

Laurelhurst Community Club
Minutes
April 14, 2014

Attending: Robin Chalmers, Emily Dexter, Jeannie Hale, Kay Kelly, Linda Luiten, Colleen McAleer, Don Torrie

Excused: Brian McMullen, Liz Ogden, Stan Sorscher, Maggie Weissman, Leslie Wright

Guests: Sandra Counts

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. and was followed by introductions.

CALLS AND CONCERNS

1. New development by St. Stephens: Beginning on March 21, LCC received several emails from neighbors about a proposed development at 4720 NE 45th Street. The land use application is to subdivide one parcel into two parcels of land. Proposed parcel sizes are 5,025 sq. ft. and 5,025 sq. ft. The existing structures would be demolished. LCC wrote to DPD requesting a 14-day extension for neighbors to comment which was granted. From review of the permits, it looks as if there were three lots and the developer/owner did a boundary adjustment to ensure that the two lots under the current permit would be 5,000 sq ft lots.
2. Dirty and worn out signs: On March 22, Karmann Kaplan emailed about the stop sign at the intersection of NE 41st and 42nd Avenue NE. The sign no longer has its reflective ability. She pointed out that drivers at night can barely see it and that it is especially bad for those who aren't aware that there is a stop there at the bottom of "Suicide Hill" and during rainy periods. She emailed the following day to say that some of our local firefighters said it would be very helpful if someone, with a pickup truck, could have maybe some big kids stand in the back and wash some of the neighborhood street signs that are just plain dirty. She took a long handled brush and a bucket of soapy water and cleaned off one by her house and it really did help.
3. Talaris: On March 30, a neighbor emailed to ask about the geographical stability of the Battelle/Talaris site. She noted that King County has posted a liquefaction map on its website.
4. Solicitor season: On April 1, Jean Amick emailed to remind neighbors and LCC that it's solicitor season and that people should not open their doors for safety reasons.
5. Speed cushions on Surber: On April 1, a neighbor on Surber emailed about the speed cushions on Surber. She was one of the neighbors that assisted in getting the petitions signed for the project to qualify for funding. She thought that large SUVs are able to avoid the cushions due to the wide wheel base and pointed out that there is still a lot of speeding on that stretch of roadway.

LCC responded noting that speeding along Surber continues to be a problem despite the speed cushions that were installed in 2011. Prior to that time, neighbors

along this stretch raised concerns over and over again for years. Finally, the corridor between NE 41st and 42nd Avenue NE was placed on SDOT's priority list and funds became available to install three sets of three inch asphalt speed cushions. Neighbors along the corridor overwhelmingly supported the speed cushions. LCC followed up with SDOT to see if there are other options to further reduce speeds.

Chalmers drove over to check things out and had to pull to one side as a large, dark blue, SUV came ripping along the other way doing at least 30 mph. The speed cushions had no effect on him at all. He thinks that the SPD are the only ones to stop these folks.

6. Tree removal: Kelly reported that four flowering plum trees were removed near her home, leaving big circles of dirt. There are concerns about habitat loss and the vanishing bee supply. She will follow up.
7. Save Union Bay: McAleer reported the SUBA is working with the state Department of Ecology on a grant to eradicate the milfoil on the lake. She will continue to keep LCC informed.

ADMINISTRATION

Announcements:

1. Public Hearing on Side Yard/Backyard Houses on Undersized Lots in SF Zone: The public hearing on DPD's proposal is on Friday, April 18 at 2:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers.
2. FlorAbundance Spring Plant Sale: This huge plant sale is on Saturday, April 26, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday, April 27, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. It will be in Building 30 at Magnuson Park.
3. Easter Egg Roll: The annual Laurelhurst Easter Egg Roll is on Saturday, April 19, at Laurelhurst Park at 10:00 a.m. Torrie, Kelly and Hale have volunteered to help.

Minutes: Approval of the March minutes was postponed until the May meeting.

Treasurer's Report: The board reviewed the monthly treasurer's report included in the agenda packet. Dexter briefed the board on the new format using Quick Books.

