

Laurelhurst Community Club
Minutes for February 8, 2010
St. Stephen's Church, Seattle WA

Attending: Len Nelson, Kirsten Curry, Emily Dexter, Adrian Whorton, Don Torrie, Cary Lassen, Maggie Weissman, Brian McMullen, Jeannie Hale, Stan Sorscher, Colleen McAleer

Excused: Marian Joh, Mark Trumbauer, Leslie Wright

Guests: Tim Hansen, David Van Skike, Michael Read, Tom Fitzsimons, Kate Lloyd, Mark Weed, Susan Marten, Guy Marquiss

Meeting called to order at 7:07 PM.

QFC Redevelopment: Tim Hansen and Tom Fitzsimmons spoke to the LCC Board about the proposed QFC development in 2008.

At this time, the plan calls for up to 375 apartment units, 37,000 square feet of additional grocery store use, 8,800 square feet of additional retail use and conversion of the 1,100 square feet of existing pharmacy space to provide a drive-through window. An additional 287 parking stalls would be installed to provide a total of 697 off-street stalls. The entrance to the apartments is planned to be off Union Bay Place near the driveway for the Metro pumping station. Full build out of the site is anticipated by 2013.

Tim Hanson explained the motivation for the expansion. Tim sees the expansion as an investment in their customers. QFC needs more parking. One third of their customers park in UVillage stalls. Customers prefer surface parking and are less interested in the parking structure at the north end of University Village.

Residential is a good co-tenant with QFC, because the two usages don't overlap much in time. This allows QFC to build more parking and pay for it with housing revenues. The City also likes the densification of urban centers. Tim met with University Village to try to coordinate the two development projects.

Tim would like the City to combine the QFC and University Village projects together in a single permitting process.

Tom Fitzsimmons showed illustrations of the development, and talked about the design process. The project is paused for the time being. Tom said LCC's comments were very helpful to the QFC design team. Issues included the dual use of parking between residential and retail, appearance of the residential structures, entry points to the site from Union Bay Place and NE 45th St.

The residential structure includes internal courtyards. The space between the QFC and the new structure would also include a courtyard. The initial design calls for four stories of apartments and several levels of parking. Tim expects rental income to be roughly \$2400 per month.

The access road at the north end of the property has a reciprocal easement allowing University Village to use that access road for entry into their shopping center. Bicycle and pedestrian access is desirable.

Q: Will densification work, or will the traffic just be worse?

A: Experts are confident that densification will work well.

Q: Children's plus U Village plus QFC will make traffic hopeless on NE 45th St?

Michael Read discussed traffic flow. The Burke Gilman Trail might be signalized with car traffic coming out of the site. If both QFC and U Village build out, the left turn capacity into the site would not be enough to carry the inbound traffic. In addition, extra capacity is need inside the site to carry traffic. One solution is to widen NE 45th St to allow an extra left turn lane.

Q: Employee parking?

A: Peak QFC shopping time is around 4-5 PM. Capacity for employees will be provided on the site.

Dave Van Skike is a land use planner. He is working on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. He would prefer a joint DEIS with University Village.

Q: MUP application?

A: QFC will adjust plans depending on the process. No MUP, yet. City will gather and respond to community comments.

Q: Does the City have authority to require combined DEIS?

A: At a minimum, the City evaluation should deal with both developments in parallel. A case in point is the question of entry into the site from NE 45th St. A second piece is, the Burke Gilman Trail intersection. A third piece is access to the upper parking levels from Union Bay Place.

QFC wants to get to final EIS around fall of 2010. MUP application will come after that. Construction could begin in 2013.

Q: Precedent at Kroger with combined housing-grocery?

A: Several other combined grocery-residential projects. Experience with those projects is that the parking works fine with the two uses.

