fred Myer with bank
- Art supply store
- Old chubby and tubby site
- Cultural center (diverse, multicultural)
- Affordable programs at the community center
- Business that offer apprenticeship programs
- More family – based areas/centers
- Another Boys and Girls club
- Codes and standards for businesses/(provide grants to start businesses)
- Community swimming pool

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Question (North Beacon Hill, New Holly at MLK, North Rainier Beach participants): Why did you choose to live, start business or shop in your neighborhood?

- We live here because it is racially mixed
- Was affordable when moved to area (not anymore)
- Liked the area
- No more Condos are needed in the area. (shared by all participants)
- Keep housing affordable (but do not keep building in the south end because it is impacting density and services)
- North Beacon Hill is assessable to downtown, I-5, Lake Washington, South End.
- Enjoy green areas
- Appreciated remodel of Jefferson Park (One participant left the Jefferson park community planning group because she felt younger whites were taking over with their own agenda)
- New Holly area is not safe to walk around – do not frequent MLK businesses, Only goes to Safeway at MLK if run out of basic food stuff, Son has had problems on the playground near house, don't know neighbors because they are immigrants who do not speak English well and seem to be suspicious of AA. Would not let son walk down to MLK at Othello, concern about gang activity in New Holly.
- North Beacon Hill has gang activity (Pacific Islander and Spanish speaking)
- I refuses to let my daughter take the 36 bus because of on-going sexual harassment – feels bus is unsafe for young girls – purchased car for daughter.
- Bus and light rail security is a major concern
- No more bicycle lanes – they are disrespectful to drivers. Mostly white and not mindful of drivers/ white bicyclist think they own the road.
- Areas in the south end don't have sidewalks and kids are not safe walking around. Hinders exercise
- South end does not have a "Community Center" feel to it. What is that suppose to mean?/ places are different/ Community Center is a white thing to not address our safety concerns
- North Beacon Hill has a lot of family owned businesses

Neighborhood improvements:

- Dry cleaners (North Rainier, New Holly)
- Superstores – Ross, Larry's, Fred Myer, upgraded Safeway (most participants either shop at "Red Apple" on Beacon Ave or drive to QFC on Rainier) Better restaurants. Establish community standards on businesses (no trashy buildings, penciled signs)(Columbia City is a good model because it has more of a village feel)
- Dawson street area - east of Beacon Hill need more sidewalks with corners because of ongoing drainage problem, erosion issues and cars tend to park any and everywhere.

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- Seattle must invest in underground wiring because of earthquakes
- More P-Patches (patches tend to be all Asian and not open to other ethnic groups)(felt Asians monopolizes P-Patches)
- Communities need to be encouraged to have Block Watches
- Gangs and tagging are becoming more of a problem.
- No more churches and nail places
- Improved lighting and sidewalks walking from transit stations (ex, Columbian St)
- Movie House, Pharmacy and Cultural Center (North Beacon Hill and New Holly @ Othello)
- Car wash (North Beacon Hill and New Holly @ Rainier)
- Retail stores (good quality example, Ross)
- Stop causing overcrowding
- More Black owned businesses
- Just ask the question – “How do you want your neighborhood to improve?”

Neighborhood Concerns:

- Increase of gang activity
- No programs for youth (Beacon Hill Area)
- No strip malls
- Light rail has broken up streets
- Community input was not implemented/ those who participated were turned of
- Congestion with parking related to light rail – no park and ride areas – parking permits will not be helpful
- No safety around transit stations
- City bringing more people to the areas – causing more problems – why do we have to have all of the immigrants and low income people when North Seattle doesn't.
- No more bike paths – Bicycle Sunday happens at the lake I don't need it in my neighborhood. Bicycle issue is a white thing
- Where is the input we gave you before?
- Pedestrians include my African American sons. They need to be able to walk down the street without suspicion. They are not something to get rid of.
- We gave you input before and you ignored it.
- This script silences our voices/ questions are not relevant to our issues/just white people doing their thing
- Not culturally process/ not relational/ the way the city wants input/ should have started last year/needed to figure out how to make amends to the AA community.
- Lack of community consciousness in some areas
- Why are you making us stick to this script?
- Older people are dying off

