

Minutes, LCC Trustees' meeting
1/12/2015
Laurelhurst Community Center

Attending: Robin Chalmers, Emily Dexter, Jeannie Hale, Kay Kelly, Colleen McAleer, Brian McMullen, Liz Ogden, Stan Sorscher

Excused: Linda Luiten, Don Torrie, Maggie Weissman, Leslie Wright

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. and was followed by introductions.

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. McAleer and Hale met with two representatives from Parents for Planning and Playground Group and a neighbor on Tuesday, December 16. Representatives from the Parents group spoke at LCC's December 8 community meeting.
2. Stolen packages: On December 5, LCC was alerted that USPS packages have been stolen off porches in the vicinity of the 5200 block of NE 43rd. UPS drivers are aware of the problem in ring the door bell when dropping off packages.
3. Work without a permit: On December 8, a neighbor from the Town of Yesler contacted LCC about the three-story rooming house located at 4316 36th Avenue NE and the small rental at 4312 36th Avenue NE. Neighbors believe that the small rental will be a tear down and transformed into yet another rooming house as it is owned by the same person as the house on the corner. At a meeting of neighbors, it was noted that the property owner was building some kind of pool or water feature with no permit. A DPD inspector visited the property after a complaint was filed and advised the person who answered the door to cease and desist excavation. Despite the order, work continued. Neighbors have had other issues with the property owner.
4. Pedestrian and traffic safety: On December 9, LCC heard from a neighbor and followed up on concerns about speed on 51st Avenue as it exits Villa Academy to the South (51st Ave. and 45th Street). The neighbor had previously contacted LCC about the problem in 2012 and Ogden responded at that time. Now, Chalmers is looking into the issue.
5. Sock drive: On December 11, a representative from the school district contacted LCC to see if the sock drive was sponsored by the Foundation, a 501(c)(3), or LCC, a 501(c)(4). LCC responded and the board will recommend to the Foundation that it take on this project next year.
6. Private security project: On December 19, a neighbor who attended the December 8 community meeting wrote to the board about the private security project. The

neighbor's letter was distributed at the meeting. The neighbor recommended more visible presence of the off-duty officers. He suggested more communication with neighbors about what the officers do. He thought LCC should look into hiring a uniformed private security company. McMullen responded. The December newsletter included highlights of security patrols and this will likely continue. McMullen indicated that LCC did consider private security companies but decided to go with off-duty police officers, modeling our program after Windermere's successful program. In mid-December, KIRO news interviewed McMullen about the project.

7. Car prowls: On the nights of December 29-30, the car of a guest parked in the driveway had her car prowled. Several valuable items were taken, including two Lenovo laptops, Swarovski binoculars, green cordura overnight bag with tan straps, a brown leather brief case, two computer hard drives and a photo card. The total value of all these items is over \$4,000. There was no sign of forced entry. This occurred on 45th Avenue NE just south of intersection with NE 41st Street. A police report was filed.
8. Crime watch signs: On January 3, a neighbor emailed inquiring how to get crime watch signs like the kind mounted on power poles and whether a permit is required to install a sign. The neighbor also asked about SNAP (Seattle Neighborhoods Actively Prepare) signage. LCC provided information.
9. Security project: Robert Arbios wrote to the board suggesting LCC explore hiring a private security company, rather than off-duty police officers for the security project. He also suggested that LCC negotiate with companies like Home Depot or ADT to try and get a price break on security products and had other comments about the program. LCC discussed the letter. McMullen responded to Arbios. Windermere used to have a private company for their patrolling and abandoned that approach in favor of using the off-duty officers. By unanimous general agreement, the board agreed to stay with the off-duty police officers. LCC will revisit the issue should the number of subscribers decline.
10. Power outage: Chalmers reported yet another power outage by his house. Neighbors had five minutes notice.
11. Security Patrol Robert Arbios wrote that LCC should look for an alternative service for our security patrol. He was not sure what our current service, using off-duty Seattle Police officers was accomplishing. Our decision to use off-duty Police took into account liability, security, training among other factors. Our experience has been generally positive. If we hear additional negative feedback from neighbors, we should reconsider the question.

Minutes: Consideration of the November 10, 2014 minutes was deferred until the February meeting.

Treasurer's Report: The board reviewed the November and December 2014 financial reports. The board discussed the fact that Wright hasn't been given a raise in at least three years. **Motion** by Emily Deter, seconded by Kay Kelley, to increase Leslie Wright's compensation for the newsletter to \$880 per issue. **Motion passed** without objection. Dexter will notify Wright.

Announcements:

1. Landmarks Board Meeting: January 21, 3:30 p.m., 700 5th Avenue, Suite 1700. At this meeting, Talaris will unveil its current proposal.
2. Metro and Sound Transit Planning: Metro and Sound Transit have begun their planning and public engagement process to make bus service changes in northeast Seattle and Capitol Hill when Link light rail begins operating in the first quarter of 2016 to Husky Stadium and Capitol Hill. The Sounding Board advisory committee begins work on January 14 from 6:30-8:30p.m. At University Christian Church. Metro will be seeking further input in March.