REPORTS/ACTION

Crime Prevention: Luiten reported on the recent North Precinct Advisory Council meeting and provided North Precinct crime statistics. Assaults are down 25% year to date. Domestic violence and car prowls are down double digits. Burglary is down 5% year to date. Residential burglary is down 11% year to date. Robbery is down 34% year to date. Auto theft is UP 33% year to date.

There are 260,000 people in the North Precinct with 43 miles to patrol. The North Precinct is going to focus on cleaning up the U-District. The problem will be to sustain it.

With regard to dealing with SPD officers, Dexter said, "Praise is better than a raise." The police recruit salary is \$4,520.52 per month. The Step 1 Entry Level salary for SPD Officers is \$69,240.00 per year.

SR 520 Update: McAleer reported that WSDOT is continuing to build a segment of the SR520 Replacement Bridge called the WABN (west Approach Bridge North). It will funnel six lanes of traffic into the existing four lanes outside of Madison Park and Laurelhurst as the funding is \$1.0 billion short at the State level to complete the project through to I-5. The adjacent neighborhood coalitions have strongly opposed this "partial bridge" segment because it will cause bottlenecks in the middle of Union Bay, adjacent to residential neighborhoods and the Arboretum.

The Coalition has re-evolved to "Respect Seattle" and represents five neighborhoods directly impacted by the bridge re-build. The concerns for the WABN include traffic gridlock that an exit of vehicles south and north of the Montlake Cut (now two exits), and sharing only one ramp with an added stoplight. Travel times will increase for residents of northeast Seattle to wade through the shared off-ramps.

McAleer and the Respect Seattle Coalition met with Councilmember Jean Godden, and Council Transportation Chair, Tom Rasmussen, to inform the potential problems of WSDOT building only one segment of the 520 Highway which does not complete the state mandate to take it through to I-5. There is a real concern that WSDOT will never build it out which also leaves the Portage Bay Bridge vulnerable to damage by earthquakes (its columns are hollow).

McAleer reported that the Respect Seattle Coalition had a large city-wide meeting with WSDOT at the Queen City Yacht Club on April 10. WSDOT promised to remedy the eastbound backup that has been created since tolling (the downtown to Montlake exit). They proposed an extra off-ramp, but citizens questioned if that solved the problem of too much congestion in that small intersection.

The Ecosystem of Union Bay was a big concern in that WSDOT building only the WABN will result in three times the construction process needed to cross Union Bay through to I-5. WSDOT planned to do permanent mitigation at Magnsuon Park and in Issaquah for remediation.

MOTION by McAleer, seconded by Torrie, that LCC contribute \$300 to the website start up of Respect Seattle. *Motion passed unanimously.* The treasurer will send a check to Pete Delaunay, the webmaster as a 1/5th share of the coalition's website. McAleer will report on the April 14th meeting with the Mayor's Senior Staff on Transportation at the next Trustee Meeting.

Mayor's Neighborhood Summit: McAleer and Hale attended the mayor's summit on Saturday, April 5 at the Seattle Center. According to Mayor Murray, the Summit is supposed to be the first step in an ongoing conversation with Seattle's neighborhoods. He adds that it is an opportunity to improve how the city works with neighborhood and community leaders on issues from planning to the prioritization of city investments. Only one councilmember (Tom Rasmussen) attended. 46th District State

Representative Gerry Pollet was there. Hale and McAleer had an opportunity to speak with the mayor and state rep.

Burke-Gilman Multimodal Connector Project: The Burke-Gilman Trail Multi-Modal Connector will replace the critical yet aging cornerstone of the regional trails network with a modern, world-class connection. The new section will not only meet existing needs, but will provide enough capacity for bicyclists and pedestrians to enjoy the trail safely well into our future. The UW has applied for a \$7.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation TIGER grant program. They are seeking letters of support from community groups. Since 2010, bicycle traffic on the portion of the trail that would receive funds has increased 238 percent and pedestrian traffic has increased 92 percent. NEDC's letter of support is included in the agenda packets. MOTION by McAleer, seconded by Kelly, to support the UW Burke-Gilman Trail multi-modal connector project. *Motion passed unanimously.* It was agreed that LCC's letter of support would recommend that the project include improvement of the Trail (less than a mile) that continues onto nearby University Village.

