

Minutes

LCC Meeting of February 9, 2015
Laurelhurst Community Center

Attending: Robin Chalmers, Jeannie Hale, Kay Kelly, Linda Luiten, Colleen McAleer, Brian McMullen, Liz Ogden, Stan Sorscher, Don Torrie, Maggie Weissman, Leslie Wright

Excused: Emily Dexter

Guests: Nathan Rimmer, Pistol Creek; Susan Jones, architect, Atelier Jones; Christi Nagle, Cary Lassen, Connie Sidles, Peter Eglick, Lane and Pam Mockett, Emily Bingham, Christine Bagley, Eric Weis, Kevin Ginever, Joe Wisi, Drew Laxton, Steve Camp, Story Swett, Diana Doran, Anne Adams, Ray Dasnett, Ardis Dumet, Melissa Minas, Jean Amick, Ed Sheets, Barb Ragee, Deanna Dukes, Brent and Cindy Christie (many others did not sign in)

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. and was followed by introductions.

Talaris Concept for Redevelopment of the Battelle/Talaris Property: Nathan Rimmer started out by saying that McCaw wants to develop the Battelle/Talaris property in a sensitive manner. They initially contacted Bill Bain, one of the original architects at NBBJ. He introduced them to Susan Jones who worked with NBBJ at the time of the original development. He said that Jones has a good eye for historic preservation.

Jones proceeded to walk meeting attendees through the development team's thinking. She has worked with Rimmer for eight years and has known the site for 20 years. She worked with Bill Bain for four years at the time the Mind, Brain and Body Institute was under consideration. She has been practicing architecture for 12 years. The property had already been landmarked when she came on board.

The plan under consideration is a Planned Residential Development (PRD) with 72 new residential units including single-family homes and town homes. Nathan pointed out that LCC had originally suggested a PRD approach. Rimmer said that a rezone would not be required. It would be a council conditional use.

Jones described the site, its surroundings and the harmonious setting with the assistance of a Power Point presentation. Building G and the lodge would be removed. The single-family homes would be along the perimeter of the site with a 100 foot setback. Attached townhouses would make up the bulk of the new homes and would be located in the site's interior area. The goal would be to enhance and preserve the natural features of the site. The intended use for remaining buildings on the site is unclear. Office space and amenities for residents are anticipated.

The developers would like 20 foot road lanes and hope that SDOT would agree with this approach. Nathan said that the roads are private—not owned by the City, which raises the question of whether it would be a gated community.

There would be a narrow gravel road for the eastside homes. Those homes would be three stories with the garage and shop on the lower level, a living area on the second floor and bedrooms on the third floor. There would be a backyard, possibly ten feet—something that is governed by Code. Elevators would be built into each townhome to address the needs of the elderly. In some of the townhomes, the garage would be on the middle floor.

Rimmer said there would be walking pathways throughout the site. It is unclear whether neighbors would be welcome on the site. One neighbor pointed out her work on the Bicycle Master Plan and the idea of a bike path on each side of the site on the property owned by SDOT.

There is no plan for the northwest corner back entrance.

The pond would be retained. A homeowners agreement would incorporate maintenance fees for the property. Community access to the site has not been determined. The dining hall could be used by residents and rented out to private parties and commercial entities.

There were questions about what kinds of commercial uses would be allowed and the possible impact on traffic. Rimmer stated that his group is talking to DPD about nonconforming uses. He added that he is interested in amending the Settlement Agreement to address the many issues. He said this proposal is being tested for economic feasibility.

Update on Proposal to add up to Four New Portables at Laurelhurst School: Christi Nagle briefed the board and meeting attendees. Seattle Public Schools (SPS) has requested an exception to the land use code to allow up to four more portables at Laurelhurst School. SPS has not adequately planned for increase in attendance in northeast Seattle schools. SPS placed one portable on the playground last summer to alleviate crowding. That portable was removed after it was learned that Laurelhurst already exceeded the lot coverage restriction. Now, SPS would like to add up to four more portables, in addition to the existing six portables. An advisory committee is being formed to assist in the decision making.

Nagle pointed out the prominent aesthetic degradation that would result from additional portables on the playground. There would be no visual buffer from high traffic streets to structures that do not fit the character of the neighborhood. There would be a loss of open space. There would also be economic impacts and practical problems with the addition of more portables.

