

**Whittier Alliance – Community Issues  
Draft Meeting Minutes**

June 11, 2007 – 6:30PM - 9:00PM

Whittier International Elementary School, 315 West 26 Street

**Present** – Michaela Ahern, Nimco Ahmed, Rita Amann, Bill Baxley, Alex Bauman, Tom Bissen, Mary Cable, Chris Carrow, Erica Christ, Jim Coury, Felino de la Pena, John Donahue, Ethan Fawley, James Glasgow, Verne Greenlee, Eric Grumdahl, Kim Havey, Wayne Henrikson, Dean Kallenbach, Joe Krumpelmann (BKV), Larry Ludeman, Brooks Mahoney, Garrett Mosiman, Jo Ann Musumeci, Pam Newsome, Pam Nordaune (MCAD), Doug O’Sullivan, Heather O’Sullivan, Jesse Oyervides, Nancy Pomplun, Nancy Railsback, Jim Roscoe, Greg Sautter, Jenny Sautter, Lesley Schack, David Schuster, Gary Simpson, Rosarah Townsend, Lisa Vecoli

**Speakers Present** – CPS Sarah Sexton-Mahmud, Rep. Karen Clark, Huey Fung, Craig Wilson (Kandiyohi), Michael Krause (Kandiyohi), Ted Redmond (BKV), Mike O’Keefe (MCAD)

**Staff Present** – Marian Biehn, Josie Shardlow, Eric James

The meeting was **called to order** at 6:30 PM by CI Chair Destin Nygard; introductions were made and the Standard of Conduct and Conflict of Interest policies were reviewed. The **agenda** was reviewed and **approved**. The **minutes** from the May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007 CI meeting were reviewed and **approved**.

**Announcements, Community Comments & Discussion**

Jim Roscoe addressed traffic concerns at 29<sup>th</sup> and Pleasant, Pillsbury. 29<sup>th</sup> and Pillsbury had a major accident recently. Destin acknowledged a lot of stress on residents in that area and hopefully solutions will occur.

A resident was upset that meetings regarding Fair Oaks Park aren’t being given public notices. The only neighborhood representative at a Park Board meeting was a member from Friends of Fair Oaks Park and he doesn’t represent the n’hood. She said she was insulted the neighbors are not being included in the discussion. Marian said the meetings started back in December 2006 initiated by CM Lilligren to tackle alcohol related crime in the park and have developed more broad discussions. There are minutes available for the past three meetings, which have not been secret meetings and are open to the public. Attendance has included affected nearby organizations and interested parties. A visioning meeting with residents is being planned in July. Nimco clarified major partners were involved first to establish some foundation to the initiative and are going to involve greater resident involvement. The purpose is to review past work and get info from the Park dept on possibilities so that can it can be part of the information presented at the n’hood meeting.

Ted asked about Lee’s Cleaners. Ownership was transferred to Lee Poppenhagen’s daughter and they are rebuilding the site. Marian noted a letter of support for rebuilding will be requested from the CI. Erica asked about the incident and it is being investigated as arson.

Community Events, Josie: June 16 is a Butterfly Festival garden planting at Los Amigos headed by Jim Roscoe. Materials and plants are provided and we need people power to help plant. Starbucks will have free coffee. Jim Roscoe said the goal is to have children do all the planting. There is a meeting next Tuesday, June 19 regarding safety issues at Clinton Park, 6:30pm at the park. Wednesday, June 13 is the Wine Tasting event.

**Fifth Precinct Report – Sarah Mahmud-Sexton**

Lt. Frizell was not available and Sarah presented. Block Leader Training is July 11 at the Precinct. National Night Out is coming so block clubs should be organizing now for a party. Apartment or condo clubs are also very helpful in getting to know neighbors and knowing who should or shouldn’t be in your area.

The crime map was reviewed. A lot of business burglaries are occurring which are instances of break-ins of laundry coin machines. Machine companies should be asked to empty those frequently. Sarah encouraged residents to join the Crime Alert mailing list for crime maps. A resident asked if there are any prostitution crimes. Sarah noted the map did not show those but the website does show all types of crimes. Again, everyone should call 911 to document crimes and trends. Jim asked about several robberies and whether they are aggravated assault. Sarah noted all assaults are included if they are also a robbery. Inspector Arneson has buy back money to have officers do overtime on narcotics and drug details of gang activity from 26<sup>th</sup> to 32<sup>nd</sup> and Grand to Nicollet. Most of northwest Whittier is being targeted for crime reduction. If residents have creative ways to spread information please contact Sarah. In terms of other neighborhoods, crime is relatively low in Whittier -- Lowry Hill East for example has a large number of robberies for a much smaller neighborhood.

