COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT COMMISSION (CIC)

October 18, 2021

6:00 – 7:45 pm

Zoom Meeting

**Commissioners present:** Carol Redfield (she/her), Martha Lucas (she/her), Jasmine Aryana (she/her), Bill Southern (he/him)

**Commissioners not in attendance:** N/A

**City of Seattle Staff present**: Laura Jenkins (DON, she/her), Angela Rae (DON, she/her)

***(Transcriber’s Note: The notes shown below are summaries of statements provided. They are not transcriptions and have been shortened and edited to include the major points raised. Full comments are retained in the files in voice recording and available upon request.***

# Public Comment

There were no public comments.

# Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The June 2021 Community Involvement Commission meeting minutes were approved by a quorum of commissioners.

# Check-in and Conversation about additional topics for future meetings

Carol Redfield checked in regarding homelessness, Covid-19 response, including vaccinations. People feeling that they weren’t heard.

* Is the CIC/CEC fulfilling the goal of the previous Mayor and Council with interacting and engagement?
* Two-way communication is not always heard.
* People feel that City Council representatives don’t always hear/act on the concerns of neighborhoods, homelessness for an example.
* Set up best practices but people feel that they are still not being heard and their concerns aren’t being addressed.
* Are we functioning as a committee to advise the Mayor and Council on how to engage with neighborhoods? Have to fend for yourself.
* Is public safety concerns SPD or SFD?
* Few town halls are advertised.

Martha Lucas checked in about the need for a space to communicate otherwise people are fending for themselves. Concern also for kids.

Bill Southern checked in regarding Trust is a factor, a real issue – City and counties don’t seem to get a handle on homelessness/crime especially the political and governing class. How to tackle this? People want face-to-face assistance rather than coming to the CIC. And it is always government asking for our help.

Angela Rae brought up Homelessness is a topic the group wants to discuss and drill down on to determine what the group is thinking.

* The Regional Homelessness Authority (RHA) is King County’s arm that will soon take over the vast majority of contracts attached to homeless shelters.
* There is also a member of DON who works on homelessness who we’d like to bring on to give guidance. We want to discuss how we may want to tailor this topic.

Works with City Light on the transportation electrification arm and they should make a presentation on the strategic investment plan, what they’ve done so far and in which communities. There’s a separate presentation on the electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and they’ve started in the environmental justice communities. A learning experience for us and them.

Laura Jenkins mentioned Covid-19 response and continued outreach, still relevant due to vaccinations, boosters, and age range expansion.

* Angela and I met with members of the Office of Planning and Community Development staff.

Some of that staff want to meet around the City’s Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) [not proposed by this group] want to meet with this group to get feedback about the outreach for the plan beginning in 2022, a two-year process. The Comp Plan is revised every six years. The Comp Plan informs what the City is planning on doing in relation to infrastructure investments, zoning, housing, and equity for the next few decades. Bringing this up as a possible topic.

# Presentation and Q&A with Kent Koth, Executive Director of the Sundborg Center for Community Engagement

Overview of the Center for Community Engagement at Seattle University

* Seattle University’s mission is to educate the whole person: mind, body, and spirit. Empower leaders for a just and humane world. When the heart is touched by direct experience, the mind may be challenged to change.

One of the major focuses is on Seattle Youth Initiative: Focusing on place-based change. Equal focus on campus and community.

* Geographic area is Chinatown International District, Yesler Terrace, and a portion of the Central District. Washington Middle School, Garfield High School, and Bailey Gatzert Elementary School are part of their geographic area.
* Families are connected to neighborhoods. Affordable housing and buying local from small businesses.
* Partnered with housing advocates to build affordable housing, combat gentrification in the Black and Asian communities.

Racial equity training is a requirement. Created a national network of universities working on the same issues.

Center started in 2004, the Youth engagement took until 2010.

* Students studying business working on strategic or marketing plans are embedded at different organizations to get connections with the communities.
* In the last seven years (particularly during COVID) doing organizing with families.
* Now have 8 family leaders who are part-time employees on the staff working with the school and community.

**Questions from commissioners:**

What ways can Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, Seattle University, and the Commissioners work together? Answer: University of Washington’s Othello Project is doing similar work and the two schools are sharing experiences. Is there a way to partner with NGOs and the City to expand this work?

What are the critical issues that need immediate attention, outside of homelessness, that connects Seattle University with the City? Answer: Fragmentation and disconnection can and should be addressed and when it is done well, there is magic.

Should we go back to the former way of Neighborhood District Councils? How to mobilize families that are working more than one job?

# Update from Commission Staff Liaisons

Staff Liaisons Rae and Jenkins:

* Recruitment
* Have moved 5 additional names to the Council for approval starting at the November 2021 meeting. The reconstituted Commission will also have a co-chair.
* May need better onboarding.
* Hope to have a Saturday retreat in early 2022 once the new Commissioners are appointed.

Last Thoughts from the Commissioners

* How do people know when and where the Commission is meeting?
  + On the DON website and event calendar. An email update is sent to the 1,000 people who signed up. Can we send the updates to the co-chairs and chairs of the Community Councils; issues arise when people are added without their permission.
  + Can we communicate with various communities and churches about CIC and how to connect?

Possible 2022 Retreat

* Early in the year

# Public Comment

Cindi Barker: Place based and topic-based discussions. DON has tools that sit on the website and don’t make it to the neighborhoods. Must recommend budgets to go with policy changes.

Steve Horvath: City needs to help citizens better communicate and connect with City government.

# Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.