

Laurelhurst Community Club
Minutes for September 10, 2007
St. Stephen's Church, Seattle WA

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

Excused: Joe Herrin, Don Torrie, Lora Poepping (leave of absence)

Guests: Elizabeth Nelson, Len Nelson, Jill Ryan, Joy Scott, Megan Allen, Cary Lassen, Gisela Schimmelbusch, and Miriam Muller

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

Treasurer's Report: Marian passed out copies of the monthly report. Dues income has slowed down. Marian asked about the number of households, and Liz is trying to estimate that from the census data. When we talk about Childrens' we should return to the budget and look at projections.

Minutes: The board reviewed the minutes of the August meeting. **Motion** by Colleen McAleer, seconded by Emily Dexter to approve the August minutes with the corrections that Mark Holden was excused, Liz Ogden was sick (and we called her at home from the meeting) and that Colleen was returning from out of town, but didn't make it to the meeting. **Motion passed** unanimously.

CALLS AND CONCERNS:

1. Children's Proposed Expansion: LCC has received dozens and dozens of messages and calls from neighbors who have submitted comments as part of the scoping part of the environmental review process or who have otherwise shared concerns about the proposed expansion. The Department of Planning and Development and the Department of Neighborhoods will be compiling all of the comments that were submitted and copies will be available to LCC at the October trustee meeting.

Neighbor comments were overwhelmingly opposed to the magnitude and height of the proposed construction, plus noise and traffic. Maggie Weissman has the sense that potential buyers are not interested in looking at houses for sale for several blocks around. We have heard that Childrens approached the Laurelon Terrace Board, with an offer to buy units at fair market value.

Jeannie Hale understands that comments from the public were coming in at 30 per hour near the deadline; the deadline for comments was extended. More in "Reports/action."

2. Car Prowls: On 8/21, Patty Pollinsky emailed to remind people to keep car doors locked at all times. She said that car prowlers are active in the neighborhood. The day before, a car was left unlocked twice during daylight on NE 54th. An iPod and

papers were taken and a mess made. She added that several car prowling incidents in the vicinity of 38th Avenue and NE 55th Street near the Metropolitan Market have been reported. On 9/3, Karmann Kaplan reported an epidemic of things being stolen in the neighborhood in the vicinity of 47th Avenue NE onto East Laurelhurst Drive. A video of the culprit was taken and distributed to her Block Watch. On 9/2, the Alkire's car was broken into. The criminal took a radio and a box of Kleenex. The criminal used the Kleenex down the block where he went Number 2.

3. Stolen Car: On 8/21, Colleen McAleer reported that the new car of her neighbors, the Bellows, on West Laurelhurst had been stolen out of their driveway the night before. That incident had not yet appeared in the crime report.
4. Sidewalk Safety: On 8/25, Richard Ettinger passed along photos of six Laurelhurst sidewalks in need of repair.
5. Streetlights: Maggie Weissman heard from a neighbor who found non functional streetlights, and called the City several times - the lights were repaired finally.
6. Transients: Liz Ogden understands that neighbors befriended young men living in their car(s) NE 47th near Sun Park. Diane Horswell advised all the neighbors to get together and encourage the young men to move on. Living in your car is not illegal. This situation is not resolved.
7. Drug paraphernalia: - Maggie Weissman called Diane Horswill - police came out and investigated.
8. Waterway #1: Liz Ogden knows an eagle scout who picked waterway #1 as his eagle project. Liz directed him to a street end that could use some work.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Thank you: Thank you to Don Torrie for coordinating distribution of this month's agenda packets.
2. Comment Extension: The Department of Planning and Development has extended the deadline for scoping comments on Children's concept plan until 10 a.m., September 17th.
3. Neighborhood Street Fund Large Project Open Houses: The North Sector open house for Street Fund project is tomorrow, September 11th, 5 to 8 p.m. at the Ravenna-Eckstein Community Center, 6535 Ravenna Avenue NE. All northeast projects nominated for funding will be on display, including several for Laurelhurst. Everyone is encouraged to stop by the open house to add his or her comments to the board that will be posted. Projects in our neighborhood include sidewalks near the Villa Academy and near Katterman's on Sand Point Way.
4. Large Project Review Committee: Ogden who represents northeast Seattle on the committee reported on the orientation meeting. At this time, 143 large projects are being considered for a total of \$4.3 million. Each of 4 sectors will get a little over

one million dollars. Based on feedback from open houses and other analysis the full list will be pared down 50 projects. This process should be complete by Thanksgiving.

