

LICTON SPRINGS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Community Meeting, May 18, 2016
NSCC Campus, OCE&E Building, Room 220B

Directors Present: Jan Brucker, Kay Mesirow, Melanie Davies, Kathleen Braden, Mike Cuadra, Mindy Lee Irvine, and Ellen Beck.

Visitors: Thomas Whittemore (Department of Neighborhoods), Christa Dumpys (Department of Neighborhoods), Lee Bruch (Safe Routes to School), Marie Oliver, Ken Thompson, Sandy Law (works for SDOT and outreach for the Bridge), Laura Jenkins (Coordinator, Find It, Fix It Community Walk Program), Pat McKenzie, Ron McKenzie, Art Brochet (SDOT, Outreach for the Northgate Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridge), and Sabrina Bolieu (with Deborah Juarez' office).

Treasurer's Report. The April bank balance was \$6,111.87.

Minutes. The April 20, 2016 minutes were approved as presented.

Board President Jan Brucker called the May meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS.

Northgate Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridge. Art Bouchet talked about the pedestrian bridge. He is with SDOT and the outreach person for the Northgate pedestrian/bicycle bridge. When I-5 was built it separated neighborhoods and people have been seeking a way for several decades to reconnect across the freeway. He explained the model that he had brought to illustrate his informative update.¹

Art related history of bridge funding. First, Sound Transit announced it was in favor of the bridge, but it wasn't its job to build a bridge. King County was in favor, but also not its job. So the City said they would take the project on and try to secure funding. Sound Transit announced it would pay \$5 Million if the remaining funding for the project were secured. The City put up \$5 Million and said it would seek additional funding; then the State passed \$10 Million for the bridge in the budget passed last year. A Federal Tiger grant was sought for the past two years, but not secured. However, in last November's election, the citizens of

¹ When the Northgate light rail station was announced, interested groups started planning the pedestrian/bicycle bridge and seeking funding.

Seattle generously passed the Move Seattle Levy, which included \$15 Million for the bridge. Therefore the project has \$35 Million of relatively solid funding.

SDOT has gone through a type, size and location study. The geography was studied, including environmental considerations, and along with levels of demand and other factors. The best locations found for it to “land” were near North 100th on both sides of the freeway. An architectural firm served as a subcontractor to SDOT’s engineering group, and together they, with other experts did many studies of alignments and the options for what type of bridge it should be. Following an open house, the bridge type selected was a tubular truss.

The alignment has gone through several refinements. The bridge now goes from the northeast corner of the parking area on the campus, south of Barton Woods and crosses I-5 at a point where WSDOT will allow a foundation to be built between the express lanes and the north-bound lanes, and then crosses over to the mezzanine level of the Sound Transit Light Rail Station at Northgate. The bridge will be 17 ½ feet over I-5, and almost 40 feet above the grade of Northeast 101st. The length of the bridge is necessary because of the ADA requirements² on slope and because of the height requirements of crossing above I-5. It takes 20 feet to come down one foot, so the looping of the bridge achieves this.

The status of the project: achieved 30% design last fall. Then it was double-checked. At present the cost is estimated at \$35 Million. There was a cost study to confirm whether to proceed with design. SDOT will assess the study and will know more at the end of the summer. Construction could begin next spring/summer, if the plans don’t change.

SDOT has concerns regarding pedestrians/bicyclists and buses on the east side. On the College side, the area where the bridge will land is near the location for ground water collection. So the City doesn’t want to interfere with that. Also, the City needs to plan on how to handle the water that drains off the bridge, which is the City’s responsibility.

Jan mentioned the statements of Deborah Juarez that she would like to see changes in the design. Ms. Juarez was doing outreach with the Northgate Mall, Northwest Hospital, and the College. Sabrina Bolieu³ (with Deborah Juarez’ office) mentioned the input they had gotten were small changes. Sabrina says that Deborah Juarez is very interested in and excited about the bridge. She is considering seeking private dollars, not further public monies, if more funds are needed because of minor changes requested.

Art stated that Sound Transit is providing an additional \$5 Million to develop better bicycle access routes to the bridge, especially 100th, from College Way to Aurora.