We would like a shuttle from the Light Rail station at Husky Stadium to University Village, Childrens' Hospital and Magnuson Park.

3. City Light Upgrades: City Light is planning to come back to Laurelhurst to finish up the three projects from last year and to start as project in South Laurelhurst in the Webster Point area. City Light is seeking LCC assistance in notifying neighbors. The three older projects will start before the second quarter. There will be power outages with the new project. City Light will prepare an overview letter for neighbors and then follow up with more details. There will be an easel like board at both ends where the trenching will take place—similar to a real estate box. The sidewalks and parking strips will be affected.

REPORTS/ACTION

Proposed Changes to Neighborhood Matching Fund: After hearing from district councils and community groups, the Department of Neighborhoods backed off a recommendation to change the way Neighborhood Matching Fund applications are evaluated. The way the process currently works is that the district councils rate the large project applications and then the citywide review team rates them. Those ratings are combined and the highest rated projects receive funding.

The proposed change would have eliminated district council ratings. The reason for the proposal was to address “non-geographic” applications—many of which are human services projects that are able to receive funding from other sources such as the Race and Social Justice fund. Groups raised concerns in part, because it would have eliminated the grassroots nature of the process. Some thought these “non-geographic” groups should go through their community councils for support before moving forward in the process. The bottom line is that it would have diminished the role of community councils and district councils and diluted a fund that is supposed to be devoted to neighborhood projects.

Expanded Hours and Use at Community Center: In light of adoption of the Metropolitan Park District measure and a stable source of park funding, the Laurelhurst Community Center Advisory Council wrote to the Parks Superintendent asking that community center staffing hours be expanded, that the lower activity room be returned to an activity room, rather than devoted to other programs, and that open hours be increased. LCC LCC board unanimously endorsed the position of the advisory council.

Community Center Conversion: LCC will write a letter supporting conversion of the downstairs at the Community Center for use by seniors.

Crime Prevention: McMullen reviewed his written report listing all the reported crimes in December and incidents reported in the Laurelhurst Blog. McMullen added that the device previously thought to be nonexistent that opens the locks on car doors actually does exist. There was a report about this on KING TV news. To the extent such devices are available, people should be even more careful not to leave valuables in their cars.

SR 520 Update: McAleer briefed the Board about the current status of SR 520. The construction of the West Bridge Approach North (WABN) is well underway, generating the expected noise from vibrating in the pilings for the permanent and temporary work bridge structures. The old, inoperative "bridge to nowhere" pieces were also being removed as part of the current WABN. In addition, the eastbound off-ramp at Montlake, heading towards the neighborhood, will be subjected to nightly delays and closures due to adding an additional lane at that stoplight. The bright lighting shining across the lake continues to be a nightly distraction for Laurelhurst's residents.

The new design for the last segment of the new bridge from Montlake to I-5, across Portage Bay has been finalized. It will be the low-rise concrete girder style. WSDOT has eliminated the option of a cable-stayed design due to higher costs, and objections from the neighborhoods in the Coalition for Sustainable Bridge. The cable-stayed bridge would have created a higher profile and created visual clutter in the Portage Bay adjacent neighborhoods.

The new westside design has fewer columns in the water than previous, yet will cost \$1.57 billion. Its location is now slated to be shifted to the north, instead of exactly centered where it is currently sited. This change in location will cause negative impacts on the yacht clubs, and NOAA, but WSDOT claims it will save construction dollars. The six lane Portage Bay Bridge will have a dedicated bicycle/pedestrian lane, and a reversible lane to the express lanes northbound based on morning peak hours. The Montlake Lid is shortened to 800 feet (from the original 1400 feet), and will operate as a bike/pedestrian crossing as well as a bus flyer stop. Thus, the promised "green lid" from the original Preferred Alternative for the project has essentially been greatly diminished.

Traffic Safety: Chalmers discussed the speeding problem around Villa Academy. He had been in touch with SDOT and SDOT is now following up after a month.

Proposal to Add More Portables at Laurelhurst School: The board reviewed and discussed the informational materials in the agenda packets about the proposal to add up to four more portables at Laurelhurst School. **Motion** by Liz Ogden, seconded by Colleen McAleer, to support Parents for Playgrounds and Proper Planning. **Motion passed** without objection. Board members were especially concerned about the loss of playground space and failure to adhere to the mandated city's lot coverage limitations in the city's Code.

Shoreline Street End Proposal: Improvement work at the 51st Street NE street end site (next to the Beach Club) will focus on increasing views of Lake Washington and public access for community members. These improvements include:

- Creating a level area with a bench
- Removing overgrown vegetation to increase visibility
- Enhancing access to the water with timber steps
- Removing two parking spaces nearest the site to accommodate new bicycle racks and pedestrian access to the site

Talaris Update: The board went into executive session at 8:10 to discuss legal matters relating to redevelopment of the Battelle/Talaris property.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:20

Notes by Stan Sorscher