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- Younger people with no historical connection moving into the area.
- There is no identifiable AA community in the South End
- East Africans are different from us/we do not share a cultural heritage/ should not be included in their group/ they are bringing gang violence into the community
- Ways should be figured out to promote more AA businesses in the South End.
- Less housing
- No more mixed housing
- Car thefts in spring and summer
- Gang activity (New Holly especially) Somali gangs are involved in break ins and drugs
- Is the south end a Mecca for East Africans and SE Asians?
- City is just pushing the AA community out like before
- Why are there so many East Africans in the South End? Another attempt to push us out from our community/ white people have done that already

Light Rail

- No one I know is planning on using it
- Not convenient until it goes downtown or to the airport.
- It will cause people to drive to the stations adding more cars to the neighborhood – what is the point?
- Would need car to get to the light rail
- Will not walk up Columbian, Dawson, Graham or Orcas to get home
- The cost will become too prohibitive
- Othello station is just another place you drive from where you live or a place you have to drive to.
- Disabled will have to drive to the station and park – so will not be using it.
- Evening safety a concern / would not walk to light rail station at night or early morning/ no elderly would use it because of safety/ no assessable for disabled
- Fought against the light rail because knew the city would take away buses, interrupt the flow of streets and we would have to pay for parking permits
- They just want to bring more people to live in the south end because they want more tax revenue.
- If though I know it is busy – I don't want it busier
- Employment opportunism near the transit stations must include AA youth

Needed Improvements

- Pharmacy
- Gang intervention/more options for young people/where do AA young people work in the South End?/ where do AA youth people actually work in Seattle?
- Understanding of the East African community and why they are involved in gang behavior

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- Trade schools/ IT training for kids/ racism keeps whites, Asians and East Africans from hiring AA youth.
- Microsoft should invest in the south end community not the East side
- A Fred Myer needs to be built at New Holly @MLK
- Park and rides need to be included in any revised neighborhood plan
- Safety is a major concern
- More break ins
- Not enough police or intervention strategies
- More sidewalks
- Evening safety is a concern
- No more apartments, condos and low income housing
- More work opportunities for AA youth
- Security assessment must be done for all three areas
- Retail store that has non-food items – such as clothing
- Figure out ways to get more public input – this is too late for us

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Meeting held at the Columbia Library

Question: How many of you are aware of the neighborhood plan?

- 3 out of 12 participants aware of plan

Question: What makes your neighborhood a place you have chosen to live, work and shop?

- Corner stores like Viet Wah, it is good to invest in neighborhood businesses
- When plans were being put together, the African American community was not aware of South and Southeast neighborhood plans – we didn't live here at the time
- Looking for an overview of neighborhood plans.
- Family has business in neighborhood – family is aging, not wanting to come out at night for meetings.
- Some people feel safer during the day – day format meetings are preferable
- Concern about gang activity – 45th and Webster
- No traffic zone – will that work? Only if properly watched.
- Concern about elderly
- Here at the meeting out of curiosity
- Lack of communication among neighbors
- Choose neighborhood because of a variety of people, well kept homes, but people aren't talking to each other.
- Gangs are an issue
- Churches – 24th and Jackson, ministry in Holly, times have changed, can't just knock on the door and assume an English speaker will answer. Diverse community – we need to minister differently.
- Wonder how churches can help to bring cohesiveness.
- Last 5 years, things have really changed, neighborhood has gone downhill.
- Many nationalities on block 5-6 families living in one house. Some discomfort with degree of diversity
- Keep up homes differently (or don't keep up homes)
- Cultural differences
- Pit bulls – concern about safety
- Whole front yard used for parking
- Feel like other neighbors want to push us out.
- Moved here, looking for where the colored folks live. We talk to our neighbors. House used to be a drug house. Neighbors got together turned vacant lot into a P-Patch
- Most diverse zip code in the world, certainly is us.
- Would not move.
- Upper part of Rainier beach. Fall 2007 saw a lot of gun activity, graffiti, tagged, houses, mobilized neighbors, created a joint block watch – neighborhood wide block watch.
- Worked with City to clean up park, occupy & program park. Group is 1 year old. Just this week, saw graffiti come back

