

***CAPITOL NEIGHBORHOODS, INC.***  
**Minutes of Executive Council Meeting Held Tuesday April 28, 2009.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Berger (President), Phelps, Hees, Mayer, Lodahl, Cooper, Megan Christiansen, Stitt, Plotkin, Hecht, Mohs, Patterson, Yarborough, Klema, Fisher, Devitt, Baynard, Verveer, O'Brien, and Hannah Karns (ASM Student liaison to the EC).  
GUESTS PRESENT: Ald. Bridget Maniaci, Madison Police Lt. Kristin Roman, Rosemary Lee, Dean Loumos.

I. The meeting is called to order by Berger. There was not a quorum at the outset. The approval of the minutes was deferred until there was a quorum.

II. TREASURER'S REPORT.

Megan Christiansen reports a balance in checking of \$8,908.42, and another \$8,107.36 in CDs, for a total bank balance of \$17,015.78. We have no liabilities.

III. REPORT ON SAFETY/CRIME DOWNTOWN.

Officer Kristin Roman reports that preparations for the Mifflin St. Block Party are falling into place. The Community Police Team is making contact with Mifflin residents letting them know the guidelines and consequences of illegal activities, while also gathering intelligence. A potential sponsor for the party will apply for a noon to 7:00 p.m. permit from the city street use committee. In response to a question by Mayer, Roman said the event is scheduled to end at 7:00, with the goal being to have the neighborhood back to normal by 8:00 p.m.

There has been an increase in thefts from autos, especially in parking ramps. Police are using additional resources for surveillance. The number of burglaries, on the other hand, has decreased 50% citywide and downtown. Roman believes that extra resources from both the city and county have helped bring about this reduction.

Patterson noted that south side residents are concerned about potential increase in gang activity this summer and asked whether police believe it may spill over into the downtown. Roman said Penn Park has historically presented challenges, but the Central District has not yet noticed any increase. She added that four officers have been assigned as gang liaisons to interface with the police gang unit. The Community Police Team will also focus more on drug activity in the Central District than it has in the past, but it will still focus on alcohol.

[There is now a quorum.]

IV. MINUTES of March 24, 2009 EC Meeting are APPROVED without correction, on MOTION by Mohs; SECOND by Patterson.

V. NEW BUSINESS.

**EC Meeting Time Slots.**

Berger notes that she has put specific time slots for each item on the EC agenda with the goal of completing the meetings by 7:00 p.m.

### **Finance Committee Recommendations.**

Megan Christiansen presented the committee's proposed recommended amendments to the committee's authorizing resolution, put over from the March EC meeting. It would authorize the committee to invest CNI funds in any insured product (e.g., FDIC) offered by downtown banks, savings and loans, or credit unions; any other investments would require prior approval by the EC. On MOTION by Phelps, with a SECOND by Lodahl, the resolution is APPROVED.

The committee has also determined that proposals for cash giveaways by CNI should go before the full EC for approval. The Finance Committee should not have that authority to authorize cash giveaways on behalf of CNI at any dollar level. The EC could, if it chose, refer this to the committee for a recommendation on a case by case basis. This came about, Klema explained, when the Membership Committee decided to give out a \$50 cash prize as an incentive for participating in the membership survey. A MOTION by Megan Christiansen, with a SECOND by Berger that proposals for any cash giveaway go before the full EC, as discussed above is APPROVED.

### **Homeless Housing Resolution.**

Dean Loumos, the Executive Director of Housing Initiatives, Inc., an organization that provides low income housing, has asked CNI to support a resolution before the city council asking it to lobby the State Legislature to keep in place property tax exemptions for low income housing providers. Apparently, the state's low income housing tax exemption that has been on the books for some 30 years is expiring, and housing advocates fear that the change will result in increased homelessness because low income housing providers cannot raise rents to offset the tax burden and maintenance costs. This could affect 1,000 housing units, he added. Loumos claimed that the Mayor and most of the council supports the resolution, although he acknowledged that the city of Madison has also been at the forefront of efforts to remove the tax exemption. Patterson noted that the city council had voted to delay taxing these units pending action on the state level, but the City Attorney would not allow it.

A MOTION by Patterson, with a SECOND by Hecht that CNI go on record in support of the resolution that the City of Madison lobby the State Legislature to maintain the tax exemptions for low income housing, led to a lengthy discussion.

