

## Final

### **Bassett Neighborhood District Monthly Meeting**

**7:00 p.m., 14 December 2009**

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

**Meeting called to order at 7:10 p.m.**

Attending: Brandon Cook, Jonathan Cooper, David Knuti, Rosemary Lee, Davy Mayer, Scott McDonell, Paula Oeler (minutes), Pete Ostlind (chair), and Alder Mike Verveer.

#### **1) Introductions.**

**2) Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes.** November minutes accepted as written.

**3) Community Police Officer.** Pedro Ortega-Mendoza ([Portega-Mendoza@cityofmadison.com](mailto:Portega-Mendoza@cityofmadison.com) and 577.5734 cell). Pete Ostlind announced that Officer Pedro Ortega-Mendoza has been promoted to detective. This means that we will have a new Community Policing Team officer assigned to us late next month.

**4) 115 & 117 S Bassett – Brandon Cook.** As noted on the agenda, this proposal was before the Plan Commission earlier tonight. Pete Ostlind reported that the Plan Commission approved moving forward with house renovations at 115 and 117 S. Bassett, but that the proposed building for at the back of those lots has been referred for a later approval process. Brandon Cook asked those present to comment on plans for the rear building and this discussion continued after more people arrived from the Plan Commission meeting. The discussion covered a lot of topics – including that Brandon should read through the staff report recommendations and strongly consider the Plan Commission’s recommendation to pull the rear building further off the property line adjacent to the houses facing Doty St as well as consider the possibility of removing the third story on that wing which would also reduce the number of units/bedrooms. Some Bassett neighborhood concerns were that the mass of the building did not leave any open space that wasn’t being used for infrastructure purposes (e.g. bicycle/moped/vehicle parking, trash and recycling containers) as well as the long-term implications of the density and mass of the building. Brandon does plan to rent to students at competitive market rates (the houses are fully rented for next year), but he stated that he wants to be making a long-term redevelopment investment that improves the quality of both the front houses and replaces a gravel parking lot with an attractive building. Brandon understands that density is a concern but noted that his proposal has more open space than many of the houses on Doty St. and that he is striving to meet a request of one bicycle parking spot per bedroom although he does not believe every tenant will have a bicycle, scooter, and/or car. There was some discussion of the tragic mistake in the 1960s and 70s of allowing zero lot line buildings and recognition that new buildings will be with the neighborhood for a long time. Brandon recognizes he needs to modify his rear building plans before returning to the Plan Commission. He was congratulated on receipt of approval for the front house renovations and encouraged to start working on his landscape plan in advance of Common Council approval (anticipated at the next meeting on January 5, 2010).

As a side matter, it was noted that large gravel parking lots behind buildings in the neighborhood are generally not considered desirable and that, since 1996, their parking spaces can only be rented to someone who lives within 1000 feet of the leased space. Renting these parking spaces to commuters is illegal. Enforcement is complaint-driven via the Building and Zoning department; the inspectors will make site visits and run vehicle plates to confirm resident-eligibility status.

**5) 151 W. Wilson – Apex Proposal** – Davy Mayer reported that the Apex proposal is on hold until the new year. Steve Yoder of Apex indicated that he would like to put together an informational presentation to the Urban Design Commission (UDC) in February. Davy said that

the neighborhood steering committee does not have enough information about the project yet and that the committee hopes to meet in January to generate an initial list of outstanding questions to be addressed by Apex – hopefully with its planned informational presentation. Davy clarified that Apex is not planning on submitting an initial proposal to the UDC in February. There was some discussion about the impact of the Apex Hotel proposal on the site as a potential future rail location as well as the prohibitive cost of retrofitting Monona Terrace to serve as a station site. Apex’s “tube” concept to connect with Monona Terrace raised many questions. Residents would also like to have a conversation with Apex about how their concepts fits with various plans for the area including with the two proposed concepts for the Downtown Plan (either low-rise or mid-rise development with retention of residential housing facing Wilson St). Scott McDonell asked to be added to the steering committee meeting notification list.