The parent and neighbor group would like LCC to allocate and provide legal counsel to assist in reviewing already collected land use data, collect additional data if needed and provide advice. MOTION by McAleer, seconded by Ogden, to authorized Peter Eglick to provide up to three hours of assistance with the understanding that LCC trustees will participate in the meetings. *Motion passed unanimously.*

SR 520 and Protection of Shorebirds in the Union Bay Natural Area: Connie Sidles briefed the board on this issue. Last year, the Seattle Audubon Society Conservation Committee learned of a unique opportunity to address shorebird declines at the Union

Bay Natural Area (UBNA) adjacent to the University of Washington campus. The UBNA is one of several sites being utilized by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to offset wetland impacts of the new State Route 520 Bridge. Unfortunately, WSDOT's mitigation plan for UBNA will likely accelerate the catastrophic decline of shorebirds there. Seattle Audubon is fighting to persuade regulators to modify the current wetland mitigation plan to help shorebirds by removing woody plants from two areas with aquatic shoreline. They believe this simple measure would restore a great deal of UBNA's former use as an important shorebird migration stopover site and have started a petition encouraging others to support their efforts.

Shorebirds are sandpipers that migrate from Central and South America all the way up to the tundra in Alaska and Canada. Every spring and fall, they pass through Washington. Notably, they come to Montlake Fill to thrill us with their beauty, their hardiness, they *tininess*! Imagine flapping your arms day after day, hour after hour, for thousands of miles to get to Alaska on your own power! That's what shorebirds do.

Unfortunately, Montlake Fill has suffered a *catastrophic* decline in shorebird migration. We went from some 1500 birds in the 1990s to a mere 42 individuals last year. That is because woody vegetation has grown all around the mudflats and ponds of the Fill. Shorebirds need open space so they can see their predators coming from far off. They don't like habitat that has dense cover, where raptors can lurk. Because willows and bushes have invaded the main ponds of the Fill and now nearly blanket the best mud, shorebirds have quit coming.

Sidles pointed out that we have a *unique*, once-in-a-lifetime chance to restore shorebirds to Montlake Fill. WSDOT is planning to give the UW \$2 million to mitigate for the 520 bridge. Tragically, though, the mitigation plan they've come up with calls for *more* woody vegetation at the Fill. Not only that, the plan calls for so-called "buffer plants" to be planted around all the ponds, making it impossible for students and community members to access them to view any birds at all. These plans will effectively end shorebird migration here. A migration pattern that has existed since the end of the last Ice Age will be no more, at least as far as we will be able to observe in Seattle.

Sidles has been working with Seattle Audubon trying to persuade WSDOT and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (who have jurisdiction here) to alter their plans and *remove* woody vegetation from around the two biggest ponds of the Fill. The conservation scientists at Seattle Audubon believe this will restore a significant population of migrating shorebirds to the Fill.

WSDOT and the US Army Corps of Engineers refuse to listen. Instead they insist on following a generic mitigation plan that does not take into account the fact that the Fill is a teaching site, where usable shorebird habitat can be accessed by both birds and people. Their plan doesn't even take into account the fact that our wetlands in the NW differ in nature from those of the eastern U.S., where these plans were concocted. Indeed, we will end up with woody deciduous wetlands that, according to Professor Dennis Paulson of the Slater Museum (a world expert), will provide habitat for very few birds at all.

Sidles and Seattle Audubon are asking everyone who cares about shorebirds and the Fill to sign a petition asking WSDOT and the USACE to revise their plans for the Fill and

remove woody vegetation from two ponds. This is a simple, easy, low-cost way to restore an important ecological niche to the Fill and to Seattle as a whole. They are also asking that people send emails or letters to WSDOT, USACE and the UW, letting them know this is an important issue for us.

MOTION by McAleer, seconded by Kelly, to support efforts by Connie Sidles and Seattle Audubon to address mitigation in the SR 520 project to protect shorebirds. *Motion passed unanimously.* LCC will write to WSDOT about the issue, publicize the Audubon petition on the issue and encourage the Blog to publish information.

