

Final

Bassett Neighborhood District Monthly Meeting

7:30 p.m., 8 June 2009

Capitol Lakes Retirement Small Dining Room, 333 W. Main St.

Meeting called to order at 7:03 p.m.

Attending: Paul Brandl, Brandon Cook, Jonathan Cooper (acting chair), Jim Eisenmann, Griffin Klema, Rosemary Lee, Maureen and Jon Miner, Paula Oeler (minutes), Officer Pedro Ortega, Alder Mike Verveer

1) Introductions. Jonathan Cooper noted that Pete Ostlind asked him to act as chair tonight.

2) Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes. April minutes were taken by Griffin Klema while David Knuti was going to type up & distribute. No one recalls a distribution so Jonathan will check with David on status of April minutes.

3) Community Police Officer. Pedro Ortega-Mendoza (Portega-Mendoza@cityofMadison.com and 577.5734 cell) was in attendance. Jonathan noted that we're pleased to have him in attendance and that Pete suggested asking for a report on what the Central Police Team is currently focusing on. Officer Pedro Ortega (as he signed in) gave an overview of his background and noted that alcohol enforcement during the UW school year has shifted more towards drug enforcement to reduce the dealing happening in various locations in and near downtown. More plain-clothes enforcement is yielding good results. The team is also working the railroad corridor (private property) to keep fisherman off the tracks (80% of those contacted recently were from Milwaukee) and homeless from sleeping along the rail line. Asked about bar time crowd issues – it was noted that Madison Avenue and Rams Head have been given 30-day suspensions in addition to liquor license modifications. Other problem spots have diminished, some due to establishment closings and/or management changes. Rosemary noted that the new owners of the Majestic Theater were recently given an award by the Madison Police Department.

Officer Ortega encouraged residents to call or email him (see above). He checks both voice and email regularly even on days off. He strongly suggested that residents call the police instead of confronting homeless people in foyers and doorways. This led to a discussion of panhandling on West Washington and Alder Verveer encouraged Officer Ortega to contact the officers who have been working on the West Wash Corridor Initiative for an overview. This collaborative community policing effort with the businesses in the 500 & 600 blocks had led to substantial improvement with respect to loitering and panhandling.

Asked about being able to come to our meetings regularly, Officer Ortega has talked to his superiors about switching his day off once a month so that he can attend during scheduled working hours. He expects that this will happen and everyone agreed that that would be great. He was thanked for coming. Officer Ortega then left the meeting.

4) 415 W Main – Norwegian American Genealogical Library Façade Renovations. Jonathan noted that there are two item 4s and that this one has been cancelled as Blanie Hedberg notified him that planned funding fell through. Jonathan anticipated that the library would return to the agenda at a later date.

4) 115 & 117 S Bassett – Brandon Cook. Jonathan introduced this project: Brandon Cook purchased 115 and 117 S Bassett and installed a new foundation that raised the building at 115 18 inches before realizing that work required a zoning variance. He has been issued a stop work order. Realizing that nearly all his plans will require individual variances, Brandon has shifted from the zoning variance process to the City's Planned Unit Development (PUD) process that is reviewed by the Urban Design Commission (UDC), the Plan Commission, and the Common

Council. Brandon discussed the PUD components with drawings and fiber cement board siding samples (a greyish blue and yellow). Both buildings will have new foundations with no elevation change at 117. Brandon would like to extend the siding to the ground (covering the concrete foundation). New basement unit windows would be added. To provide for second exits, a stairwell exit for both basement units would be fitted into the very narrow space between the buildings. The doors (per code) will be locked and there will be an overhead light. He will pave the gravel driveway. 117 is currently a 3-flat with 2 bedrooms in each unit. Brandon would like to add a basement rental unit, bringing the total bedrooms from 6 to 8. 115 is currently a 4 bedroom rented single-family house. Brandon would like to add a basement unit as well as a second floor unit doubling the bedrooms from 4 to 8. Originally planned as a full second story, Brandon is now proposing to raise the roof 6 feet and add window dormers. Except for the dormers in the roofline, 117 and 115 would have similar profiles. 115 is adjacent to a zero lot line apartment building; 117 is next to another 3-flat. The carriage house on the back of the property is not being included in Brandon's immediate plans, nor is the desired addition of porches. He would like to start on 115 so that he has a place to live (he plans on owner-occupancy of one apartment) and then he will move on to 117. To this end, he may seek a zoning variance for 115 so that the basement unit can be finished sooner than the PUD schedule would allow. The planned meeting schedule is UDC on June 17, Plan Commission the following month (July 6 or 20), and Common Council the first week in August.