Fisher opposes this, noting that he is a developer who rents to disabled people and competes against the Madison Development Corp. He has to pay property taxes but they do not. Mohs agreed, stating that "a lot of well-to-do people are making money off of this." He added there are so many ways to get into this and it is more complicated than one might think. While the tax exemptions would benefit low income housing providers here, they might also benefit high income retirement communities elsewhere Mohs hopes the legislature takes a hard look at the unintended consequences of the exemptions. Stitt countered that we are still better off with these housing projects, and the resolution puts pressure on the politicians to come up with answers. Klema commented that this is complex, we received the proposal at the last minute and he is very hesitant to support it without more information. He also doubts our support will have a significant impact on the legislature. Klema proposes we table this until next month. Patterson agrees that this is generally a good idea. O'Brien asked when and why the state law was changed. Loumos said it was brought about by a Wisconsin Supreme Court decision that required a

legislative “fix” that also had a “sunset” provision. Apparently the date of the “sunset” provision is fast approaching and these exemptions will expire unless there is action to extend it. He noted that some of the legal challenges to the exemption were brought in the past by the City of Madison itself. Phelps believes this should be tabled because we haven’t had enough time to think about it. He noted that any individual can appear at the city council hearing to support the resolution if they so choose. Plotkin noted that the legislature’s Joint Committee on Finance will be done with its work on this before the May EC meeting.

Stitt calls the question. The Motion is APPROVED by a vote of 10 to 5, with 3 abstentions.

### **Downtown Living Tour – Workload and Profit Sharing with DMI.**

Berger reports that DMI would like for us to contribute more to the tour. In the past, CNI has done 1/3 of the work and received 1/3 of the proceeds from the event. DMI believes that CNI’s role has slipped in the past few years. In response, Stitt acknowledged that DMI believes we are not carrying our weight, but DMI should specify what they need from us. He asked what Susan Schmitz is proposing. Berger answered that Schmitz wants a dialogue with us and suggested we propose what we think is fair. Cooper pointed out that he has in the past opened up his home as part of the tour, and is happy to do so again. He participated in the tour as a supporter of CNI. That should be taken into account. Mayer asked whether CNI provides its mailing list to DMI. Phelps said we do not. Berger suggested we might offer the list to them for the tour. Patterson volunteered to help on the tour and suggested we look back to see what our original responsibilities were. Baynard also pointed out that the shifting of more responsibility to DMI came in part due to the fact that DMI had paid staff, whereas we do not. Megan Christiansen referred back to Cooper’s remarks and encouraged CNI member-residents to open up their homes for the tour. Berger said there is no need to resolve this today.

### **New Downtown Alderperson.**

Newly-elected District 2 alder Bridget Maniaci introduced herself and was welcomed to her first EC meeting. Mohs noted that Ald. Maniaci recently spent several hours with Mansion Hill residents, touring the district and learning about the planning process for the district. Mohs believes she is committed to learning about the neighborhood and about its issues. Stitt told Maniaci it is extremely important that she regularly attend the EC meetings; this matters to us and to the city, he added.

### **Nominations for Neighborhood Chairs and Elected Representatives.**

Plotkin is compiling a list of names of those who are up for election for neighborhood representative positions at the June Annual Membership Meeting. Plotkin will find out from the district chairs whose positions are up this term, and what openings there are. Lodahl asked for clarification on how district chairs are selected. Mohs explained that the chairs are chosen by the elected district representatives. Phelps agreed the district chairs need not be elected to that position. Cooper explained the new bylaws provide that district chairs are to be selected prior to the Annual Meeting, but they do not explain how that is done. Phelps then read directly from the bylaw provision to the effect that the

district chairs shall serve as voting members of the EC and shall be “elected or designated” by each district prior to the Annual Meeting.

### **CNI Membership Survey Results.**

Klema distributed the results of the membership survey. They show that personal and property safety are the highest ranking concerns of the 73 people who responded. He added that “volunteering” rated toward the bottom. Klema urged us to focus on what our members see as the most important issues. The committee believes we need to target under-represented individuals such as the student and early career demographics where only 10 people responded. The committee is looking into alternative media sources to increase membership (i.e., on-line media outlets and digital technology). Suggestions are welcome. Patterson noted that Microsoft has a free package that might be useful. In response to a question from Phelps, Klema said a winner of the survey lottery was selected and has been contacted. Klema has yet to hear back from the person. If he does not hear back in the next two weeks, Klema will select another winner. Klema said he will share the survey results at the meeting with the Mayor tomorrow (4/29). Stitt thanked Klema for the committee’s work on the survey.