Waterway #1: Kate Lloyd passed out a packet of material. Kate and two other Friends of Waterway #1 met with Peter Goldmark, and staff from the Department of Natural Resources, in Olympia. Jeannie Hale and Liz Ogden attended. Kate found that DNR is considering a permanent land swap with neighbors on either side of the waterway. It's not clear at this point what other property would be involved in the swap.

LCC commented on the declaration of non-significance for the Lewis' proposed permit. Jeannie will send Kate a copy of LCC's comments. The environmental checklist is the structure for making comments. Kate is happy to coordinate with LCC on this issue.

Susan Marten: Susan asked for copies of the financial report. Susan asked to post financial reports in the meeting minutes. Susan is concerned about having different sources of income and whether funds are co-mingled or allocated between different uses.

ADMINISTRATION

Minutes: The board reviewed the December 14, 2009 and January 11, 2010 minutes.

Motion by Emily Dexter, seconded by Adrian Whorton to accept the December 2009 minutes, with the clarification regarding the Laurelcrest utility project. **Motion passed** with Maggie Weissman abstaining.

Motion by Adrian, seconded by Len Nelson to accept the January 2010 minutes, correcting the spelling of Marian's name. **Motion passed,**

Treasurer's Report: Marian Joh had a conflict and could not attend tonight's meeting. She reports that the Security Project is going well with expansion of the coverage area and renewals starting up in January 2010. The year-end balance of last year's security patrol is \$3,091. Collections so far for the 2010 program through January 31, 2010 are approximately \$55,000. Annual dues contributions are steadily coming in. Jeannie said we've spent about \$130,000 in legal costs.

Changes to the Agenda: Add Park Board Commission nomination of John Barber and possible executive session.

CALLS AND CONCERNS:

1. Junk truck: LCC received many emails regarding the illegally parked truck next to the Seattle Bicycle Center at 4529 Sand Point Way NE. The truck is not in an approved and paved parking lot and is not in the right-of-way. Neighbors were provided the link to file a code violation with the Department of Planning and Development.
2. Crime info: The Laurelhurst Blog has requested regular updates on crime in the neighborhood to post. Information will be provided.
3. Absentee landlord: Neighbors in the Town of Yesler has requested follow-up again with the owner of property at 44th and 36th. The property is again overgrown and obstructing the sidewalk in violation of the Code. LCC will follow-up.
4. Waterway No. 1: Judith Thornton contacted on 1/19 and thereafter about the waterway. She provided an excellent listing of noxious weeds at the waterway and offered to continue to help with eradication. LCC's consultant surveyed the waterway and has provided his recommendations. Thornton also asked about

removal of and old log and the rubble as the lake is low now and the old pieces of asphalt and concrete and now more accessible.

5. Swamp project: A neighbor who lives on Surber across the street from the site of the Yesler Swamp project contacted LCC several times in mid-to late January about the project. She is concerned about parking and traffic with increased usage of the site and greater vulnerability to crime with more people in the neighborhood. She prefers only one entrance to the swamp trail (behind the Center for Urban Horticulture). She is also concerned about disturbing the character of the swamp and its ability to sustain itself if overly disturbed by human access.
6. Vandalism: On 1/24, someone threw a frozen egg through the window of the home of a neighbor in the vicinity of 48th and NE 40th. The window was broken and a big mess created as the egg thawed out. The incident was reported to the police. On 2/05, it was reported that there has been a rash of car prowls in the Town of Yesler. One neighbor's car was keyed.
7. Red Light Runners: Jean Amick emailed on 2/04 about the municipal traffic judge throwing out the traffic ticket for a person who ran the light at Five Corners. LCC has been in touch with city councilmembers about this issue.
8. Meeting materials: Susan Marten emailed on 2/07 and today requesting LCC's agenda and asking about the availability of minutes and the treasurer's report.
9. Expanded security project: Several neighbors have contacted LCC about the expanded security project. Lassen and McMullen have responded.
10. Crow research: John Marzluff published research on crows, which was carried in the national news. The experiment showed that crows recognize humans, but can be confused by masks with the face of Vice President Dick Cheney, or the face of a caveman. In scientific terms, this is stated more substantially.
11. QFC Traffic signal: The new signal at the QFC entrance onto NE 45th street is timed in a way to create a hazard for pedestrians.