5. Webmaster: LCC will advertise for a new webmaster. After years of service, webmaster Susan Rucker is ready to retire. It had been suggested that LCC hire a professional to take over webmaster responsibilities. With growing expenses associated with Children's Hospital, LCC will advertise for a volunteer. Professional services will maintain the site at an hourly rate, which could cost something like \$600 per month.
6. NE Seattle Outdoor Public Pool: Neighbors interested in developing a plan for a public pool in northeast Seattle have given themselves a name—Project Splash! There will be a planning committee meeting on Thursday, September 20th at 6:30 p.m. at the Northeast Branch Library. Emily Dexter volunteered to go to meeting. UW may provide \$3.5 million for a pool. Elizabeth Nelson is also interested in going to the planning meeting at the northeast Library.
7. Children's Master Plan Meeting: The next advisory committee meeting is Wednesday, September 26th from 6-8 p.m. in Room W3747 in the Whale Building of Children's Hospital.
8. Signage Criteria: In response to continuing requests to approve signage at the Spiger Building under the Settlement Agreement that gives LCC sign approval, Leslie Wright has agreed to chair a committee to develop signage criteria.

REPORTS/ACTION:

Crime Prevention: A handout listed reports from 911 calls. This was a relatively quiet month - a few calls, mostly at the park. Park patrols were a big success at Cowen Park with the involvement of many neighbors. Police issued tickets for camping and "other things" going on in the park.

Neighbors should call all 911 if they see them illegal magazine sellers. A Seattle vendor license is required.

Police are issuing tickets to kids in the parks, requiring the juveniles to appear in court.

Children's Hospital:

1. Children's Scoping Meeting: More than 100 neighbors attended the August 23rd environmental scoping meeting for the proposed Children's expansion. Those attending commented on the two alternatives proposed by Children's for its expansion—both would add 1.5 million additional square footage and both would increase building heights in parts of the campus from 37, 50, 70 and 90 feet to 240 feet. Under one alternative, the one-story Hartmann Building on Sand Point Way would be increased to 120 feet. Attendees commented on the alternatives proposed by Children's and suggested other alternatives that should be studied in the environmental impact statement. Some suggested that Children's has outgrown its Laurelhurst campus and should relocate elsewhere. Many commented on the

environmental impacts of Children's proposed expansion plans and the inability to mitigate the impacts.

With assistance from its land use consultant, LCC had a prepared statement and read it at the scoping meeting. About half way through, time was called as only a couple of minutes per person was allowed. DPD denied LCC's request to complete its statement. The next person testifying then read the remainder of LCC's statement.

LCC's statement focused on three issues—building heights, scale and access issues, stating there was no conceivable way to mitigate the impacts. LCC listed 13 compelling reasons why alternatives, other than the two presented by Children's should be studied in the environmental impact statement. Children's proposed alternatives are essentially identical, adding massive square footage and heights and impacts that are not capable of mitigation, and there is no basis for an alternative analysis and contemplated under SEPA. LCC recommended that an alternative that redirects traffic away from the Laurelhurst quiet single family and low-rise multifamily be developed. Because Children's campus is located in a single-family area, LCC recommended that alternatives be explored to make better use of below-grade development opportunities to minimize the impacts. LCC added that the level of square footage added should be dictated by the ability to mitigate the impacts, stating that the appropriate level of square footage expansion should be no greater than 250,000-300,000 square feet.

At the conclusion of the meeting, LCC asked the audience how many people supported an alternative with building heights less than 240 feet and less than 1.5 million square feet. The response was unanimous. Every person in the audience raised his or her hand, except the Childrens' representatives.

At the scoping meeting, Children's unveiled its model showing what the campus would look like under its proposed expansion plans. LCC asked that the model be put on display at the Laurelhurst Community Center to educate neighbors and encourage involvement in the process.

As we understand the project, two new entrances will be added to the site.

The review process requires discussion, but not actual response by DON.

Jeannie Hale said one objective should be for Childrens to throw out their alternatives.

