

Laurelhurst Community Club
Minutes for November 12, 2007
St. Stephen's Church, Seattle WA

Attending: Jeannie Hale, Emily Dexter, Stan Sorscher
Mark Trumbauer, Leslie Wright, Brian McMullen, Barbara Bender, Liz Ogden. Colleen McAleer

Excused: Barb Bender, Joe Herrin, Mark Holden, Marian Joh, Heather Newman, Don Torrie, Maggie Weissman

Guests: Len Nelson, Patsy Sawa, Jo Bramwell, Allene Caddy, Lois Jones, Karmann Kaplan, Christina Koons, Rod Cameron

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

Treasurer's Report: Marian Joh could not be here tonight. Marian has indicated that that there has been no significant activity to report to the Board in the last month.

Holiday card signing: Jeannie Hale will bring cards to the December meeting. Trustees were asked to notify Hale of department staff people with whom they have worked to add to the holiday card list.

Minutes: The board reviewed the minutes of the September and October trustee meetings. In the September minutes a motion regarding safety was mistakenly recorded under the SR520 update. That motion should be in the next item of business, the Pedestrian Safety Initiative. **Motion** by Barbara Bender, seconded by Colleen McAleer, to approve the September 10, 2007 minutes, as corrected. **Motion passed** unanimously. **Motion** by Barbara Bender, seconded by Emily Dexter, to approve the October 8, 2007 minutes. **Motion passed** unanimously.

Appointments: LCC needs to designate an alternative representative to the Northeast District Council (NEDC). NEDC meets the first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. in Wedgwood. LCC also needs a rep to the City University Community Advisory Committee (CUCAC). Holden is the alternate. CUCAC meets approximately eight times a year, the second Tuesday of the month. Stan Sorscher agreed to attend the November CUCAC meeting. With the loss of trustee Nan Haigwood who moved to Oregon, LCC needs someone to take the lead on parks issues. Emily Dexter volunteered to work on parks. Leslie Wright agreed to be the alternate for NEDC.

Mark Trumbauer is working with Boy Scouts on a project at Waterway #1.

Children's update:

1. Open meetings act violations: Children's responded to LCC letter pointing out apparent violations of the Open Public Meetings Act in knowingly refusing to move the location of the September 26th meeting to accommodate a larger crowd. At the meeting, neighbors were not allowed to enter the meeting room due to lack of space. Earlier, Children's had indicated that if an overflow crowd showed up, the meeting would be moved to the hospital's cafeteria. Children's letter was unresponsive other

than to say it was unfortunate and to blame the problem on LCC due to LCC's insistence that the meeting be in the neighborhood.

2. Children's push poll: In response to numerous complaints from neighbors, LCC wrote to Children's and the Department of Neighborhoods for information about the phone survey commissioned by Children's and also asked for a copy of the survey. Children's was nonresponsive. The City did not receive a copy of the survey although some employees were surveyed and commented informally on the substance of the questions asked.
3. Children's outreach to other neighborhoods: Community councils in Phinney Ridge and Mount Baker contacted LCC to report that Children's had contacted their organizations to schedule community meetings on their proposed expansion. LCC wrote to Children's consultants to request a list of events they have scheduled or are in the process to schedule so that Laurelhurst could have a presence at those meetings. To date, Children's has been unresponsive other than to say they would let LCC know some time in the future. The Mt Baker club invited LCC representatives to their meeting about Children's.
4. City's rejection of study of LCC alternatives: DPD's letter to the CAC rejecting study of the LCC alternatives in the EIS is included in the correspondence packets. Little rationale is provided and much of what is stated is based on faulty information.

LCC subsequently wrote to DPD requesting that it reconsider denial of study of the LCC alternatives. During the last master planning process, the LCC alternatives were studied. In the meantime, Ruth Benfield wrote to the CAC stating that Children's has incorporated elements suggested by LCC. Benfield's statements in the letter, however, are misleading. As a starting point, LCC relied upon many of Children's design parameters—but these design parameters have little or nothing to do with avoiding or minimizing the impacts of the proposed expansion. Contrary to Benfield's letter, Children's has not accepted any of the important design elements proposed by LCC for study in the EIS. LCC land use consultant Carol Eychaner prepared a detailed analysis of DPD's response. That memorandum is included in the correspondence packet.