### **Central Neighborhood Association Collective (CNAC)**

According to Berger, this is a newly-formed collective of representatives of six central neighborhood associations: CNI, Marquette, State/Langdon, Greenbush, Vilas, and Dudgeon/Monroe. The objective is to have 1-2 representatives from each association meet quarterly to collaborate. At each meeting, 45 minutes would be devoted to a presentation on an issue of concern to the members, and 45 minutes would then be devoted to a general meeting. Berger said the CNI representative would report quarterly to the EC. She asked for EC approval of our participation in this. Patterson commented that this seems similar to the idea of a Planning Council we discussed forming a few years ago, and suggested we revisit that concept. Verveer added that the city sets aside \$1/4 million each year for neighborhood planning councils that have paid staff and city support. Verveer had proposed 3 or 4 years ago when Zellers was President that CNI consider forming a planning council. He had even obtained modest funding for it in the city budget, but nothing came of it. If we are still interested in the idea, Verveer is willing to seek funding for it again. He said the council would likely include CNI, Tenney/Lapham and Marquette neighborhoods. Berger noted that the six neighborhoods in the CNAC focus on downtown issues as well as the campus culture, and have established, well-run associations. Verveer noted that Marquette and Tenney/Lapham also have great associations. He encourages us to add them too. Cooper asked whether those two associations are already in the East Isthmus Planning Council. Verveer does not know, but pointed out we could create whatever boundaries we want. Patterson argued this would give us more clout and access to city funds. It would also bring together both residents and neighborhood businesses. Berger will talk further with Verveer about this and perhaps bring this back up at the May EC meeting.

### **Posting EC Minutes on the Web.**

Klema raised the issue of posting EC minutes on the website when sensitive topics are discussed such as last month's alcohol issues committee discussion. All agreed the minutes should still be posted, but not until after corrections are made.

A MOTION by Klema, with a SECOND by Megan Christiansen, that we continue to circulate the EC minutes on the listserv but that we wait to do so until after they are corrected and approved by the EC, is APPROVED.

### **Status of Alcohol Issues Committee.**

Cooper reported on the recent meeting of the EC to discuss the status of the AIC. He noted that at the March EC meeting, we voted to temporarily suspend the operations of the AIC. The recent meeting at the library involved a discussion between the EC and AIC members. He described it as a good discussion as to where EC and AIC members stand on this. They discussed the transcript of the recent ALRC meeting (that Klema had requested be put into the record along with the minutes of the March EC meeting) where concerns about the AIC were discussed by the ALRC. Cooper said AIC members expressed surprise that the EC was unhappy with the way things were going. There is a need to improve communications, he said. The AIC and the EC agreed to meet again May 5, 2009, 5:30, at a place to be announced. Cooper described it as a good step and a great meeting. He urged everyone to attend the May 5th meeting.

Stitt commented it is important to understand there is a difference between reviewing license applications and advocating on issues related to alcohol abuse. CNI still wants to be able to review applications, but the AIC is also interested in advocacy. Perhaps they could form a separate organization to advocate on issues of concern relating to alcohol. Perhaps each district could review license applications in that district; although he noted that a lot of the applicants are within the Mifflin West and State/Langdon districts. If State/Langdon is no longer part of CNI, Stitt noted, we would no longer have any influence with respect to that district's establishments. He also noted that three establishments are now having their licenses reviewed due to sales to underage customers. It shows the AIC has had an impact by causing the ALRC to pursue these matters. The "bottom line" is that we need some constraint on alcohol.

Berger added that we discussed establishing a protocol in hopes of getting everyone working consistently. Mohs observed that we lost our relationship with State/Langdon and with the students due in large part to the tone we used. We have a lot of work to do with the students and with their neighborhoods.

Guest Rosemary Lee pointed out that State/Langdon is no longer part of CNI, but that does not prevent any citizen from going on their own before the ALRC or the city council to protest a license application in that or in any other district. Anyone can get a copy of a license application from the City Clerk, she added.

Berger said we need to streamline the application review process; do we need to give applicants a questionnaire when we already have the necessary information, she asked. She added that former Ald. Eli Judge could not attend EC meetings because he had issues with the process. Patterson noted his church had a session on how to recognize people with substance abuse problems. Treatment is another option; we need to find a way to help, he said.

### **VI. OLD BUSINESS.**

### **The Role of CNI President after June.**

Berger reminded everyone she still intends to step down as CNI President after the June Annual Meeting. We will need a new President. She suggested forming a search committee. Stitt suggested suspending the rules so we could ask Berger to continue. But, assuming Berger does not want to continue, there are people here on the EC who are able to do this job. It has to be one of us, Stitt said. Or, Phelps added, it could be someone we select at the June meeting.

### **Parking Subcommittee.**

Devitt has nothing to report.