ADMINISTRATION

Calls and Concerns from Neighbors:

1. Proposed new portables at Laurelhurst School: LCC received several emails and phone calls about the proposal to add up to four new portables at the school. The school district is seeking a departure from the land use code that would increase lot coverage from 35% to 45% and would eliminate playground space. LCC has been in touch with Steve Sheppard from the Department of Neighborhoods about formation of the portables advisory committee and meeting dates.
2. Talaris redevelopment: LCC has heard from several neighbors with questions about redevelopment of the Battelle/Talaris property. On January 14, LCC representatives met with Nathan Rimmer of Pistol Creek and Talaris architects for a preview of options under consideration. On January 21, Talaris unveiled its preferred concept plan to the Landmarks Board. LCC and others attended the briefing. Friends of Battelle/Talaris submitted written comments and spoke at the meeting. Hale and McAleer also spoke on behalf of LCC at the meeting.
3. Traffic light at the bottom of NE 45th: On February 2, LCC received an inquiry about the traffic light at this location as it is only long enough to let one car through. Chalmers checked it out and found that the green light lasted no longer than ten seconds allowing one or two at most to get through. Chalmers will follow up with SDOT which has been responsive in the past.
4. Traffic calming on 51st Avenue NE: Bill Leedom has been in touch with LCC several times since the end of January about submitting a Neighborhood Street Fund grant application to address speeding cars exiting out the back entrance/exit from Villa Academy. Leedom has reached out to Villa's headmaster. Since September, neighbors on 51st Avenue NE have had an ongoing dialogue with John Milroy, Villa's headmaster and have provided him with traffic data about vehicle trips on the street. Milroy agreed to more closely monitor traffic leaving the campus and put up signage warning neighbors to slow down as they leave the campus. He and neighbors are suggesting installation of speed humps on that stretch of road. LCC suggested asking Villa to post a sign inside their property by the south exit that reminds parents to drive slowly down the street after leaving school groups. LCC provided suggestions for the street fund application. Villa has agreed to support the street fund application for traffic calming measures.
5. Traffic rules by Laurelhurst School: On January 27, LCC heard from a neighbor about school rules that mandate that nearby neighbors follow the rules such as when 46th is one way after school and rules restricting parking. There have been

complaints that school officials have been rude to neighbors not following the rules. SDOT has indicated that school traffic circulation plans are guidelines for school-related traffic. They do not override city rules and have no legal standing. SDOT added that the school cannot require neighbors to drive one way down a two way street.

6. Shoreline street end project on NE 51st: On February 4, a neighbor inquired about the project on NE 51st next to the Beach Club. The neighbor thought it would be easier for kids to into the water and hop on the Beach Club dock. Ogden responded with details and history of the site.

Minutes: The board reviewed the minutes of the November 2014 and January 2015 minutes. MOTION by McAleer, seconded by Ogden, to approve the January 12, 2015 minutes. *Motion passed with all voting yes and three abstentions (Luiten, Wright and Torrie)*. MOTION by Ogden, seconded by McAleer to approve the November 10, 2014 minutes. *Motion passed with all voting yes and one abstention (Sorscher)*.

Treasurer's Report: The board reviewed the January financial report. It is time again to consider sponsorship of a Little League team. MOTION by Kelly, seconded by McMullen, to authorize sponsorship of a Little League team for \$250 and to designate Torrie to select the division LCC wishes to sponsor. *Motion passed unanimously*. LCC's treasurer will be traveling for the next six weeks and she suggested LCC pre-approve legal expenses for our attorney. MOTION by McAleer, seconded by McMullen to pre-approve \$5,000 for Peter Eglick. *Motion passed unanimously*.

Announcements:

1. Notice on Small Lot Development: On January 13, LCC commented on House Bill 1084, introduced by Representative Gerry Pollet and others. This bill would require notice to adjacent property owners of small single-family lot development. Without a change in law, neighborhoods have 21 days to challenge a land use decision—but they have *no* notice of the decision.
2. City Light Upgrades: LCC, in cooperation with City Light, sent out a Constant Contact alert to neighbors in the Webster Point vicinity about utility upgrades in the area. Thank you, Leslie, for your work on this.
3. Special Thanks: Special thanks to Colleen McAleer for putting together excellent notes for the minutes on SR520 issues for the November and January minutes. LCC and the community appreciate McAleer's great work in following these complex issues and keeping neighbors informed.
4. Thank you to Kay Kelly: Thanks to Kelly for drafting a very thoughtful thank you letter to Foundation contributors. The thank you letters were out in time to meet the January 31 IRS deadline.

REPORTS/ACTION

Shoreline Street End Update: Ogden attended the quarterly meeting of Friends of Shoreline Street Ends. There is a new SDOT director and Jennifer Weiland is the staffer the group is now working with. SDOT approved nine capital projects for

shoreline street ends. The Laurelhurst project by the Beach Club was rated number 1 and allocated \$35,000.

