



City of Bellingham MAYOR'S NEIGHBORHOOD ADVISORY COMMISSION

February 14, 2007

The Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Commission meeting was called to order by Kathryn Hanowell, neighborhood services coordinator, on **Wednesday, February 14, 2007, at 6:35 p.m.**, in the Mayor's Board Room, Second Floor, City Hall.

APPROVED MINUTES

1.	<p>Attendance: Unless noted below, all were in attendance: Substitutions: Guide Meridian/ Cordata – Cathy Starr; Lettered Streets – Howard Steiner Absent: CBD, Mount Baker</p>
	<p>JSYAA Feedback Exercise – Janice asked group for feedback on newsletter, what's working, what's not working. City staff is going to work on updating newsletter.</p>
	<p>Items from the Neighborhoods</p>
2.	<p>6 Year TIP Process Recommendation – Mike Robinson Explained that a committee met of Brad Rose, April Markiewicz, Mike, Chris Comeau of Public Works, and Kathryn. Because of quick timeline, group recommended that for 2007, each neighborhood submit one priority directly to the City. Mike asked group to think about how to process that info for next time in anticipation that they could plan a process in October/November of next year for MNAC to look at TIP as a whole but be fair to all neighborhoods. Therefore, Kathryn sent information via email. Donna asked if sub-committee would continue to work. Kathryn explained that this committee was ad hoc but that if the group is interested, at the next meeting we could discuss an ongoing role and ask for volunteers.</p> <p>Alabama Hill: Trouble with landlord/ tenant issues – looking for help from other neighborhoods on similar experiences; rash of mailbox thefts.</p> <p>Birchwood: Electing new board members, sent out newsletter to approx 700 households; 2 new rezones – Birchwood Greens – staff recommended to PC to not review proposal; Allsop Development [Squalicum Lofts] – rezone from industrial to mixed use residential – was recommended by city staff and Planning Commission to go forward. Council will decide on docketing for review on March 12.</p> <p>Columbia: Allsop proposal is main concern of neighborhood. Traffic will change with addition of project on Squalicum Parkway. Mayor explained that he had asked PW to do a baseline traffic count on West Street – will allow us to look back over the years.</p> <p>Sunnyland: Review of WSDOT site – upcoming rezone, PC went along w/ staff recommendation to not docket plan. TIP: improved pedestrian trail crossing at Alabama (Ellis St.) Route between Sunnyland Elementary and Bellingham HS.</p>

Cornwall: Elections coming up, bylaws being updated, continuing to work with surrounding neighborhoods.

Edgemoor: Brad discussed process on selecting TIP projects. Their TIP: Add sidewalks to Fieldstone for school safety.

Fairhaven: Thom expressed how impressed he is with how much work everyone is doing. Preparing to send out neighborhood survey. Kathryn explained that City staff will help with a neighborhood data base for mailing lists. Fairhaven Plant Sale at parking lot north of Village Green coming up on March 31st. This is a fundraiser for the association.

Guide Meridian/ Cordata: Sponsoring first neighborhood summit on March 6. Represent large geographic network for communicating needs of area.

Lettered Streets: Noted confusion between TIP and NTSP.

Puget: TIP: More sidewalks between Edward and Racine. Having confusion with traffic calming devices – look like roundabouts but aren't.

Roosevelt: Traffic calming circles have become a problem – planted w/ dirt and plants causing people to drive over them. Would like boulders put in circles, but Fire Dept won't allow. TIP – sidewalks and bike lanes on Carolina St.

Samish: Working with Sehome Neighborhood on Samish Way. Annual membership meeting on March 13. TIP: Improvement of Samish Way – sidewalks and bike lanes. Want to get large project started. (Vince Biciunas noted problems w/ getting assigned police officers to attend meetings.)

[Editor's note: In follow up with the Police Department, please make requests for police department representatives to attend your meetings through Lieutenant Steve Felmley (738-7371). Officer work schedules and reassignments as well as requirements to maintain minimum patrol staffing may sometimes interfere with our ability to attend neighborhood association meetings but we will do our best to get someone to your meeting when requested].

Sehome: Potential rezone – waiting for neighborhood plan update before area will be rezoned. Working with surrounding neighborhoods on neighborhood plan issues. Sustainable Connections will work with neighborhood – Dave Christiansen will be working w/ group on design concepts. Nick Zafaratos will be working with his planning students and Sehome on their plan. Dealing with growing membership – working on how to efficiently update information, would like to share the costs of membership management software – willing to work with other neighborhoods. Allen would like to have on next month's agenda to cover this – use Small and Simple Grant \$\$? Allen asked any interested to email him.

Silver Beach: City staff presented on zoning (Kim Spens and Kurt Nabbefeld); new website up; newsletter published, sent out to 1400 residents; Discussed concern with proposal for floating piers on lake – a SB committee will meet with Steve Sundin of Planner to discuss concerns over concern that pier will mean more boats on lake and this seems incompatible with City goal of making lake clean and healthy.