5. Media event: On October 30th, LCC was contacted by KOMO TV news and other media sources about a planned media event at Children's that afternoon. LCC emailed Children's for information about the event, but there was no response. The media did provide information it had received about the event. Hale, Ogden and Len Nelson showed up to attend that afternoon. They were not allowed in and guards were on hand to keep them out. They were told that Children's is private property and the event was only for the media. LCC wrote to the Mayor and the directors of the Department of Neighborhoods and DPD to protest the exclusion.
6. October 30th CAC meeting: Over 130 neighbors attended the October 30th meeting of the Children's Citizen Advisory Committee. The City had requested that Children's come up with alternatives with lower building heights. At the meeting, Children's proposed heights of 160 feet for study, in addition to the 240 foot alternatives it has proposed. The 160 foot level exceeds the height of any major

institution in low density/single family neighborhoods by 55 feet. The highest height the city has ever approved in these areas is 105 feet, and that has been in areas bordered by the freeway.

One alternative proposed would eliminate the affordable, 136 unit garden-condominium complex of Laurelton Terrace. Another alternative shuffles the tower layouts bringing rooftops to 160 feet. A variation of this alternative shuffles the towers northward. The CAC unanimously voted to ask the City and the hospital to reconsider studying the LCC alternatives.

There was extensive coverage of the October 30th meeting in The Seattle Times and the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. KUOW also covered issues raised at the meeting.

7. New Laurelton coalition: In response to Children's plans unveiled at the October 30th Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting to study acquisition of Laurelton Terrace for expansion, a new group has formed—the Laurelton Action Coalition. This group of neighbors does not want to lose their homes. They have hired an attorney and are planning on defending their homes and the community from any attempt by Children's to buy-and-bulldoze the 136-unit garden condominium development.

Coalition members shared their concerns with the Laurelton board and other neighbors at a Laurelton homeowners meeting on October 25th. They have since hired their own attorney to protect their segment of the neighborhood. In the meantime, the Laurelton board has hired its own attorney to facilitate the transfer of property to Children's. One Board member resigned, but two new Board members have been added.

Most units in Laurelton Terrace are owned by residents or "investor-homeowners" who live in one unit, but own other units.

The coalition takes issues with statements by Children's staff Ruth Benfield at the October 30th CAC meeting who said that Laurelton would become available for construction due to the actions of the Laurelton board in hiring an attorney (three-quarters of the fees are being paid by Children's) and because the complex in her view is run down, burdened with debt and has no funds needed to do the work. In the meantime, Laurelton has continued its ongoing projects to maintain, repair and upgrade infrastructure systems and features such as sewers, siding, porches, window replacements, plumbing and electrical.

The Laurelton Action Coalition consulted with four lawyers who specialize in preparing covenants and bylaws for condominium associations. All four agreed that tightening and/or adding covenants to prevent a Children's takeover are common, legal and should be effective if written and executed properly. The lawyer hired by the coalition will brief homeowners at a meeting on November 28th.

Motion by Colleen McAleer, seconded by Emily Dexter that Laurelhurst Community Club supports the actions of Laurelton Terrace residents to maintain the existing use

of Laurelon Terrace as homes with no change in the current boundaries. **Motion passed** unanimously.

Rod Cameron praised Carol Eychaner, LCC's consultant. Rod said the challenge has been superb. Also, he suggested satellite campuses instead of building up at the Sand Point location.

8. Support from allies: The Seattle Community Council Federation, a coalition of community groups throughout the city, wrote to the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) on November 6 urging DPD to reconsider its decision to reject study of the alternatives proposed by LCC for study in the EIS. The Federation joined with the Children's Citizen Advisory Committee and the Northeast District Council in asking DPD to reconsider its decision. The Federation letter is included in the correspondence packet.
9. Children's Citizen Advisory Committee meeting: The meeting is tomorrow, November 13 from 6-8 p.m. on the Battelle property in the Cedar Room. At the meeting, there is expected to be an initial presentation on progress in preparing the preliminary draft EIS. As usual, there will be an opportunity for public comment. Children's had yet to explain the methodology it has used in calculating the need for expansion, which is different than the methodology used by the state board of health that has estimated Children's only need 65 new beds through 2020.

CALLS AND CONCERNS:

1. Childrens Hospital: LCC continues to receive a high volume of calls and emails from neighbors concerned about Children's proposed expansion and its purchase of the Laurelon Terrace garden condominium complex and the one-sided push poll undertaken by Children's consultants.
2. Private Security: LCC has also received a number of messages regarding crime in the neighborhood and an interest in exploring the possibility of hiring private security.
3. Possible code violations: Barb Ragee called on 10/24 to report possible code violations at a home in the Town of Yesler. She will get the street address so LCC can follow-up.
4. City Light issue: On 10/16, Marilyn Ginnever emailed to inquire whether the city or the homeowner is responsible to the buried electrical service up to a house. She wasn't able to get an answer from the city. LCC suggested she contact the city's Customer Service Bureau as they respond to all inquiries within a day or two. Ogden also responded that at the "masthead" it becomes the customer's responsibility—that's up against the side of the house. Up to the house, it is the city's responsibility and it doesn't make a difference if the lines are underground or overhead.
5. Sewer drains: Grover Ellis called on 10/18 to urge LCC to alert neighbors to clean their sewer drains to avoid the flooding problems we had last year during the big storm. Last year, his sewer got clogged and there was three-four inches

of standing water in his front yard that seeped into his basement. He drives a Vespa and suggested that LCC ask neighbors to clean up leaves on the roadway and not sweep them into the street.