Cary Lassen asked about the quasi-judicial process under which we can't email City Council. Childrens' has been talking to officials for two years. Jeannie said that Council members always get mail from residents, and the high comment volume did get the City Council's attention. Also, the Mayor is not quasi-judicial, so we can email Greg Nickels or Tim Ceis.

In terms of tactics, we could consider mass mailings and coordinating our list of Laurelhurst neighbors with lists from other neighborhoods. The project will have a

huge effect on views in Laurelhurst and the effect will be significant to other neighborhoods. To help mobilize residents, it would help to have imagery of the size of these structures in context. A campaign should include "Here's what you can do." Another ally would be condo associations near the development.

Q: What about the process for denying Children's proposal?

A: That is DPD's responsibility.

Some neighbors are considering hiring a lawyer and/or a lobbyist to offset the professional resources available to Children's.

Some neighbors feel that Laurelhurst members of the Advisory Committee are left out of communications, which defeats the purpose of the committee. Perhaps we could see 240 foot high balloons to show building profile. We need to communicate this to the community. Maybe a newspaper ad would be effective.

We could use a positive message - that Children's should grow but this campus is maxed out. They area already expanding to other areas - why not South Lake Union or someplace else?

Neighbors might be able to fund a more aggressive campaign, possibly hiring a PR organization or an investigative reporter?

With respect to the comment meeting, individuals are limited to 2 minutes, but we can pool our time and cede it all to Carol Eychaner for her to make an in-dept comment.

Q: Can we insist that Children's develop elsewhere, rather than offering Carol's three alternatives.

We should strongly encourage a big turnout at the September 17th meeting.

2. Children's Model: After the scoping meeting, LCC followed up and wrote an official letter to Children's CEO Tom Hansen requesting that the model be on display at the Laurelhurst Community Center. LCC had been in touch with Dena Schuler the community center coordinator who indicated that space could be provided in the line of site from the front desk to ensure security. LCC stated that having the model on display at the center would provide a great opportunity for neighbors to learn about the master planning process and Children's concept plan and to get neighbors involved in the process. Having the model on display at the Laurelhurst center also would promote the goal of the Major Institutions Code to promote

Children's responded to LCC's letter by stating that the model would be made available on a few specific dates at specific times when its staff could be on hand to respond to questions. Children's also stated that the model would be made available to other community centers in the area.

LCC wrote a follow up letter asking why Children's was imposing restrictions on making the model available to neighbors. LCC said it would be extremely difficult to

publicize when the model would be on display if access is limited. LCC also questioned why they needed a staff person on hand as the model speaks for itself. LCC pointed out that no other community has requested that the model be on display at its community center and two communities with representatives on the citizens advisory committee don't even have community centers. LCC concluded by stating that neighbors from surrounding communities would be welcome to view the model at the newly expanded and very beautiful Laurelhurst Community Center.

Children's has not responded to LCC's follow up letter.

3. Advisory Committee Meeting Location: At the August 23rd scoping meeting, LCC trustee Mark Holden suggested that future meetings involving Children's be held in a more neutral and easily accessible location. LCC followed up and wrote to Children's about this suggesting that meetings be held at the Laurelhurst Community Center. LCC said that neighbors would be more likely to attend meetings in more familiar surrounds. LCC cited the goal of the Major Institutions Code to "encourage significant community involvement" and said this could best be accomplished by scheduling meetings at the community center. Children's staff Desiree Leigh said she would discuss the meeting venue issue with the advisory committee chair and vice chair and Steve Sheppard of the Department of Neighborhoods who staffs the committee. LCC had not heard further from Children's or DON about this request. In the meantime, the next advisory committee meeting on September 26th was scheduled at a location at Children's hospital.
4. LCC Scoping Comments: Carol Eychaner submitted comprehensive scoping comments on behalf of LCC. With the appendices, the document is 20 pages long and included in the agenda packets. In her comments Carol states that Children's proposed heights, boundary and square footage expansion and new entrances would have unprecedented and unmitigatable significant impacts. She stated and as we know that the alternatives proposed by Children's are grossly incompatible with the low density, low heights and residential character of the Laurelhurst neighborhood. Because the impacts are so severe and contrary to City policy, she recommended that the two alternatives in Children's concept plan be thrown out. Of the 11 other major institutions subject to the Major Institutions Code, six have a neighborhood context similar to Laurelhurst. The highest MIO (Major Institution Overlay) height approved by the city, so far, in these locations is 105 feet and one has a height limit of only 50 feet. The City has only approved 240 foot height increases in urban villages which include mid-rise (60 foot), high-rise (160-240 foot) and commercial (65, 85 and 160 foot) zones. Laurelhurst, on the other hand, is an area outside an urban village where growth is limited consistent with the existing character of the neighborhood. In the area, zoning heights are 25 and 30 feet.