² Can’t have more than 5% slope.

³ sabrina.bolieu@seattle.gov

The Transit Station has an escalator and an elevator, but the Station will be closed between 1:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. for maintenance.

Kathleen Braden asked how long it would take a person to walk across the bridge. The answer was eight to ten minutes.

It is impossible to jump off the bridge or throw anything off the bridge. The City will maintain the bridge. The Seattle Police Department will be responsible for safety/crime. There are no places on the bridge where people can hang out for no purpose. Lighting is important and call boxes are being considered. You will be able to see people coming towards you. The bridge is not shielded for weather⁴ and traffic noise will be loud. Also, the bridge will cut 1.5 miles from the distance people have needed to walk to get to the east side before the bridge.

Mayor's Walk, Find It/Fix It. Laura Jenkins reminded us the walk will take place on Tuesday, May 31, 2016. It will begin at Oak Tree Village, in front of the cinema, at 6:00 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. We need to publicize this and get our neighbors out because there will be a large contingency from the City and we need to equal or outnumber them. You can talk directly to City officials and, of course, the Mayor. There are also Find It/Fix It community grants available just to our neighborhood of up to \$5,000.00. The grants open next week. The stops along the walk will include the new schools under construction, safe routes to school, and Licton Springs Park. She said there would be a City Walk planning meeting regarding the route, and who would be speakers, on Thursday, May 26th, from 7:00-8:00 p.m., at Lantern Brewing, 95th and Aurora.

Councilmember Juarez. Sabrina reminded us that Deborah Juarez is usually in her office at the College on Fridays. Sabrina said that she herself is there from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. She requested that people wanting to meet with Councilmember Juarez email her.

Introductions. We made introductions around the table as we had just gone into Art Brochet's information about the pedestrian bridge at the beginning of our meeting.⁵

Aurora Licton Urban Village ("ALUV"). Jan reported the ALUV had put together another street fund application to have colored treatment of cross walks on Aurora, not just for the safety of school children going to the new schools, but for all folks needing to cross Aurora. This

⁴ This will make it unpleasant for anyone hanging around unnecessarily.

⁵ Please note that April minutes do not reflect Marie Oliver elected because she was absent, but all were in favor of having her join the Board.

application is up for consideration at the upcoming meeting of the Northwest District Council (if there is a quorum).

Capstone Studio Project - UW Architecture School Master Study. Melanie Davies reported the Capstone Studio Project that focused on Licton Springs began last fall and went nearly a year! In the wrap-up presentation, the students presented long term visions for an area within our neighborhood and a short term project that could be done immediately and perhaps have a big impact! They are publishing an MLA Capstone Studio Booklet (1. Civic Landscapes Themes; 2. Neighborhood Analysis, Community Process, and Studio Framework; and 3. Design Proposals (by each student)). We are getting the Booklet for the Council and also some of us are individually getting copies. The Booklets will be finished in three to four weeks. We are really indebted to the students and Julie Johnson, who is in charge of the Capstone Studio Projects. We are also indebted to Melanie for suggesting to Julie that the Capstone Studio do its project in Licton Springs!

Jan described some of the projects, which included a vision of the North Precinct site as a community center, eight students focused on Northgate Elementary School, a school where 24 languages are spoken, and the kids are from low income homes. There was also a student who focused on Aurora. She envisioned a bus tunnel accessible from the middle of Aurora and a more pedestrian friendly landscape, but no decrease in the lanes of traffic.

NEW BUSINESS.

Safe Schools Walk Near New Schools. Lee Bruch announced that there will be another walk taking place on Monday, June 13, 2016, from 5:00 p.m. to approximately 7:30 p.m. with Councilmember O'Brien. This walk will be around the new schools.

Secondly, there is another group doing a bicycle ride with Councilmember Johnson on Monday, June 6, 2016, with a number of people from SDOT from 65th up to Olympic View School, then over to the new schools under construction, then back to the Ravenna area. This will be from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

NWDC Judging of Grant Proposals. Kathleen Braden is going to be one of the judges reviewing the grant proposals from across the City. Thank you, Kathleen!