## **VII. DISTRICT REPORTS.**

### **James Madison Park.**

Hees reports the owner of the boathouse at J.M. Park has asked for permission to cordon off the roof and have private parties catered by Blue Plate. This is now being discussed internally. Hees also notes that Ilse Hecht's handiwork can be seen in the planters.

### **Mansion Hill.**

Devitt reports the meetings on the Edgewater Hotel proposal continue. They are being facilitated by Tim Anderson. They met recently with Brad Murphy from the Planning Dept. Stitt asked whether the Mansion Hill neighborhood plan is in jeopardy because of the Edgewater proposal. Mohs answered it is not, but said it has been painful to see the mischaracterization of the neighborhood as "commercial." Devitt added that, if there were no Edgewater issues, then there would be no planning issues.

Verveer asked whether anyone had heard from Trek Bicycles, the new owner of the Mansion Hill Inn. Mohs said they had not, but the hotel is now open. Mohs believes the new manager understands the issues but does not want to get involved. Verveer received a call from Trek seeking an alteration to their conditional use regarding parking and landscaping. He has no details at this time. Verveer will refer the Trek representative to Devitt.

### **Bassett.**

Cooper reports the Badger Bus Depot steering committee has met several times. An advisory statement, generally in support of the project, is in the works. The developer has applied for rezoning to a PUD and has submitted an SIP that will go before the Plan Commission June 15th and before the city council July 7th. Verveer reports Urban Design voted last week to approve the Badger Bus Depot redevelopment plan. Mayer asked where the Badger Bus will now stop. Verveer believes Badger will simply shift over to the UW Union, where they already stop, as well as any requested stops along the route. The bigger issue is what Greyhound Bus will do. In response to a question by Berger, Verveer said demolition will not likely begin until a tenant is lined up. The depot will remain open until then.

Urban Land Interests has proposed a second office building for the site on North Shore and Proudftt. ULI has met several times with the steering committee. Cooper described it as "a good building" that should fit in nicely with the neighborhood. Verveer said ULI has not yet submitted an application but he expects one soon. Verveer added

that when he hears CNI and Bassett being labeled “anti-development,” he can point to these as among the examples of a positive process with development teams. Cooper added it has been a positive experience working with Monona Bay Neighborhood Association members on the ULI project.

Cooper reports the Hyatt Hotel on W. Wash. is starting to take form.

Phelps asked about the status of State/Langdon because it puts our boundaries in question. Phelps has e-mailed Jule Stroick but has not gotten a response. He’ll continue to pursue this and Verveer will help.

### **Mifflin West.**

Lodahl reports the Central Library project is moving ahead rapidly. The city committee will make a recommendation within 60 days. Verveer thanked Cooper and Ostlind for the amazing turnout at Capitol Lakes last week for the library meeting. He said the city committee meets tomorrow (4/29), 6:30 p.m. at the library. He encourages anyone interested to attend. The Mayor’s address to the Rotary Club last week appears to support construction of a new library. Verveer believes the choice may come down to whether we go with the Fiore proposal or renovate the existing structure and expand vertically

Lodahl reminded everyone of the Mifflin St. Block Party next weekend.

### **First Settlement.**

Megan Christiansen notes that the recent proposal to construct a hotel on the Municipal Building site will be a topic of discussion with the Mayor tomorrow (4/29).

## **VIII. REPORT OF THE ALDERPERSONS.**

Verveer thanked everyone for their support for himself, especially with regard to his continuing service on the ALRC. Berger also noted we received a “thank you” letter from the Mayor for expressing our support for Verveer.

Verveer notes that all liquor licenses come up for annual review before the ALRC in June. Alders, police or the City Attorney can ask that specific licenses of “problem establishments” be separated out for review. In the past, this would normally result in a “slap on the wrist.” But this year, Verveer said, police have “upped the ante” by seeking to shut down 3-5 establishments at the May 12th meeting. The result could range from non-renewal, placing conditions on the license, chastise the owner or put on notice. If we had an AIC committee, it would want to weigh in, he said. If anyone knows of problem establishments, let the ALRC know so that the licensee does not get a “rubber stamp” at the meeting.

Verveer has worked to obtain a sponsor for the Mifflin St. Block Party in hopes of avoiding the violence of past years and in other college towns in recent weeks. The idea is to take the party back to its roots in 1969 when the Mifflin St. Co-op sponsored it. He said campus radio station WSUM has been helpful. The focus will be on food, entertainment and porta-potties. Verveer believes the permit will be granted tomorrow (4/29) by the city.