Little League Sponsorship: Guy Marquiss is on the Board at NS Little League. The league is working with Parks Department on improvements at Laurelhurst Playfield for 12 and under leagues. The Parks Department will put in gravel under spectator areas behind the backstop at the north end of the playfield. At the other field, closer to the Community Center, gravel will be added past both dugouts. A step and gravel path will be added on the hillside. The work has already started. It was completely funded through projects run by NE Seattle Little League, and volunteers helped do the work. They will look for reimbursement funds from the City.

The dugouts will be covered, with open sides.

Q: Can kids throw the gravel?

A: Glacial till, which compacts quickly, while remaining permeable.

Q: Trucks tore up the turf. Repairs?

A: That will be restored after the project.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Please see the NEDC announcement handout.

1. Waterway No. 1: On Monday, February 1, representatives from the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and LCC (Liz Ogden and Jeannie Hale) met with neighbors Judith Thornton, Jim White and Kate and Noel Lloyd from Friends of Waterway 1 and their attorney in Olympia to discuss issues they have raised regarding the waterway. Those neighbors oppose the recent permit granted by DNR to the one adjacent neighbor regarding private use of a portion of the waterway and the upcoming future permit with the other adjacent property owners. DNR explained that there are many restrictions on the permits. The dock on one side of the waterway has been reconfigured so that there is little intrusion into the waterway, the two steel pilings have been removed at LCC's request and non-toxic materials must be used in the permit area. It was explained that DNR's goal at this point is to have the areas permitted so that DNR can collect fees. In other words, the short-term goal is to get the adjacent property owners into compliance with DNR regulations. The fees are used for to provide revenues for public schools, universities and other purposes. Neighbors raised concerns about a potential land swap. It was explained that although suggested by one of the adjacent neighbors, it is not likely that this would happen. LCC explained its the policies and goals adopted over a two-year period for the waterway.
2. Laurelcrest Neighbors Meeting: On Wednesday, February 3, City Light hosted a meeting with Laurelcrest neighbors at the community center to discuss the upcoming utility project. The project will upgrade the underground electric cables and equipment serving your neighborhood, replacing the less reliable, old direct-buried cables with new, higher voltage cables encased in concrete ductbanks. This modernization will upgrade the system from its current 4kV (4,000 volts) to 26kV (26,000 volts), providing significantly improved reliability and faster, easier maintenance. LCC sent out a reminder email notice to neighbors about the meeting. Neighbors got their questions answered and the project will begin in the next few weeks. One issue remaining is that the last four homes on a portion of Laurelcrest are not included in the project. LCC has asked that City Light consider a change-order in the project to cover all neighbors on the street.
3. Red Light Runner Cameras: On February 3, KING TV reported that a traffic judge has thrown out a ticket received by a driver running the red light at Five Corners. The judge said the ticket was illegal as he interpreted the law as only allowing cameras at intersections where two arterials meet. The cameras were installed about a year and a half ago and have been extremely successful in promoting pedestrian safety at this location. LCC continues to monitor challenges to the law and pending legislation before the state Legislature. The bill in before the Legislature would limit the fine for red light runners to \$25 or the average fine for parking violations. The current fine in Seattle is \$124. The bill fails to recognize the

importance of a municipality recouping its cost in installing these highly effective devices.