SDOT hired two fulltime urban forestry staff as there is now a renewed interest in shoreline street ends. An artist (Sam Trout) will design the bike racks at the street end by the Beach Club. There will be gravel filled steps to reach the water. The project will not address the rusty pipe on the left side at this time due to permitting issues. SDOT will contact SPU about this.

The project involves removal of half of the massive laurel hedge and removal of two parking spaces to allow access to the water. Visual and physical access are priorities. SDOT has been in touch with the Beach Club about the project.

Traffic Safety: Chalmers reported on the main points from the SDOT study speed data as follows: The data was taken over a one week period starting Thursday January 8, 2015 and ending Friday, January 16, 2015 at a point on NE 41st Street. The traffic was monitored traveling both east and west.

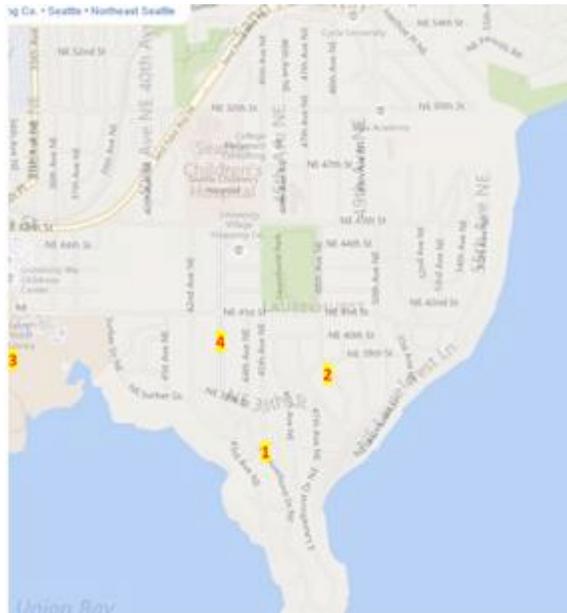
The data showed that about 50 drivers exceed the speed limit by more than 5 mph per day. The maximum speed tracked was 70 mph, followed by a large number in the 35-40 mph and 40 to 45 mph range. The biggest percentage of speeders are those heading westbound. The location of the tracking device cables were across NE 41st Street and about 60 yards east of 43rd Avenue NE.

The number of vehicles counted was 8,801 eastbound and 9,543 westbound.

Crime Prevention: McMullen reported that Laurelhurst had two burglaries during the month on the same day, January 19, and a car prowl on January 8 as noted in the crime report below:

January Crime Report, Monday, February 9, 2015, 4:11 PM

| | Date | Description | Case # |
|---|----------------------|--|-------------|
| 1 | 1/19/2015 10pm AM | Burglary - 40XX BLOCK OF 45 AV NE, SEATTLE, WA | 15000021136 |
| 2 | 1/19/2015 17:51 | Burglary - 48XX BLOCK OF NE 43 ST, SEATTLE, WA | 15000020780 |
| 3 | 1/14/2015 19:34 | Theft - 32XX BLOCK OF NE 45 ST, SEATTLE, WA | 15000015332 |
| 4 | 01/08/2015 07:47 PM. | Car Prowl- 38XX BLOCK OF 43 AV NE, SEATTLE, WA | 15000008149 |



Linda Luiten reported on the crime stats for the month from Lt Arata, North Precinct. There has been a big robbery problem, especially cell phone robberies. Car prowls are way down. There were 105 car thefts between December 28 and January 24. Burglaries were also a big problem with 193 burglaries between these two dates.

The speakers for month of January at NPAC meeting were Captain Dick Reed and Supervisor Robert Montague from the SPD 911 Communication Center.

There are 118 people assigned to department's 5 watches, mostly civilian employees. In 2014, the average number of calls/day was at 2339. This is the largest call center in King County. It takes an operator 90 seconds to determine how to route a call. Some go to non-emergency operators and some to the Fire Department. Vice calls are prioritized. Examples of this: (1) violent crimes in progress, (2) property crimes in progress, (3) non-emergency events, (4) noise or parking complaints. If you are transferred by the operator you could be on hold for an average of seven minutes. Calling 911 is not the same as making a report. The operator will ask if you want to file a report. If you do say, "yes." This can be done on-line, by phone or in person with an officer. You can also remain anonymous. Calls work best if the caller lets the operator take control. Let the operator ask questions. If you don't know the answer that's okay, just say, "I don't know." Texting a report is being addressed and should be live in six months or so.

Sgt Newsome reported that she gave 500 pair of socks to Roots and 500 pair of socks to YouthCare this year.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 9:07 p.m.