A discussion of porch additions and fire exits led Alder Verveer to encourage Brandon to review the Bassett Design Guidelines which, although not binding, were developed for exactly this sort of project and therefore seems critical that they be followed. He also suggested meeting with Pete Ostlind who helped develop those guidelines. Given that and the small-scale of this project, it was generally agreed that a large neighborhood meeting was unnecessary, especially given that immediate neighbors will be notified of the city's meetings as well as the presence of across-the-street neighbors at this meeting. There was also consensus that Pete Ostlind's first letter that noted minor alterations should be updated to note that the proposed project is in keeping with the fabric of the neighborhood. Jonathan will send an email to Pete and Brandon should follow up with Pete directly. Jonathan thanked Brandon for returning to the neighborhood and noted that while longer, the PUD process allows for more flexibility and should yield better vetting of the overall project.

5) Development Proposals Status Report

- a) 2 S. Bedford redevelopment (Badger Bus Depot site)** – The steering committee has not met recently as the consensus was that another meeting was not needed. At least one member of the steering committee was concerned with the height of the W Wash elevation (too high). This project has received initial approval from the UDC and is scheduled to go before the Plan Commission on Monday, June 15 at 6pm in Room 201 of the City County Building. Attend meeting to comment personally. Randy Bruce, the architect, sent an email to Alder Verveer wanting to meet. Mike surmises that the meeting will be about landscaping since the UDC focused on the lack of landscaping in the proposal. There is no update about any potential commercial tenant.
- b) Urban Land Interest (ULI) Office Proposal North Shore & Proudfit** – The steering committee has not met in awhile as this project works its way through city approvals. ULI has submitted a PUD for the second office building (a two-story on Proudfit). This project should have been at a UDC meeting already for initial approval, but that appearance was cancelled. This may delay their planned schedule of being before the Plan Commission in July (meets on July 6 and 20). Alder Verveer expects that this project will continue to move forward. [Post-meeting followup: Pete Ostlind noted that ULI received initial UDC approval on May 20.]

c) Lake Park Apartments, Wilson & Bassett (added agenda item) – McGrath gave Jonathan a tour of these apartments last week at which time 36 of 40 units were already rented to the targeted market (generally young professionals). Tenants will begin moving in at the end of the month. Jonathan was pleased with the interior and noted that the units overlooking the park and lake have stunning views.

6) District Chair — Jonathan explained that the new CNI Bylaws have specific language for selecting a District Chair: “The District Chairs shall be elected or designated by each District prior to the Annual Meeting.” The Annual Meeting is June 18 so this needs to be done tonight. Pete Ostlind is willing to serve another term. Rosemary noted that the 2 people she would suggest are not currently willing, but that she would like to see a change. Jonathan commented that he is not in a position to become Chair now, but may be in a couple of years. The length of the District Chair term was discussed, but not confirmed. It will either be a one- or two-year term. Hearing no other suggestions, Pete Ostlind was selected as District Chair. Jonathan will pass on the name to Adam Plotkin.

7) District Reps — Jonathan explained that 3 Bassett District Reps are elected at the Capitol Neighborhoods (CNI) Annual Meeting by everyone present (Bassett is one of five districts). All 3 seats are open. Of the current reps, only Jonathan Cooper is willing to run again as this summer Melissa Berger will be moving out of the district and Griffin Klema will be moving out of state. Rosemary Lee and Brendan McGrath have indicated an interest in running. Anyone else interested in running needs to contact Jonathan or Adam Plotkin (plotkinaj@gmail.com). If no more than 3 people run, then those 3 people would likely become our reps. Rosemary Lee noted that as a member of the Downtown Coordinating Committee she will likely not be able to attend the Annual Meeting since CNI moved its date into conflict with a DCC meeting. It was noted that attending the meeting is not required and that candidates do not make speeches. Rosemary also commented that Dane County Sheriff Dave Mahoney would like to attend a CNI and one of our neighborhood meetings. She requested that the Sheriff be sent a complimentary copy of the CNI newsletter as well as added to the Bassett listserv. Rosemary and Jonathan will coordinate getting the Sheriff regular communication.