4. NOAA: LCC's letter supporting keeping NOAA's fleet in Seattle and Magnuson Park as an alternative is included in the correspondence packet. LCC is working with Senator Cantwell's office on this possibility, as well as the Mayor's office and Councilmember Godden.
5. Yesler Swamp Trail Project: Friends of Yesler Swamp filed its Neighborhood Matching Fund grant application for a small and simple grant on January 11 for design work associated with their project. In response to concerns about the impact of the project on wildlife, Kern Ewing assembled a team of wildlife experts to visit the swamp. The experts agreed that the benefits of attention to the swamp, especially control of invasive plants, would outweigh any damage from a trail and boardwalk. In fact, a dedicated trail that keeps people from trodding directly on leaves and branches could benefit wildlife by curtailing the potential impact of humans. A work party to remove ivy and blackberries is scheduled on Saturday, February 27, 10 a.m. to noon. Tools will be provided, but wear gloves and sturdy shoes.
6. Sad News: Enotria, the popular Italian restaurant in the Laurelhurst business district, has closed permanently. The owners were unable to re-negotiate their loan with their bank. If you are holding a valid unused gift certificate or have ordered and pre-paid for any wine please send an email with your information to Enotria at enotriaseattle@gmail.com or go to <http://www.enotriaseattle.com/>.

REPORTS/ACTION:

Crime Prevention: Brian McMullen summarized reports of vandalism, aggressive magazine sales, and an intruder who passed out after breaking into a house. The security patrol responded to the incident and arrested the intruder. Our funding is working out well. We have 316 subscribers. Participation is about the same in the new and old areas. Brian would like to look at whether neighbors continue participating year after year.

North Precinct advisory meeting: Cary Lassen reported that Peter Holmes spoke about his new administration of the City Attorney's office. Holmes will make 6-7% budget cut. He is concerned with public safety if more cuts are needed.

LCC has written letters about adequate funding for public safety and community officers. General agreement to renew that position with the City.

Little League Sponsorship: LCC has again been invited to sponsor a Little League team. See letter in the correspondence packet. **Motion** by Don Torrie, seconded by Maggie Weissman to authorize \$500 to support a North Seattle Little League team. **Motion passed.**

Reappointment of John Barber to the Board of Park Commissioners: John Barber was appointed to the Park Board in May 2007 and his term expired in December 2009. He

is now up for reappointment. Barber has a long history of working collaboratively with a broad range of people and interests. He is the head of Parks and Open Space Advocates and coordinates Friends of Streetends, a group LCC has worked with for many years. Barber is a voice for neighborhoods and has opposed commercialization and privatization of Seattle's parks. **Motion** by Emily, seconded by Colleen McAleer, to support John Barber's reappointment. **Motion passed** unanimously

Seattle Children's Update: The City Council's Committee on the Built Environment (formerly the Planning, Land Use and Neighborhoods Committee) will hear oral arguments on Children's proposed master plan at it February 10 meeting. No public testimony regarding the merits of the proposed MIMP will be taken at these meetings. LCC and Children's continue to work together on a compromise.

SR 520 Update: Colleen McAleer described the alternatives currently under consideration. Alternative A may not have enough ramp capacity to carry traffic into Montlake. Mayor McGinn wants to consider light rail on the SR-520 bridge.

Sound Transit did not want light rail on SR-520 because of problems getting above-grade tracks into the tunnel; the tunnel capacity will be used up; UW doesn't want to be a transit hub.

Another issue is that the state has mandated 6 lanes, and we're not sure how the 6 lanes will be allocated.

Mark Weed is a neighbor who has been active in the SR-520 bridge project. Mark believes the 6-lane mandate applies to motor vehicle traffic, but can be augmented with 2 more lanes for light rail. Planning on the east side has included light rail plus 6 lanes of motor vehicles. Mark imagines that any light rail decision will be many years from now. Mark wants any building now to allow for future addition to bring light rail to 520.

Our light rail system lacks capacity in the downtown area to carry additional traffic from a track on SR-520 into the city.

Mark said alternatives A and A+ have the smallest footprints, but Colleen has a different impression.

Executive Session started at 9:40 PM.

Motion to have Peter Eglick review the draft press release regarding Children's Hospital. **Motion passed**, with Maggie Weissman and Don Torrie abstaining.

Meeting adjourned around 10 PM.

Minutes by Stan Sorscher