	<p>South: No issues on residential streets – mainly concerned w/ arterials; neighborhood would like to know about potential changes affecting neighborhood and whether there is any news on Chuckanut Ridge proposal. Mayor Tim reported that he is not aware of any. Steve noted that the uncertainty regarding this major development is a challenging situation in terms of updating neighborhood plan. Neighborhoods need to know what the reality of the issue is.</p> <p>South Hill: general membership survey on least-safe streets – Highland Dr. – working to get sidewalk on east side of Highland Dr. Issue with collector arterials. Formed subcommittees on 3 areas. Blockwatch contacts have been beneficial in facilitating the process. Came up with speeding problems, accident concerns, etc. Putting out neighborhood survey on street improvement issues.</p> <p>WWU: Noted new crosswalk going in a Birnam Wood. Better lighting in walkways from BW to campus. Appreciate the installation.</p> <p>York: Annual meeting coming up this month.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Information from the City</p> <p>Reports from the Mayor’s Office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood Services Coordinator Plan amendment process--Working with Nicole Oliver on neighborhood plan amendment – putting together resource packet for process. Planning work sessions for neighborhoods – 1st one in early April – bringing together Parks, PW, and Planning staff to provide technical assistance for those working on neighborhood plans. Working on financial assistance paperwork. Traffic - Need names of traffic rep if you’ve not yet submitted. Library – would like copies of neighborhood newsletters – give to Kathryn and she will forward. New Waterfront Redevelopment Manager – Len Johnson – coordinating work on waterfront. • Mayor Tim Douglas Participated in meeting with Lummi nation. Lummis are presenting Healing Pole to one of the families who lost a son in the Olympic Pipeline explosion. This will be installed near Whatcom Creek. Installation ceremony on April 22. Waterfront – recognition of themes for waterfront – research, clean up, focus on Puget Sound, noted list of recognitions/ awards/ lists that Bellingham has received centered on environment and noted importance of WF being redeveloped in conjunction with our commitment to the environment. Clean air, clean water, needs to continue to be enjoyed. Noted Bellingham citizens high rate of recycling. Statement of what this community values. <p>City Council 2007 Priorities – Presented by Councilmember Terry Bornemann Terry served on MNAC years ago and knows importance of group; feels strongly about input from group. Discussed council’s 2007 goals and priorities. Most get carried over</p>

	<p>from year before. Have to make sure objectives are measurable for review in the next year. Goals lay out services that citizens expect. Goals recognize importance of neighborhoods. Council will be putting more effort in supporting economic development – Mayor Tim noted we will be working on expanding existing smaller business, sustainability through economic development.</p> <p>Terry noted large percent of population that is low-income; must have balance with total community.</p> <p>Improving disaster preparedness –new goal for 2007. Setting up own Emergency Response system this year. Council recognizes that we are not as prepared as we should be and they want to fix that.</p> <p>Discussion with group on issues/ concerns.</p> <p>Terry mentioned willingness to continue work on landlord accountability issue.</p> <p>Public Involvement Survey Report – Mary Dumas presented.</p> <p>Assessment was initiated last fall. Report was presented to City Council on Feb. 5. Mary noted high response rate of citizens, passion, intelligence of respondents.</p> <p>Assessment identified opportunities to improve public involvement.</p> <p>Focus areas of improvement on things that were implementable. Noted parallels between staff and citizens responses.</p> <p>Better public involvement does not equal more public involvement. City needs to clearly articulate uniform policy throughout different departments. City needs to be more strategic in involvement. Rebuild trust. Working partnership is why process needs to start earlier.</p> <p>Q – Tom Scott mentioned need to change to Muni Code in regard to notice –</p> <p>A--Some changes may be necessary; issue not brought up in recommendation highlights.</p> <p>A- Interdepartmental guidelines may drive that process.</p> <p>Improve design of activities, come up with more diverse ways to get input. Consistency between departments should be goal. Can help citizens know when to become involved..</p> <p>Interdepartmental team presentations can increase cross-sector thinking, and reduce redundancy.</p> <p>Neighborhood reps are the experts on what is going to be meaningful work.</p> <p>This report is just one part of City’s effort to improve public involvement.</p> <p>Asked for Group feedback –</p> <p>Donna said process was great, interview questions were great, elicited enriched responses. Others noted this as well.</p> <p>Mayor Tim – DHs have heard the report, changes have been underway, taking this very seriously. Working on preparing a matrix of involvement activities, timelines, key staff that deal with citizens, etc. Transparency and reporting back is key; want to keep it simple and effective.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Overview of the 2006 Alabama Hill Neighborhood Survey, Doug Bestle, MNAC Rep for AHNA</p> <p>Did survey with \$250 small and simple grant. Process took one summer to complete. 202 responses on survey – covered 500 people in neighborhood. (1800 homes in Alabama Hill neighborhood.)</p> <p>Large volunteer effort. More than half of respondents have lived in neighborhood more than 10 years. Residents are older.</p> <p>Why people chose particular neighborhood: established, calm & tranquil.</p> <p>Question on traffic speed asked – is speed acceptable? Question on traffic calming – if people want them.</p> <p>Question if people use public library, and how often.</p>

	Suggestion – City can make template survey for all neighborhoods to use. (Portland has one) Janice asked members to look at City's surveys conducted in 2004, 2006.
5.	Adjourned at 9:05 p.m.