Eychaner has recommended that the Childrens' proposal be thrown out, and three alternatives on LCC's behalf that should be included for study in the EIS. None of the options would allow new Children's access points on Laurelhurst residential streets. Option 1 would retain the existing building height areas (as height limits have not been reached in some areas) and identify where new development could occur. Square footage expansion would be limited to 250,000 square feet. Option 1A would not put a square footage limit on expansion.

Option 2 would allow heights of 90 feet in some portions of the 37, 50 and 70 zones (as well as retaining the existing 90 foot limit in those areas) with a 250,000 square foot limit. Option 2A would not include a square footage limit.

Option 3 is similar to Option 1 and would explore different development possibilities and impacts of increased heights. There would be no increase in the 37 foot limit in the southeast sector of the campus (the Whale garage sector). The square footage expansion would also be limited to 250,000 square feet. Option 3A would not include a square footage limit.

5. Misrepresentations in Children's Concept Plan: On September 4th, LCC wrote to Children's CEO Tom Hansen and the Director of the Department of Planning and Development about misrepresentations in Children's Concept Plan. Carol Eychaner had discovered that Children's incorrectly stated that height increases on the campus would be from 90 feet to 240 feet, whereas they should have stated that on portions of the campus height increases would be from 37, 50, 70 and 90 feet to 240 feet. LCC asked that Children's and the City take immediate steps to provide correct information to neighbors and others in a very public manner. LCC further asked that the City reinstate the scoping process to allow a new comment period after appropriate notice has been provided.

In its letter, LCC noted that Children's misrepresentations, whether intentional or inadvertent, caused LCC added expense and resulted in incorrect information to the community. The hundreds of flyers distributed by neighbors listed the incorrect information and had neighbors known about the possibility of a height increase from 37 feet to 240 feet, more would have attended the scoping meeting. LCC asked that Children's immediately notify neighbors of its error, correct its master planning website and revise its concept plan.

Once again, Children's has not responded to LCC's request. Through a KING 5 reporter, LCC learned that Children's architect has apologized for its mistake. As a result of Children's misrepresentations, the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) has extended the comment period from September 5th to 10 a.m., September 17th. DPD's notice, however, has not been widely publicized.

6. Presentation of the Laurelhurst Alternatives to the Citizens Advisory Committee: At the August 23rd scoping meeting during LCC's comments, LCC mentioned that it would like an opportunity to present its alternatives that Eychaner was in the process of developing to the advisory committee. After that, LCC contacted Steve Sheppard from the Department of Neighborhoods to request time on the agenda of the September 26th advisory committee meeting. Steve Sheppard said he would contact the chair and vice chair, but said that if they did not agree to LCC's presentation at the September meeting, he would poll the committee. It turns out that Karen Wolf, from Bryant and chair of the advisory committee, has refused to allow LCC to present at the September meeting. This is unfortunate because DPD and Children's will be deciding on October 1st which alternatives will be included for study in the EIS. Hale explained this to Wolf who would prefer that the September advisory

committee be devoted to process issues so that committee members understand their role and responsibilities with no presentations.

Hale relayed Wolf's position to Steve Sheppard on Friday and asked if he intended to poll the committee. Sheppard took the matter to the Director of the Department of Neighborhoods who will be calling Children's and Karen.

On Saturday, Wolf called Hale and said she could cut the public comment portion of the meeting and allow LCC to present its alternatives for a few minutes. Hale explained that LCC had talked about 45 minutes on the agenda with Sheppard. Also, LCC pointed out that cutting the public comment period would not set well with neighbors.

Today, Robert Rosencrantz from Montlake who is on the committee called Hale as Wolf called him asking that he serve as liaison to LCC. He said he would meet with Hale periodically and report weekly to Wolf. Hale responded, no thanks that LCC would prefer to deal with the Department of Neighborhoods, the chair and vice chair and the committee as a whole.