6. Dangerous intersection and abandoned car: Christine Barrett emailed on 10/18 and 10/30 to let LCC know that she had reported an abandoned vehicle on Sand Point Way near 40th and she also raised concerns about the dangerous crossing at that location where there have been two recent serious accidents, one involving a fatality. The abandoned car was removed. Barrett is disappointed that the intersection doesn't qualify for a crosswalk. Ogden responded that the area is being studied as part of complete study of Sand Point Way by the transportation department and its consultant. The consultant is the same one that LCC hired to do its north Laurelhurst transportation master plan and LCC has been in touch with her.
7. Speed watch: Jean Amick emailed several times in October to suggest that LCC support using the city's speed watch program, rather than alternatives such as speed humps and traffic circles. Ogden responded that LCC does recommend that neighbors participate in the speed watch program if they have speed problems in their area. She explained that sometimes neighbors participate, but that it is hard to get people to spend their time out on the side of the street with a radar gun. She added that it seems to help for awhile as drivers tend to check their speedometers when they see someone pointing a radar gun at them. But, then speeds go back to usual when the drivers are not monitored.
8. Tree removal: Barbara Manning emailed on 10/12 to ask about removal and replacement of two evergreen trees on the back of a vacant lot they are buying on 47th Avenue near 34th. Ogden responded.
9. Junky house: Marian Goddard called on 10/11 to express concern about a vacant, empty house on NE 44th and 36th NE. The house is very unsafe and is attracting neighborhood kids. LCC explained that the house has recently been sold at auction. Goddard also mentioned that the street light was out and was told who to call to report this at the city.
10. Proposed housing development: On 10/08, Robert and Patricia Skinner who live on 45th Avenue and 47th to inquire about the recent purchase of two adjoining lots across the street from where they live. The developer who purchased the lots plans to build three homes on the two lots. Ogden researched the lots and learned that the square footage of each is 6,120 and that the developer can make three properties out of the two. They will still have to get a master use permit to short plat the properties that will be to a size that is substandard to the zoning. Ogden explained the loophole in the Code that allows a substandard size lot if the new size is at least 75 percent of the zoned square footage and at least 80 percent of the mean lot size on the block face. Two other nearby houses built in 2005 and 2006 already passed this test and are the size of the three proposed new lots—4,080 square feet. LCC is regretful for the loophole in the Code and continues to work to eliminate it.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Thank you: Thank you to Don Torrie for coordinating distribution of this month's agenda packets and to Stan Sorscher for assisting.
2. Will be missed: Joe Herrin will be resigning from the board in January to get involved with the AIA urban design committee and to get it steered to working on SR 520 issues.
3. Children's Master Plan Meeting: November 13, 6-8 p.m., Talaris, Cedar Room, 4000 NE 41st Street. At the October 30 meeting, the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) voted unanimously to write a letter supporting reconsideration of study of the Laurelhurst Community Club (LCC) lower scale alternatives in the EIS. At that meeting, Children's laid out a revised conceptual plan that would lower the planned towers 80 feet, from 240 to 160 feet—55 feet taller than any height approved by the city for low-density, residential areas. The two new entrances on residential streets and expansion of the major institution boundaries are in the revised plans, which also still call for the addition of 1.5 million square feet.

At the November, there is expected to be an initial presentation on progress in preparing the preliminary draft EIS. There will be an opportunity for public comment at the meeting. For further information or to find out the meeting location, contact Steve Sheppard at 206-684-0302 or steve.sheppard@seattle.gov, or go to www.laurelhurstcc.com or www.childrensaction.com.