7) Bassett Cleanup — Jonathan reported that Brendan McGrath is organizing the cleanup this year and believes it will be held towards the end of this month. Look for an email to be sent out. In past years, cleanup has started at 9am on a Saturday from Jo Tazzina’s Café. Because of consistent yearly efforts over the past few years, the amount of trash has diminished and work should be finished about 11am. Jonathan also thanked Alder Verveer for making sure that street sweeping is done at least annually. This year’s sweeping has already been completed.

9) Alder’s Report – A national trade association for cosmetic dentistry has purchased the National Council of Bar Examiners building at S Broom and W Wilson. Closing on the property should be in the next month, but given a long-term lease elsewhere in Madison, the trade association will not likely move into the neighborhood building for six to twelve months. We should expect to see representatives at the July meeting, as the group would like to discuss purchasing a carriage house property in the 400 block of W Doty. The lot is adjacent to their surface parking and they would seek demolition to expand their surface parking. Mike noted that he gave the representatives a history of their surface lot, including the resulting conditional use permit that allows neighborhood use of their parking lot at night. He indicated to them that getting a demolition permit for a surface lot is not certain and he noted that he is particularly interested in hearing from the surrounding neighbors. The history of the carriage house would also be important to understand.

The Board of Estimates thanked the Bassett Neighborhood for the more than anticipated money returned with the closing of the Bassett TID. The creation of a new TIF district is on the city’s

work plan for 2010 along with the modification of the State Street TID. Mike noted that the neighborhood needs to do a better job of making a case for what public infrastructure improvements would be completed with any increment generated by a new district. According to the city attorney, street pedestrian lighting cannot be paid for with TIF monies and in the past, only street reconstruction projects have included lighting (costs are assessed to adjacent property owners). Mike hopes to convince the city that the upcoming S Broom Street project (2010) will be disruptive enough to get lighting put in. The Small Cap TIF pilot project cannot be restarted without the creation of a new TID and Mike believes its effort to stimulate owner occupancy in the neighborhood is not a vision shared by enough alders to carry the argument for creating a new TIF. Therefore, increment (increased property value) from projects completed this year will go directly to the general funds of the various taxing districts (city, county, school). It was noted that TIDs do not need to conform to neighborhood boundaries.

Apex has informed Mike that they have purchase options on all the property they want at the corner of 100 W Wilson and 300 S Henry so he expects to hear from their facilitator about moving forward on a redevelopment project. Apex closed on the Porchlight property at 315 S. Henry; Porchlight will be moving/expanding the Henry St. program to E. Mifflin and E. Johnson Sts. Mike will suggest to Apex that coming to a monthly neighborhood meeting is their starting point. The destruction of the historic columns on the façade of a Wilson St. home will be an issue raised by the neighborhood. This major project will require a steering committee. It is uncertain whether a hotel is still part of the plan as the nearby Hilton Monona Terrace is likely to exert its option to expand. It was noted that Hyatt Hotel construction on West Wash is moving along.

The Downtown Plan is also moving along. Discussion is now a micro-level, block-by-block discussion. Every day from 10am to 2pm a city planner is available at the storefront office across from the Central Library to hear comments. Mike noted that DMI, a downtown business organization, has been very active in commenting and is proposing to radically transform W Mifflin. He encouraged interested residents to go weigh in since planners are starting to make decisions about what will be in the final document. Another issue concerns whether to argue strongly for making Broom and Bassett two-way streets or keeping them one-ways. Given the importance of this issue, it was suggested that the planners should be invited to the July or August meeting to discuss plans, especially for the Bassett neighborhood blocks.

10) Upcoming Events

a) CNI Garden Tour — Saturday, June 27 from 11am to 4pm. Tour more than a dozen downtown gardens. For tickets or to volunteer, contact Dory Christensen (204-0681). Tickets will be available the day of the tour. See CNI website for more details.

b) CNI Annual Meeting – Thursday, June 18, 7pm at Monona Terrace. Noel Radomski, a former alder, will be the featured speaker. He will be discussing an upcoming cultural plan. The Annual Meeting is also where our new Bassett District Reps will be elected (see above).

7) Other Items brought forth by residents — None.

8) Adjourn. Adjourned at 8:47pm. Next meeting second Monday, July13, 2009 at 7pm.