7. Consulting Expenses: At the August LCC meeting, the board authorized expenses to hire Carol Eychaner to assist in preparing scoping comments for the Children's environmental review phase of the master planning process. Due to Children's error in its Concept Plan, Eychaner was required to spend an additional 10 hours in re-doing her comments and developing the Laurelhurst alternatives. Extra time was also required due to the complexity of the Concept Plan. The bottom line is that Eychaner's time almost doubles what LCC authorized—from about 33.33 hours worth of work to 66.2 hours (not counting her usual write-off of several hours). Unless the board authorizes her payment for the additional expenses, she will write off those expenses. If the board would like Eychaner to perform additional services—attending a future citizen advisory committee meeting to present the Laurelhurst alternatives, monitoring the process and preparing comments on the draft EIS, an additional expenditure authorization is required.

In the Board discussion, it was agreed that Carol's report was a good resource in our objection to the project.

Motion by Emily Dexter, seconded by Liz Ogden to authorize payment for 66.2 hours. **Motion passed** unanimously.

Marian Joh, and Maggie Weissman said that Carol needs clear direction not to proceed past authorized limits without approval from officers or the Board.

Looking forward, we might want to consider contracting with a PR firm or political consultant to manage a campaign. The community committee will move ahead in any event, possibly being more aggressive in message and tactics.

Marian proposed getting an estimate of what a campaign might cost. For instance, we should cost out a special mailing, and maybe get an architect to illustrate visual

effect of the large towers. We could ask Carol to recommend an architect that can do an illustration or a series of illustrations.

We would also want to hold organizing meetings to inform neighbors and get them motivated.

SR 520 Update: Colleen McAleer reports that the official state funded mediation begins Tuesday September 18th from 1-7 PM. She expects about 35 participants will attend, representing local organizations, government, and transportation groups from Seattle and Eastside neighborhoods.

Pedestrian Safety Initiative: At the August LCC meeting, the board unanimously supported funding for installation of red light runner cameras at Five Corners. Since then, five members of the City Council have proposed a Pedestrian Safety Budget Initiative. Details are included in the agenda packets.

In addition to additional funding for red light runner cameras, the council members are proposing funding for two to four mobile speed enforcement vans that could target speeding vehicles near elementary and middle schools and other priority locations. The vans are set up like the red light runner cameras with sophisticated radar units and cameras and citations are then mailed to speeding motorists.

The council's budget package also includes funding for pedestrian safety infrastructure improvements and technologies, a pedestrian safety education and awareness campaign and funding for new sidewalk development and repair of existing sidewalks. **Motion** by Colleen McAleer, seconded by Leslie Wright that LCC endorse the Council's proposed safety initiative. **Motion passed** unanimously.

Changing SEPA Thresholds: The City's Department of Planning and Development (DPD) has proposed raising the SEPA thresholds to dispense with environmental review that is now currently required. The DPD thinks that existing building codes, historic reviews, the design review process, etc. are sufficient to ensure environmental review of development project that would now be exempt. Under the proposal as it affect Laurelhurst, low-rise and neighborhood commercial would change the thresholds as follow: The existing threshold is 4, 6 and 8 dwelling units in Low-rise zones. This would change to environmental review for 10 dwelling units and above. For the LDT zone would change from 4 to 6 units. For neighborhood commercial, the number of dwelling would increase from 4 to 10. For non-residential square footage increases, in Neighborhood Commercial review would increase from the current 4,000 square feet to 8,000 in Neighborhood Commercial 1 and 12,000 square feet in Neighborhood Commercial 2 and 3.

The Seattle Community Council Federation's letter of March 2007 is included in the agenda packets. The Federation unanimously opposed the changes for a number of reasons. Completing the SEPA checklist does not add much time to processing the permit application. Should there be impacts, the developer would then be required to undertake mitigation measures. The Federation favored continued citizen participation in the environmental review process. Should Children's succeed in its rezone requests for height increases, the changes in SEPA thresholds will make a difference due to the

precedent that will be set. **MOTION** by Brian McMullen, seconded by Liz Odgen to oppose changes in SEPA thresholds. **Motion passed** unanimously.

Neighbor Appreciation Day Planning: Coco Sherman, LCC's special events coordinator, has indicated that she will be unable to chair organizations of the February 2008 Neighbor Appreciation Day reception.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Minutes by Stan Sorscher