4. Parks Meetings on Strategic Business Plan: Seattle Parks and Recreation will hold more than 30 public meetings in late November and early December to gather input from community organizations and individuals as Parks prepares a new Strategic Business Plan. The Plan will lay out a strategic vision for how Parks' programs, services and facilities can meet recreational demands within anticipated financial capabilities over the next five years. Meetings in northeast Seattle and nearby areas are:
 - Monday, November 26, 7-9 p.m., Montlake Community Center, 1618 E Calhoun Street
 - Tuesday, November 27, 5-7 p.m., Ravenna-Eckstein Community Center, 6535 Ravenna Avenue NE
 - Thursday, November 29, 7-9 p.m., Laurelhurst Community Center, 4554 NE 41st Street
 - Saturday, December 1, 2-4 p.m., Green Lake Community Center, 7201 E Green Lake Drive N
 - Tuesday, December 4, 6-8 p.m., Arboretum – Graham Visitor's Center, 2300 Arboretum Drive East
 - Tuesday, December 4, 7-9 p.m., Meadowbrook Community Center, 10517 35th Avenue NE
 - Wednesday, December 5, 7-9 p.m., Magnuson Community Center, 7110 62nd Avenue NE
5. Funding for library collections deficit: On November 6, LCC wrote to the City Council urging support for the recommendation of the Friends of Seattle Public Library for \$2.5 million for increased funding for books, materials and computer replacement.

On November 10, LCC was notified that the Council unanimously approved adding \$2 million to the collections budget for 2008. In addition, the Council approved a Budget Guidance Statement indicating that the Council intended to set a new base budget level for future years that is at least \$1.5 million greater than that proposed by the Mayor for 2008. This recommendation will be given a formal final approval in Full Council on Monday, November 19.

6. Proactive rental housing inspection program: On November 7, LCC wrote to the City Council asking that \$75,000 be added to the budget to develop a proactive rental housing licensing and inspection program. This is the second year in a row that LCC has supported this funding, in large part to address the inability of the City to enforce the Code as it applies to the Laurelhurst rooming house. On November 9, Councilmember Conlin responded that the Budget Committee of the Whole decided not to allocate the money in the budget. He added that the Council will consider funding the study from the Council's consultant budget.
7. Open Houses on community vision for Magnuson Park: Seattle Parks and Recreation will hold three open houses in November to share with the community information about improvements to Warren G. Magnuson Park. They will be Saturday, November 17 from 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Monday, November 19 from 5-7:30 p.m. and Tuesday, November 27 from 6:30-9 p.m. All open houses will be held in the Brig (Building 406) at Magnuson Park. The Arena Sports proposal will be discussed along with other proposals from nonprofit groups.
8. Parent Pledge and Directory: Eckstein parents and guardians will soon receive information about signing a pledge stating that they will not allow underage drinking to occur in their homes. Those who sign the pledge will be included in a directory of "safe homes" where children will not be allowed to drink alcohol. The directory will be distributed in the spring. Further information is included on the NEDC announcement handout.
9. SR 520 catastrophic failure plan: The meeting that was supposed to be held by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the SR 520 Bridge Replacement and HOV Project on Tuesday, October 9 was cancelled with no prior notice. That meeting is rescheduled for Thursday, November 29. Weissman and McAleer showed up in the morning and the afternoon to participate.
10. Neighbor Appreciation Day Student Art Contest: Saturday, February 9, 2008 will mark the city's fourteenth annual celebration of Neighbor Appreciation Day. Once again the City is asking Seattle students to contribute original artwork for a contest as part of this annual event. Winning art depicts caring and active neighbors, reflecting the theme of Neighbor Appreciation Day. The winning artwork will adorn free greeting cards available at City Hall, the 13 Neighborhood Service Centers, and libraries throughout Seattle. The winner will also receive \$100. Student artwork must be received by Friday, December 14th, 2006 at 5:00 p.m. Seattle students, kindergarten through 12th grade are invited to submit entries.

REPORTS/ACTION:

NPAC/crime update: Brian McMullen distributed a map and report of all crimes reported in Laurelhurst from 2007, along with the monthly crime statistics from Diane Horswill. The handouts showed a cluster of incidents on Webster Point - several stolen cars and a creepy house break-in.

Private patrol: McMullen briefed the board and neighbors on the research that he has undertaken to assess the feasibility of hiring private security to patrol the neighborhood. He has been in touch with Windermere, which has had private security for several years. Residents pay \$500 in annual dues, which covers the \$40,000 annual cost of security out of a budget of \$130,000. The officers patrol in uniform, carry guns and radios, respond to 911 calls and use their own cars. They have an email list for those who want to be aware of the issues that surface. They check on houses when people are on vacation, if asked, and one officer coordinates with the Windermere community group.

McMullen pointed out the differences between Windermere and Laurelhurst. Windermere has about 400 homes, of which 380 belong to its beach club. Their geographic area is about one quarter to one third the size of Laurelhurst. They have few entrances into their neighborhood, while Laurelhurst has many (at least eight).

