

# Laurelhurst Community Club

Serving 2800 Households and Businesses in Seattle's Laurelhurst Neighborhood

---

January 15, 2008

Members of the Children's Citizens Advisory Committee  
c/o Steve Sheppard  
Department of Neighborhoods  
P.O. Box 94649  
Seattle, Washington 98124-4649

RE: CAC Process Issues

Dear Members of the Advisory Committee,

The Laurelhurst Community Club (LCC) Board of Trustees appreciates the commitment you all have made in serving on the Children's Citizens Advisory Committee. To ensure an open and transparent process that is fair to both the institution and the community and responsive to committee members, we offer the following suggestions.

Technical questions for LCC consultant: At the January 8<sup>th</sup> CAC meeting, a committee member asked a question of LCC's consultant, Carol Eychaner, during the meeting. The chair objected stating that the matter could be taken up during the public comment period. Committee members should be able to have their questions answered during meetings by whomever they think has information on the topic, as some members may like a different and/or broader understanding of an issue than provided by Children's staff and its consultants. It is also likely that the subject of the CAC question(s) may not be what Carol (or whomever might be called upon) intended to address during the limited time allowed during the public comment period. Thus, the time to respond to questions during this period would cut short any prepared comments that Carol or others might have.

Just as the city council often calls upon individuals in the audience at council meetings with special expertise on an issue to answer questions, committee members should be able to do the same. Committee members should also understand that they have the right to appeal any decision of the chair under Roberts Rules.

Presentations from LCC consultant at CAC meetings: We have been disappointed that there have been no further opportunities for LCC's land use consultant to brief the CAC on various issues and that LCC requests for agenda time have been denied. We hope that will change.

We have been told that LCC can simply provide written materials for the committee to consider. LCC has and will continue to do this, but sometimes a briefing can be helpful to ensure an understanding of the many complex issues. For example, it took Carol many hours to research the issues and prepare the handouts distributed at the January 8<sup>th</sup> CAC meeting. A couple of minutes or so during the public comment period was an insufficient amount of time to explain the materials.

The Laurelhurst community is a major stakeholder in the Children's master planning process. LCC and its consultants have spent many hours researching and analyzing issues that are of concern to the community and the CAC, and will continue to do so. We will likely ask for agenda time at future meetings to share some of our research and analysis with the CAC, and respectfully request that such time be granted.

Additional briefings by Eychaner: Carol Eychaner has offered to meet with CAC members to provide information about the environmental review and major institution processes. We have heard from some of you interested in this kind of briefing. If others are interested, please let us know right away. We understand as Steve Sheppard explained that any meetings involving CAC members should be limited to no more than seven members and we will comply with that requirement.

Report of interim activities: We recommend that DON staff provide a very brief report of meetings, events, activities and important discussions involving CAC members and the institution, DON and/or DPD with the institution or CAC officers, and issues that have surfaced in the interim. This is sound practice and will ensure that all CAC members are informed of substantive emails and meetings between parties and have the same tools upon which to make decisions.

Agenda setting: While it is the role of the chair to prepare the agenda in consultation with the institution and DON, committee members should also have a role in agenda setting. Generally, under Roberts Rules, the agenda is adopted at the beginning of each meeting. This is the time when members have the opportunity to add other items or make changes to the agenda. Most groups have established a practice of contacting members or representatives prior to agenda preparation for suggested agenda items. This allows the chair to determine whether time permits to allow the agenda item. Groups often have an agenda item called "changes to the agenda." Some groups reserve a few minutes at the end of each meeting for suggested agenda items for the following meeting. These are ideas the CAC should consider.

Process issues: To save time and to ensure accurate information to committee members, we recommend that the chair defer process questions to DON staff who has an in-depth understanding of the Major Institutions Code, environmental laws and Roberts Rules.

Thank you for considering our suggestions. If CAC members are interested in meeting with Carol Eychaner please let us know right away.

Sincerely,

*Jeannie Hale*

Jeannie Hale, President  
3425 West Laurelhurst Drive NE  
Seattle, Washington 98105  
206-525-5135 / fax 206-525-9631  
[jeannieh@serv.net](mailto:jeannieh@serv.net)

cc: Stella Chao, Department of Neighborhoods