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- Increase in guns and youth violence & activity in this area. Don't want to feel imprisoned in own house
- 1974 moved here because it is midpoint between Everett & Tacoma – the neighborhood is not as aesthetically pleasing as it used to be.
- Broken into 6 times, the last time when house was occupied. Told to have a dog and also not to live alone. Don't know as many neighbors.
- Brighton elementary – graffiti, tagged play area – if you keep the graffiti up, they will come back, and if you clean it up, it shows you will protect it.
- Property values – people can't afford to live in their own houses.
- New development without infrastructure is a concern
- More accidents, bike lanes not enough room.
- Police officer helping w/ traffic
- Accident @ Othello – traffic backup. No notification indicating detours or restricted circulation. In your own neighborhood, you don't know where you can drive, restricted access, shut off from alternative routes. Only sign is police car blocking lane.
- CONCERN AND FEAR WHAT IS GOING ON IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD.
- CONCERN ABOUT PAYING FOR PARKING PERMIT.
- BRIGHTON – 45TH AND HOLLY STREET SIGNAGE IS CONFUSING. Too many “only” signs (right return only, left turn only) can only go only for so long, restricted turning movements because of rail.
- Concern about how RPZs will work for employees, parents
- Only allow 3 cars on property – ticketed, parking enforcements not consistent.
- HB1490
- How about people who live 2 miles from light rail – no parking and no bus connections to rail.
- Metro bus routes numbers 8, 43, and 48 will change in response to light rail
- Consider alternative parking protections for residents, employees and businesses.
- Transportation must be provided to viable employment centers
- Power of neighborhood plan – tell City how you want to maintain quality of life.
- Awful lot of overhead wires – low – if wires fall in storm – dangerous.
- 38th and Orcas, Dearborn no crosswalks. – top of hill down – people drive fast, no sidewalks, no lighting, 2 signs for school zone – no speed bumps, no blinking lights for school.

Question: How many people plan to take l. rail?

- ½ the 1st day
- A lot of same questions and comments around planning for light rail. Some comments and issues – not a lot has changed. Concerns were not listened to
- Why people don't come to meetings anymore – a lot of talk, no change, why bother?
- Sound Alliance – collaboration within city brings churches, community together
- Done with Mayor Giuliani in New York City

Neighborhood Plan Update Workshop with Members of the African American Community

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- Frustrated at these meetings.
- African Americans were not part of the plans in the 1st place. We were on the outside looking in and we are now. We have not come together as a community. All we are doing is talking about someone else's plan. Stop being reactionary, be proactive – talk about 5/10 year plan for our community.
- Will this turn into an action team, if so, sign me up.

Question: What do you want out of this process?

- Response to gang violence and youth violence – preventable not punitive – address African American native born male population – Black Community Center
- ****Services, educational services, specifically oriented youth (Central District example of youth led – April 18 – slamfest – youth promoting self to community.
- Want current Mayor to leave – he is business friendly not neighborhood friendly.
- Law enforcement should live in the community
- Henderson (School) – status of corner – children hanging out block of Cloverdale across from school drug and gang presence.
- Putting a new station and system in but violence is still there, it has not gone away.
- Taking care of one side of neighborhood but not another.
- Gang violence – Rainier Community Center has an open gym 8-12 – late night open-Saturday nights – gang members are inside and just playing – only two places in neighborhood where that is an option
- African American Academy
- Campaign – raise the bar in our community
- You cannot make a decision if you are not at the table
- Community Councils
- What can be tweaked, what can't be tweaked?
- Clean up activities of teens on Rainier, Cloverdale and Henderson
- Ask them what will take to clean up their community
- Othello Park drug activity – unsafe, unsafe, unsafe
- Activities for youth that include youth in the planning
- Collaboration between schools and city so city can supplement activities for youth
- Need more activities that are not athletic, activities that lead to skill development.
- Less wires hanging everywhere