Metropolitan Park District: Informational materials about the proposed metropolitan park district are included in the agenda packets. If enacted by the voters, the ballot measure would create a new taxing jurisdiction, with the same boundaries as the City, and create a governing board that could levy up to 75 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value. The city council would then enter into a contract called an interlocal agreement with itself that would outline how the new district would operate. Voters would have no say in whether the district should later be dissolved. The board would have to make that decision. May 5 is the deadline for the City Council to take action to have the measure to create a Metropolitan Park District on the August 5, 2014 ballot. A group called *Our Parks Forever* has formed to oppose the ballot measure and support a parks levy. The 46th District Democrats and the NEDC oppose the metropolitan park district and instead support a parks levy. When the idea of a metropolitan park district surfaced years ago, LCC came out in opposition due in large part to the lack of accountability. MOTION by Torrie, seconded by Kelly, to reaffirm LCC's position supporting continued parks levies and opposing the proposed new taxing entity, the Metropolitan Park District. *Motion passed unanimously.*

Traffic/Pedestrian Safety Update: Chalmers updated the board on traffic calming and signage issues. SDOT conducted a seven-day speed study on the NE 41st corridor. The study notes that there are a handful of people that exceed the speed limit significantly. The most common speed measurement that SDOT uses when assessing drivers' compliance with the speed limit is the 85th percentile speed. The 85th percentile speed is the speed at which 85% of the motorists travel at or below. From the data collected through the speed study that was conducted, the 85th percentile speeds are 30.5 mph for eastbound traffic and 31.2 mph for westbound traffic. These speeds are within the typical range of what SDOT expects to see on a 30 mph arterial street. The study concluded that there are no traffic calming devices available that will significantly reduce speeds on your street. They suggested that tools such as education and enforcement are better suited to address those motorists that are exceeding the speed limit. .

On April 2, Chalmers submitted two requests to the SDOT on roadway issues. Both were accepted and given tracking numbers. The first one was for the downed speed bump sign located at 49th Avenue NE and NE 45th Street. The second was for damaged curb stones at the top of "Suicide Hill" (the south/west corner of NE 41st Street and 43rd Avenue NE). Earlier, he submitted two other requests on signage issues: NE 47th and 47th Ave NE and the Stop sign at the bottom of "Suicide Hill." Both requests were accepted and given racking numbers. A third request for overgrown vegetation on the north side of "Suicide Hill" was rejected with the response: "Service not provided at this location." Chalmers will follow up on this.

Chalmers reported that about 90 percent of the Laurelhurst street signs are faded and in need of replacement. Sign washing may not be an option. He is monitoring efforts to work with the home owner at the corner of 43rd Avenue NE and NE 41st Street on the overgrowth and sidewalk safety issues. The trees, planted at least 25 years ago, obscure visibility of drivers. The roots have damaged the adjacent sidewalk.

Talaris Update: Public Records Act documents recently extracted by LCC from the City reveal significant information was withheld from the public during the February Talaris public comment and public meeting process. They show that Talaris counsel has floated with the City Code changes to facilitate development of nonconforming uses and nonconforming structures on the Talaris site. For example, development of a new intensive Talaris hotel and office complex would benefit from such a Code change. LCC has asked the City to make full disclosure of what is being considered and to re-open the public comment period on the Talaris application and environmental impact statement, which are in process. DPD director Diane Sugimura has declined LCC's invitation to meet to discuss this and other Talaris issues.

Waterway No. 1 Basketball Court: The expenses associated with replacement of the basketball court at Waterway No. 1 have exceeded the funds collected. One of the project co-chairs has offered to pay the needed \$2600 and/or to split it with another person. Trustees were very complimentary about the new court and the opportunity provided for healthy activities for neighborhood kids. There was some discussion about a loan, rather than payment of the overage. MOTION by Torrie, seconded by McAleer, to contribute \$2600 to the Foundation to pay the overage. *Motion passed unanimously.*

MEETING ADJOURNED: 8:50 p.m.