A resident talked about Karmel Mall and the statistics of number of attendees. He is concerned about the lack of parking and security guards. He asked if it’s possible for the neighborhood to ask Karmel to have more security. Sarah is not

clear about what steps can be taken but concerns should be voiced to the owner. Nimco addressed the K-Mart off-site parking situation with Karmel and a meeting is being setup. There are too many people going to Karmel and the problem needs to be addressed very soon. Sarah noted several business owners at Karmel are concerned about this issue as well. Jim Roscoe noted residents who must live with Karmel's problems constantly is unbearable and activities at Karmel are increasing. He said the City is having poor stewardship of that area.

### **State Representative Karen Clark**

Representative Clark noted Whittier is the first neighborhood group she is speaking to after the Session. A non-partisan report on all the State Capitol work was handed out. She was appointed the Public Housing and Finance Committee Chair this year. If residents would like her to address certain issues please contact her. Clark noted Governor Pawlenty had tight control on expenditures. She spoke about a property tax bill that was vetoed. What passed includes college tuition rates being held down to 4% increase and education overall from preschool up gained funding. The Legislature also passed initiatives which directed public health authorities to watch out for chemical pollutants.

Local government aid was increased to deal with gang and drug task forces and victim crime resources including young juvenile offenders. Funding for roads and traffic congestion was vetoed. The State is now requiring energy companies to have 25% of their power be renewable energy by 2020. Greenhouse gases in the state cannot exceed 20% in 2015. The Department of Health will also be studying groundwater, lakes and streams to potentially clean them up because of so many restrictions on eating fish. In regards to the housing foreclosures and predatory lending, there was strict restrictions and penalties on lenders to combat that. A bill was passed that made window makers make safety precautions in windows. Many affordable housing programs also progressed in her committee. Felino thanked Rep. Clark for coming in front of the community to inform them of her actions. To have the elected official come in front of us is the most important part of this committee.

Tom asked about decentralizing affordable housing. Rep. Clark responded outer suburbs are now asking for funds to do affordable housing and so the committee is working on incentives to promote housing across the metro. A resident asked about private groups constantly asking for letters of support for affordable housing funds. She is concerned about the accountability of the owner's spending. Rents are not being used to pay for upkeep and owners continue to return to the neighborhood and ask for more affordable housing dollars. Rep. Clark acknowledged accountability is a problem, she asked the resident to speak with her later.

Larry noted there was no restoration of increased police funds (LGA). He asked why police & fire are taken out in the LGA first. Rep. Clark noted local governments must make that decision. Larry encouraged communication between the state and local level. Rep. Clark had proposed a 10 cent tax on each alcohol drink sale to fund chemical dependency help. Much support was had but it did not progress. Pawlenty supported the "health impact fee" on cigarettes so he should support such a fee on alcohol. She noted there is a big anti-immigrant push which legislators have tried to counter. Rep. Clark encouraged residents to call the Governor and ask for a special session if they oppose cuts in local government and transportation. To get in touch with Rep. Clark call her office or go online. Tom thanked Karen Clark as one of the sponsors of the NRP bill.

### **Nicollet Franklin Pedestrian Overlay – Erica Christ**

The Nicollet Franklin Pedestrian Overlay will go in front of Planning Commission soon. The 45-day public comment period is underway. The committee would like the neighborhood to make a motion in support of the overlay. Any comments or suggestions now can be forwarded to Amanda Arnold at the City. The overlay details were again reviewed by the committee.

Tom asked about future fast food establishments moving in. Erica said fast food cannot be new build. They can fit into an existing store front but not be new build or have a drive through. Ted Redmond inquired why the overlay did not extend to Lake Street. The Greenway land use plan covers to Lake Street. City Planners did not want to overlap other zoning. Also the 35W access project may complicate future plans around Lake and Nicollet. Destin clarified fast food moving in can likely change their concept to be a restaurant and be able to be in the neighborhood. Joann noted the neighborhood should not give up on defining guidelines to control new development. Erica acknowledged it's up to the neighborhood to look closely at site plan reviews so that for example green space does not end up all in the alley.

A resident voiced concern about enhancing livability in the neighborhood not taking into account MCAD students. Whittier has not addressed a long-time problem with students. Erica responded the overlay project needed to be manageable to address one particular stretch such as Nicollet. Another resident suggested it's shortsighted to not address the parking demand of other properties. Jim asked about accessory parking spaces. