

Laurelhurst Community Club
Minutes for February 11, 2008
St. Stephen's Church, Seattle WA

Attending: Mark Trumbauer, Mark Holden, Heather Newman, Liz Ogden, Jeannie Hale, Leslie Wright, Emily Dexter, Stan Sorscher, Marian Joh, Brian McMullen, Maggie Weissman, and Colleen McAleer

Excused: Barb Bender (leave of absence), Don Torrie

Guests: Diane Sugimura, Director, Department of Planning and Development; neighbor and former Governor Dan Evans

Jeannie Hale called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM.

Laurelhurst Rooming House: At the June 13, 2005 meeting, Diane Sugimura, Director, Department of Planning and Development (DPD) and Alan Oiye, Supervisor and Land Use Planner came to speak to the board about the development near the corner of 36 Ave NE and NE 44th Street. At that time, LCC had received many complaints about the mega-house under construction behind the Laurelhurst business district. The four-story house appears to exceed the 30-foot limit in single-family zones. Concerns about lot coverage, setbacks and lack of parking continue. At that meeting, it was reported that the house has nine bedrooms and nine bathrooms and two kitchen areas. The development includes an accessory dwelling unit on the main floor (includes one of the bedrooms and one of the kitchen areas).

Back in 2005, Ms. Sugimura agreed that this design of the mega-house is not a typical single family unit. DPD recognized that the owner took full advantage of several loopholes in the code, to expand lot coverage, height, provide no parking, and create the possibility of very high number of occupants. DPD did state that only 8 unrelated adults could occupy the building. Diane Sugimura noted that the design and construction for this project comply with the code.

The owner of what is called as a "Laurelhurst Rooming House," has advertised it as including 10 units. There are concerns about the Code allowing only 8 unrelated people to live in one dwelling. There are also concerns about the owner occupancy requirement for the accessory dwelling unit on the first floor.

Diane Sugimura explained that owner occupancy requirements are enforceable. An inspector visited the site and issued a Notice of Violation. The notice cited a falsely certified ADU, discontinued maintenance of something, and violation of conditions of the permit regarding an auxiliary dwelling unit in an area zoned for single family housing. Also, the building permit expired, although that can be extended easily.

DPD Staff contacted the realtor to object to false advertisement by referring to the unit as a rooming house. The Realtor said the "seller's package" states it must be owner occupied. The Realtor said the seller's application must be taken at face value. They assert that it is the use of the property that triggers a violation.

When a Notice of Violation is issued, the owner has 15 days to comply. The owner must discontinue using the property as boarding house. Falsely certifying the owner is living there carries a penalty of \$5,000. The realty advertisement should be withdrawn. Up to eight unrelated adults can live in the building, and the owner must live in the building at least half-time. This is very difficult to prove.

Diane discussed some history about the rental housing inspection program: The City Council hired a consultant to analyze and report on rental housing inspection, and what it would take to enforce codes. A model program in Pasco passed review by the State Supreme Court, and we would be able to adapt that for Seattle.

Other questions for Ms. Sugimura: Why didn't DPD tell Children's Hospital that the initial expansion alternatives that were proposed are inconsistent with the Code, the Major Institutions Code and the Comprehensive Plan? The alternatives are out-of-scale and unprecedented in low-density, single family areas. Jeannie Hale gave a packet of correspondence to Diane Sugimura.

Husky Stadium Renovation: Neighbor and former Governor Dan Evans briefed LCC about the legislative proposal to obtain extension of local option taxes to raise \$150 million in state funds to renovate Husky Stadium. Under the plan, taxes used for paying off Safeco Field and the Kingdome would be extended to raise \$64.6 million from King County's food and beverage tax; \$15.2 million from the car rental tax; \$37 million from a hotel/motel tax and \$20 million in deferred sales tax construction costs. Donors would pay the additional \$150 million to renovate the stadium.

Governor Evans passed out a budget showing different elements of the plan, and how much would be funded by public and private sources.

Governor Evans said UW has made rapid progress on the project. The lower bowl was built at grade. It has no foundations, which leads to safety hazards. Some metal fittings are rusted through. Safety work would cost about \$150 M. Items to improve fan experience would be about \$150 M. The cost to maintain operation, without a major renovation would be about \$100 M over ten years. Evans' current proposal is about \$300 M, including some contingency for inflation.

Going in to the public/private breakout, Governor Evans said that public funds would be used to rebuild the lower bowl of seats. Adding seats below lower bowl and adding premium seats would come from private funds. Adding a new operations and support building for football building would cost \$50M in private funds.

Governor Evans said the State Senate is treating this favorably. Sound Transit construction will take 5 years. Evans would like to start construction immediately after this football season ends. During construction UW would use Qwest field.

The parking structure south of the stadium is not part of this plan.. The Operations & Support Building for \$50 M will be on NW side of stadium. The new design maintains good views toward Mt Rainier. The large scoreboard will be replaced by two smaller ones.

Regarding public funding sources, The taxes used for Qwest field would be extended to cover the UW Stadium. King County levies the taxes; the State grants authority to King County. No taxes would be collected for the stadium outside King County. Cost overruns would be born by UW, not the public. Dan Evans believes his bidding process can resist cost overruns.

UW has a \$2.2B endowment. Those funds are used to build many large buildings on campus. One-time gifts have been used for the Gates Law building, business school, and other new construction on campus. Endowment funds are used for endowed chairs, scholarships and programs.

Governor Evans cited \$120 M in private donations to sports. The same donors gave \$260 M to projects on the upper campus.

A great deal of dirt will be removed, but much of it will be used in construction.

Q: Integrate with transit hub?

A: No space is available for that. Dan Evans is happy with the Sound Transit station and pedestrian overpass, but doesn't see expansion of bus routes east and west through a transit hub at Husky Stadium.

Q: Can UW sell bonds to finance project?

A: Governor Evans believes it will be easy to sell bonds. Revenue forecast for the state will not be good, but a construction program is good for the economy. Dan Evans believes Frank Chopp will ultimately support the program.

Q: Isn't it awkward to endorse a project when the details are still moving around?

Motion by Brian McMullen seconded by Mark Holden that LCC supports renovation of Husky Stadium for maintenance safety and ADA accessibility, paid for with matching funds from private donors, plus public funding from existing taxes, **Motion passed**, 10-2 with no abstentions.

CALLS AND CONCERNS: LCC continues to receive calls and emails from neighbors concerned about Children's proposed expansion and the South Laurelhurst Pilot Private Patrol project.

1. Stop light delays: Alan Zarky followed up with LCC on 2/02 regarding stop light delays at NE 45th and Sand Point Way. He has not gotten a clear response from SDOT. LCC will follow up.
2. Laurelhurst rooming house: On 2/01, email from Brian Cooper who lives next door to the rooming house. He said he has learned that the owner will not be moving in with his mother as he talked about for the past three and a half years. The owner also needs an easement from him to get gas to the house. Cooper got the request in September, but hasn't signed it yet. He now has his attorney working on it.
3. Children's: Roy Amundsen emailed on 1/28 suggesting that Children's build a new hospital out at Magnuson Park. LCC responded to pass along the restrictions that exist on the use of Magnuson Park and the Sand Point Historic District.

4. Dangerous property: A neighbor emailed on 1/17 about the dangerous situation at 4816 NE 47th, which is on the corner of NE 47th and 49th NE. For at least the past two years the property has been torn up. There are open trenches at least 4 feet deep. All the parking strips are dug up as well as the yard. There are small children that play in the driveway in the summer, along side the open trench. LCC will follow up.
5. Waterway No. 1: Judith Thornton and Kate Lloyd have been in touch with Trumbauer about maintenance and other issues at the waterway.
6. Eagles: A neighbor called about the eagles' nest on the Talaris site.
7. Talaris update: Stan Sorscher spoke to Bob Wicklein about the Talaris project. Bob said the project direction has not changed, although nothing has happened on the site since a prior conversation in January 2007. Sorscher also talked to Roy Mann at CBRE. Roy said he has some potential tenants lined up who would qualify under the "institute for Advanced Study" category. Roy said the tenants would make a good match to the community's interests. Roy needed more commitments to reach the threshold to move forward. He thought he should have a better idea by early summer, and we could check back with him then. Sorscher asked if the tentative tenants had given Roy a date by which they needed to occupy their space? Roy said no.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Thank you: Thank you to Don Torrie for coordinating distribution of this month's agenda packets and to Heather Newman for assisting.
2. Injured: On 1/30, LCC learned that Dena Schuler broke her leg severely. She had surgery to repair a spiral break from the waist down. She is expected to miss work for three-four weeks.
3. Children's Master Plan Meeting: Tuesday, February 12, 6:00 p.m., Children's Hospital auditorium.

REPORTS/ACTION:

Neighbor Appreciation Day reception: Due to logistical complications, LCC has postponed honoring neighbors with Good Neighbor Awards until the May Annual Neighbors meeting. Most honorees were OK with deferring. The February date was not a good match to most people's schedules. Community Center was not aware the meeting was off, which caused some confusion. We need to set a date, get speakers, and find out what other conflicts might be going on at the Community Center.

SR 520 Update:

1. Mediation process: Colleen McAleer briefed the group on a joint statement of steps to improve the effectiveness of the mediation process. She described a meeting with Ed Murray and Frank Chopp. The "eastside" hired a lobbyist to change the bridge

back to 8 lanes based on an old design. Officials from eastside sit at the mediation table, but this alternative has not gone through the full vetting process.

Three bridge designs will go to DOT for an EIS by April 1. The mediation group would need to approve an 8-lane alternative to make that one of the three designs. Colleen showed us some design concepts. Two more meetings are scheduled to settle on the three designs. Sort of a wild finish!

Motion by Colleen McAleer, seconded by Maggie Weissman to reaffirm our position for 6-lane maximum . **Motion passed** unanimously.

2. State legislation: The two bills before the Legislature allow for the collection of tolls on the existing and replacement SR 520 following the submission of the tolling implementation report required by the act and approval by the Legislature.

Crime prevention:

1. NPAC/crime update: McMullen and Weissman reported a brick throwing incident. A young person with loud speakers in the car was brought to justice. Overall, January was a quiet month. One neighbor set up a camera, which recorded a hit and run incident.
2. Update on pilot project: The pilot patrol area could be expanded toward NE 43rd St without much additional effort.
3. Officer T.J. Havenar: Officer Havenar, who has served Laurelhurst since 1993 has been transferred to Wallingford/Fremont/Greenlake sector. Many officers were transferred with implementation of the mayor's new neighborhood policing initiative. The sector covering Laurelhurst has now doubled in size. There is still just one officer covering the sector, but if there are high priority calls, officers may be sent from other areas. Jeannie Hale offered to write a letter supporting him.

Children's Update:

1. CAC update: The CAC meets tomorrow night at 6 p.m. at Children's auditorium. The CAC is scheduled to finalize its comments on the preliminary draft master plan and the preliminary draft environmental impact statement. A listing of issues and compilation of comments of individual CAC members is included in the Children's packet.

At the January 22nd CAC meeting, a subcommittee meeting was set up to develop alternatives or parameters for alternatives to recommend as the CAC is not enthusiastic about the alternatives proposed by Children's. The subcommittee met on Saturday, February 2nd. They came up with two alternatives that each include: no new access points on 45th and 50th, no expansion of major institution boundaries, greater setbacks, no roads through the setbacks, only two towers instead of four. One alternative would set building heights at 128 feet, the other lower heights to minimize impacts on Laurelon. If Children's does acquire Laurelon, the subcommittee suggested that there could be an access point through that property.

2. HB 3071: House Bill 3071 would change the law governing the Laurelton condominium complex. Currently, there must be 100 percent approval of all property owners to dissolve the condominium. Under the legislation and the condominium law that applies to complexes built after 1990, the requirement for termination is 80 percent. The preliminary draft environmental impact statement indicates that termination of Laurelton Terrace would result in a 21 percent loss of affordable housing in this area. LCC wrote to 46th District legislators opposing HB 3071. The Northeast District Council also voted to oppose the bill and wrote a letter. The bill passed out of the House Housing Committee and is currently in the Rules Committee. It could be advanced to third reading and go to a vote on the House floor at any time.
3. Steinbrueck employment at Children's: LCC wrote to Children's and former Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck to inquire about Steinbrueck's potential employment with the hospital. Steinbrueck had requested an opinion from the city's Ethics and Elections Commission as the Ethics Code places restrictions on city employees for a one-year period after leaving employment. Based upon what Steinbrueck submitted, the Ethics Commission found no conflict of interest. In its letter, LCC requested copies of any employment contract or agreement, memorandum of understanding or similar documents. Steinbrueck responded that he didn't have anything written from Children's, but that even if he did, he wouldn't provide it as he said it was proprietary and not subject to disclosure.

For now, Steinbrueck plans to serve as mediator, problem-solver and ombudsman.

4. Correspondence with Children's attorney: Neighbor Douglas Ross, who happens to be a partner in the law firm representing Children's, emailed LCC about Children's issues. Due to the abusive nature of the emails, and questions about the propriety of LCC responding directly to a Children's attorney, LCC asked its attorney to respond. The email exchange is included in the Children's packet.
5. Little League: Don Torrie encouraged the Board to sponsor a Little League team. **Motion** by Stan Sorscher, seconded by Mark Trumbauer to sponsor one T-ball team and one "78'ers" team. **Motion passed** unanimously.

Treasurer's Report:

Marian Joh walked the Board through the monthly report. We have a strong balance, but face potentially large expenses with the Children's Hospital project. We are still looking at setting up a separate corporation with 501(c)(3) status. Special projects could be run from the charitable corporation, with dues being directed for that purpose.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:25 PM

Minutes by Stan Sorscher