Windermere's crime rate is relatively low with some vandalism. The key is visibility and education. A Seattle Police officer coordinates the private service in his personal time.

Brian looked into the details of funding in Windermere and he needs to follow up. However, Beach Club dues are already very high, and some Laurelhurst neighbors might want to pay security dues, but not beach club dues. Also, many homes in Laurelhurst are not in the beach club zone.

McMullen stated that education and awareness programs have the biggest impact on crime. He said that security services will never make the area "crime free" or catch many crimes in progress. He said the perception of security is more important and has a bigger impact than actual security.

Wedgwood has a very well organized block watch program. Our block watch structure has eroded with time, as people moved in and out of the area.

Rod Cameron suggested a Newsletter reminder about simple steps neighbors can take in their own homes to reduce crime.

McMullen recommended that LCC improve the education and awareness component of crime prevention. He suggested contacting block watch Captains to schedule crime prevention session, recruiting new Captains and hosting a neighborhood crime prevention meeting. He recommends some kind of email box for reporting and alerting the community to criminal activity.

McMullen also suggested increasing the visibility of security in the neighborhood and discussing ways to fund sporadic coverage by private patrols. He recommended that LCC develop a survey to assess community interest in private security and willingness to pay.

Outdoor public pools—update: Emily Dexter briefed the board. On October 9, LCC wrote to the City Council supporting funding in the budget for a feasibility study for siting additional outdoor public swimming pools. Councilmember Della, the lead on this for the Council, was unable to garner five votes to add funding to the Mayor’s proposed budget, although he did have support from Councilmembers Conlin and Clark. Money will, however, be allocated from the existing Parks budget to fund an initial study to look at city-wide need and revenue/expense projections for outdoor pools at a more modest level. Elizabeth Nelson attended the October 10th City Council budget hearing on LCC’s behalf. Both Dexter and Nelson are actively working on this issue. The pool group now has a website at www.seattlepools.org. Elizabeth is organizing swim teams and local groups to support "Project Seattle Pools."

The Parks Department will be hosting several meetings throughout the city for input on a new Strategic Business Plan. The committee working on promoting outdoor public pools is encouraging supporters to attend the meetings. The meeting at the Laurelhurst Community Center is on Thursday, November 29 from 7-9 p.m.

Christine Larson was appointed to the Parks Board. Public hearings will be scheduled to hear what residents priorities are.

Revisiting the Arena Sports issue at Magnuson Park: In October 2006, LCC voted unanimously to oppose commercial use of Hangar 27 at Magnuson Park by Arena Sports. Arena Sports would like to convert the hangar into private uses—an indoor fitness club and sports arenas. This building is currently used by community groups for a variety of purposes—the Friends of the Library books sales, the Lakeside Rummage Sale, the annual Northwest Crafts show, the Rat City Roller Girls, just to list a few. The hangar is also home to a federally protected colony of Cliff Swallows that passes through each year and stays for a month or so on their migratory flight path.

Both the Seattle Community Council Federation and the Northeast District Council have endorsed the letter from the View Ridge Community Council that is included in the correspondence packet regarding commercialization of Magnuson Park and preservation of the area as a multi-cultural, multi-use urban park dedicated to arts, education, recreation and environmental amenities that are available to the public.

Motion by Emily Dexter, seconded by Mark Trumbauer, to reaffirm our position on Hangar 27. **Motion passed** unanimously.

Holly oak replacement: At the May 2007 trustee meeting, the board voted unanimously to authorize up to \$500 to replace the holly oak tree that was destroyed by a careless driver and to replace the name plaque. The plaque was lost when either the UW or the transportation department cut the tree remains down. Liz Ogden reported that she found a tree for \$200, and planting would cost another \$200.

Boy Scout bench donation: The Boy Scout Eagle project would install benches near the Basketball court at Waterway #1. The LCC Board expressed enthusiastic support for the Eagle project, and invited the project leader to speak to the Board, if he is interested.

Bridging the Gap/Neighborhood Street Fund large project fund outcome: Roughly 143 proposals were boiled down, using standard criteria from the City. A handful of proposals remain, with a budget of \$2 million per sector in the City. In the Northeast sector, one leading proposal would build curbs and road improvements near Decatur School, which is currently muddy and gets a lot of traffic.

SR 520 update: Colleen McAleer said the RTID ballot measure failed, which casts a long shadow on the funding picture for the SR 520 bridge replacement. She described some tensions within the mediation group. Colleen sees Richard Conlin as leaning toward the Pacific Interchange option.

A team from the Danish construction firm is back in the area to assess the idea of a combined bridge-tube option.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Minutes by Stan Sorscher