**6) Alder’s Report** – An unveiling of staff recommendations for the Downtown Plan at a public meeting at the Overture Center will likely be in February 2010. Staff and the Plan Commission have been delayed by the Edgewater Hotel proposal that caused a cancellation of their scheduled November workshop. The current schedule calls for this workshop to be held in January to allow the Plan Commission to give staff feedback before their recommendations are revealed. As a result of the delay, there is nothing new to report. The plan should be recommending a study of making one-way streets downtown two-way as well as identifying an area near the Kohl Center as a logical place for a multi-modal station that will likely need the City of Madison to become involved in acquiring property.

Officer Pedro Ortega-Mendoza has been promoted to detective. New police assignments are next month so the neighborhood will be assigned a new community police officer then. Generally about half of the Community Policing Team will continue to choose this assignment.

As a public safety item, Alder Verveer stated that about two weeks ago, two recent local high school graduates were arrested for burglaries in the 300 block of W. Doty. Since then, one of the accused has admitted to an additional robbery. Also, an expensive stolen bike was recovered from one of the accused with police help through a Craig’s List advertisement. Hopefully, these arrests will account for a rash of recent burglaries in the neighborhood.

The recent implementation of the snow emergency rules in the downtown area reminded Alder Verveer that the parking rules do not yet include a suggested change to create no parking times to facilitate snow removal all the way to the curb. However, many more streets were cleared to the curb as the City did tow about 100 illegally parked vehicles during the recent snow emergency. Towed and ticketed vehicle owners were fined a total of \$110 (\$60 ticket and \$50 towing fee). Alder Verveer noted that Brittingham Park now offers free parking during declared snow emergencies – residents can expect the lot off of W. Washington Ave. to be plowed with the added possibility that the lot by the boathouse on Northshore would be plowed. City forestry is working on cutting limbs from damaged trees and branches piled on the terraced should be cleared away soon. Winter parking information and the ability to sign up for email updates is at [www.cityofmadison.com/winter](http://www.cityofmadison.com/winter)

Year-round curb-to-curb street cleaning for Bassett is not likely in the near future as it would require the purchase of additional equipment that would not be allocated during tight budget times. Instead, storm sewer “socks” in catch basins will be added in the downtown area to address DNR concerns about sediment reaching the lakes. Similar to temporary construction-related basins, these will be permanent and cleaned regularly. Finally, confusion over parking at bus stops should be reduced with the addition of new two-sided (car- and pedestrian-friendly) signs placed where people board with no parking here to corner signs placed where appropriate. Installations will be ongoing.

Alder Verveer noted that the Hyatt Place Hotel's liquor license request would be before the ALRC (Alcohol License Review Committee) on Wednesday night (12/16). The CNI executive committee generally responds to these for downtown neighborhoods, but if anyone feels strongly about conditions, please comment now or contact Mike before Wednesday. There was discussion about the hours of operation stated in the hotel's application, the concerns raised by neighbors during the approval process, and the statewide bar time. Typically, hotel bars do not have conditions other than service location, alcohol storage, and whether room service is available. At the ALRC meeting, Alder Verveer will have the applicants state their intentions re: hours of operation based on their application. As liquor licenses are an annual renewal (expire June 30<sup>th</sup>), any concerns or problems as a result of the hotel's first few months of operation can be addressed this June.

**7) Other Items brought forth by residents —**

Status of Cliff Fisher's project on S. Henry St.? The City of Madison has declared the site a nuisance property and the city is proceeding under those circumstances that carry a higher standard than building inspection violations.

Status of Eric Minton and Dr. Bonsett-Veal's project on W. Wash? Financing fell through due to the economy and the project is on hold until at least 2011.

Happy Holidays.

**8) Adjourn.** Adjourned at 8:50pm. Next meeting second Monday, January 11, 2010 at 7pm.