Meeting with Brian Dougherty of SDOT. Melanie, Lee and Jan met with Brian Dougherty. Melanie reported the SDOT study of North 90th last week. The gist of the study is that they are looking at the vehicular crossing and potentially remaking 90th with only left or right turning access onto Aurora (and not driving straight west). A left turn light would also be established. SDOT will be doing outreach concerning this change and asked for our help to get the word out. At North 92nd they will recommend a pedestrian activated light. Lee

mentioned that the traffic once the schools open will increase dramatically. Cars making a right turn onto North 90th will increase by 40% to 50% (depending on if it is a.m. or p.m.).

Aurora Merchants Meeting. Jan reported on attending the Aurora Merchants meeting on Tuesday. The meeting began at 7:00 a.m. It was a small Board meeting. Jan was able to tell them about the SDOT study. One of the Board members there was the owner of ACME Auto Electric and he indicated he was not concerned about the announced changes. He reported that he hears complaints of neighbors on the west side about drivers cutting through from the eastside. The Aurora Merchants are prepared to be against the activated light at 92nd. The light at 90th and the light at 92nd will be synched, so if you are driving on Aurora you wouldn't be stopped twice. Jan also commented that the Aurora Merchants would only be affected for about a half hour in the morning and a half hour in the afternoon. Melanie noted that there will be an island added at 92nd, so you will no longer be able to make a westbound turn onto 92nd.

North Precinct Report. Mike Cuadra reported on the North Precinct Advisory Council. They had a discussion on drug cartels in our city and state. He will give more detail on that on a later date. Property crime is increasing and we need more police officers. Jan said because of the budget cycle, this is the time to write a letter to the City Council requesting more officers. With the new Precinct being built at North 130th, officers are going to be traveling farther and response times will be longer. It would be great to have some officers still in local in the neighborhood. Jan noted that the Aurora Merchants were all in favor of that.

Discussion followed. Licton Springs has had a higher increase in property crime than other parts of the city. It was agreed that we should have our own letter with our own perspective. Getting 200 new officers just replaces the hundreds who will be retiring. We need more officers than the number retiring!

North Seattle College Meeting. Jan said that a number of us had attended the meeting at the College. Kathleen said that the College had just gone through the accreditation process and one of their core requirements is to reach out to the community. So, this meeting was primarily for outreach. It seemed the biggest challenge is funding because the College is now competing with UW, WSU, and other large universities for funding. Ellen Beck added the College is about to get the upgraded sign for the corner of College Way and North 92nd. It will be electronic and easier and faster to change announcements. It will also be lighted.⁶ We were told about the plan for upgraded signs by Monty years ago, but now it is about to happen. Melanie said that she really sympathizes with the challenges the College has to raise money.

⁶ This is why the College began to light the old sign – to get people used to a lighted sign.

Jan added that the College announced it was going to need people to serve on the Advisory Committee regarding development plans for the College and the Department of Neighbor-hoods was organizing that for them. She was surprised that members of the Community Council have to individually apply by May 31st. This is very short timeline. Jan said she was highly offended because we had asked the very question of Andrea Johnson and she mentioned no deadline. Jan requested verification from Tom Whittemore. We had received no prior notice of the May 31st deadline. Even Kay Mesirow living across the street from the College received no notice. Why isn't the Council included?

Refreshments Donation. Jan said that the refreshments she paid for last February for our large meeting in the old cafeteria, where we were forced by the caterer to purchase more refresh-ments than we needed and ended up donating them back to the College. Jan requested a motion that this could be a donation from her to the Council. It was moved and seconded and passed unanimously.

Good of the Order. Jan reported that ALUV is going to have a booth at the Celebrating North Seattle event on Sunday, June 26, 2016, which is sponsored by the Church. We can organize at the June meeting what we should do. There are a lot of kids, so it would be great to have some activity.

Mike announced that the University Street Fair is this weekend.

Melanie reported that the new head of the Sustainability Office at North is a young man named Christian, who has replaced the Christian, who we know from the past.

Our next meeting is Wednesday, June 15, 2016.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen M. Beck, Secretary