A few years ago, the city council passed an ordinance to ban alcohol in Law Park due to problems there with chronic alcoholics. It has a “sunset” provision. Verveer is sponsoring a new ordinance to make the alcohol ban in Law Park permanent.

In response to the recent efforts by the city to tax the Majestic Theater for the encroachment of its marquee over the sidewalk, Verveer has introduced an ordinance exempting landmarked buildings from the encroachment fee. He may expand the ordinance to exempt all landmarked properties in an historic district. Fisher asked whether this exemption would apply to the Argus building. Verveer said it would.

Verveer announced the State St. TIF district has been expanded to Mansion Hill for 2010. This may include reconstructing all of Gilman St. from State St. to Wisconsin Ave, and Carroll St. as well. It boils down to how much construction Mansion Hill can handle in one season, he added.

## IX. COMMITTEE REPORTS.

### **Student Liaison.**

Hannah Karns distributed a handout on the “Move-Out Night” Initiative. This covers the period from noon August 14 to noon August 15 when renters – mostly students – are moving in and out of their apartments. Three university lots have been made available for use strictly by students: lots 91, 83 and 7 (at the Fluno Center, at Granger Hall and next to the Kohl Center). She hopes to get volunteer students and CNI members to patrol the lots on two hour shifts from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. Karns passed a signup sheet around and asked everyone to please volunteer. Karns also announced the Visitor Information Service in the Student Activities Center will be open 24 hours that day.

[At 7:00, a MOTION by Patterson, with a SECOND by Mohs to extend this meeting 10 minutes, is APPROVED.]

Patterson suggested contacting area businesses to donate food and coffee. Karns also explained that they are working with UW Transportation Services who made the three lots available. Berger thanked Karns for her work on this. Karns announced that her term as Chair of ASM ends this week but she would still like to serve on the EC.

### **Education and City Issues Monitoring.**

Patterson has nothing to report.

### **Garden.**

Yarborough reports that work continues on the May 17th geranium sale and the June 27th Garden Walk. She asked each of us to sell 10 tickets. With one week to go, 259 geraniums have been sold and \$2,000 has been raised. While they had hoped to sell 600, it now appears about 300 will be sold, she said. Yarborough acknowledged the flower sale’s sponsors, including Fred Mohs.

### **Program.**

Baynard proclaimed last week’s meeting on gangs in Madison (4/23) a success. Berger agreed, calling the meeting “terrific.”

On May 28, 7:00 p.m. at Gates of Heaven in James Madison Park, Jim Draeger of the State Historical Society will discuss Historic Buildings in Downtown Madison, focusing on architectural styles.

### **Membership/Media.**

Klema reports that the overhaul of the CNI website is still in the works. Information is being pulled together into a centralized form.

The committee is working with DMI to come up with ways to increase membership based on the CNI survey results.

Klema announced he will be leaving us for law school in the fall.

### **Development.**

Phelps has nothing to report.

### **Finance.**

Megan Christiansen announced that the city will let us use the remaining \$1,200 from the 2008 grant Joe Bonardi received for Period Garden Park.

### **Physical Linkages.**

Mayer has nothing to report.

### **Downtown Plan.**

Berger reports there was a great meeting 1 1/2 weeks ago to discuss the plan.

### **President's Report.**

Berger thanked everyone for their help.

MEETING ADJOURNED

**NEXT EC MEETING: *Tuesday May 26, 2009, 5:15 p.m., State Capitol Rm 415 NW.***

AGENDA for May 26 EC Meeting\*

I. CALL TO ORDER AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF APRIL EC MINUTES.

III. TREASURER'S REPORT.

IV. NEW BUSINESS.

- **Report on Meeting with the Mayor.**

- **Other.**

V. OLD BUSINESS

- **Safety/Crime Downtown.**

- **Neighborhood Chairs and Elected Representatives.**

- **Downtown Living Tour Workload and Profit Sharing with DMI.**

- **Alcohol Issues Committee Status.**

- **Central Neighborhood Assoc. Collective (CNAC).**

- **Housing Inventory – Candidates for Owner Occupancy.**

- **Parking Subcommittee.**

- **Other.**

VI. DISTRICT REPORTS.

**Bassett, Mifflin West, Mansion Hill, James Madison Park, First Settlement.**

VII. ALDERPERSONS' REPORTS.

VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

**ASM Liaison, Education and City Issues Monitoring, Garden, Program, Membership/Media, Development Review Oversight, Development, Finance, Physical Linkages, Downtown Plan, Ad Hoc Homeless, Alcohol Issues, President's Report.**

IX. ADJOURNMENT.

**\*Agenda is subject to supplementation by CNI President Berger.**