

Northwest District Council Minutes – February 24th, 2010

Steve Deters called the meeting to order at 7:00 and called for introductions around the table.

Here's the list of attendees at the Feb 24th meeting: Steve Deters, Aurora Avenue Merchants Association, Dale Johnson, Broadview Community Council, Gloria Butts, Broadview Historical Society, Marcia Norma, Friends of Green Lake, Amy Duncan, Green Lake Community Council, Trevor Stanley, Greenwood Community Council, Marita Niemann, Haller Lake Community Club, Liz Kearns, Licton Springs Community Council, Lori Oliver, Phinney Neighborhood Association, Irene Wall, Phinney Ridge Community Council, Aubria Boynton, Tri-Court Resident Council, Dean Fournier, 46th District Democrats, Ronni Wolfe, Visioning Greenwood Park, Michael Stringer, Visioning Greenwood Park, John McSweeney, Greenwood resident, Patrick Meagher, Phinney Ridge Lutheran Church, Sally Clark, Seattle City Council

Marita Niemann presented the January 27 minutes and they were approved as written.

Steve next introduced projects for our council from the Draft Recommendations from the Leadership and Inclusion Project accepted at our January meeting. He said the first step was to determine who we are and what we do. Originally district councils were formed to support neighborhood residential and business interests and this is still the case.

We next discussed succession planning. Steve thought of this mainly as mentoring members to prepare them for leadership positions in our council. Lori Oliver thought of it as a way to insure the continuity and vision of our organization would continue in spite of new people in leadership posts. Irene Wall looked at it as a responsibility of our group to help each of our constituent organizations to be strong. One way to do that is we might work with Beth Pflug and our council to provide leadership training for interested people in all of our groups. The Department of Neighborhoods could provide the curriculum or we could do it ourselves.

The third project involved agenda planning for the year ahead of time. There are certain things we must do each year at the same time, Neighborhood Street Fund and Large Matching Fund, so we could place these on our calendar first and then fill in with items we want to promote and of course leave some room for problems as they come up. This preplanning would help in answering the many requests Beth and Steve get from people wanting to speak to our group.

The fourth project involves finding groups we wish to include in our council. The Delridge Council has a civic festival each year where representatives from the city and neighborhoods are available to promote what they do and model the value of being good citizens. Delridge blankets their district inviting everyone they can think of to

come and new groups often end up being identified from this process. We would need to have entertainment, food and good PR to make this happen. A new representative from Tri Court has agreed to work on identifying groups. John McSeeney, (Greenwood resident) offered to help and Gloria Butts has already started a list of groups in our area. Gloria found old minutes from 1988 where this same topic of trying to broaden our group to include everyone was discussed.

Sally Clark, from the Seattle City Council, was introduced next. She passed out copies of the SCC's 2010 Work Program for us all to look at. She said Committee chairs change every two years unless you want to keep the same position for another two years. Sally continues to be the Land Use/Built Environment chair, called COBE. Neighborhood Planning has been shifted to the Seattle Public Utilities and Neighborhood Committee (SPUNC). In 2010-2011 two neighborhood plans have been chosen to be updated and those are Rainier Beach and the Broadview/Haller Lake area. People learned from last year's three neighborhood plan updates. There is great dialog going on now about development buffering and multi-family code trying to avoid some of the earlier disastrous outcomes and revise some codes. There will be a series of work sessions on this topic. There will be a community meeting at Taproot on March 20 about townhomes from 10-12:30 in the morning. They are trying to get feedback from people about what they want. City can assign non-significance on State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) checklist. EIS is often designed to just wear people out. DPD is revamping Citywide Design Guidelines. Developers have to violate some rule before you can stop them. There is no way to just stop ugly! A question was asked about the Nite-Life advisory group that used to be available to come out and monitor noise questions at nite. This group has been disbanded due to lack of funds so only the police respond to noise problems and they don't do it too often since they are often busy with other things.

Irene Wall commented that some neighborhoods are short of the growth that was targeted 10-12 years ago in their neighborhood planning while some areas, like Ballard, have grown way more than was anticipated. There is no way to force developers to go to certain areas. Many were sad that the Ballard Bowling Alley was torn down and now there is just a large hole there as is the case in many places in Seattle. SEPA exists to be able to turn down development plans but rarely does that actually happen. Our Mayor is all for dense housing on the transit line.

Ronnie Wolfe, the Visioning Greenwood Park representative, spoke about the group's pending application for a Neighborhood Matching Large Fund Project to work on their new park located at 87th and Fremont.

Irene Wall of CNC is concerned about the new process for reviewing and ranking Neighborhood Matching funds and thinks it diminishes the role of the district councils, getting away from what was initially planned.

Beth Pflug, Department of Neighborhoods, explained that the new proposal is being made in light of staff cuts. There was a motion for our council to continue to vote in our district. There was discussion that perhaps we could disadvantage ourselves by not going along with the new proposal. There was a call for question and the motion was defeated. There was a call for volunteers to serve as the District Council Review Team for this year's Large Fund rating process. Dale Johnson, John McSweeney and Jerry Owens all agreed to serve. Also the district council voted to confirm Viki Sonntag as the Northwest District's representative to the Citywide Review Team. We will have the groups present to our council so we can advise our reps.

The Northwest District Council has the opportunity to determine a list of priorities of previously submitted street fund projects—nine projects from 2009 and one project from 2007 that was inadvertently left off of last year's roll-over list. Although two of the projects were also reviewed by the district council as part of the Bridging the Gap Large Fund process last October, SDOT has recommended that they remain on this list as well. If they do not end up being funded on the BTG list, it is a way of making sure they receive consideration. At the March 24 meeting of the Northwest District Council, members will be asked to prioritize the top five projects (top 3, plus 2) for SDOT's further review, with an option of reprioritizing at a later date after the detailed cost estimates are presented.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 by Steve Deters

Minutes respectfully submitted by Marita Niemann, Secretary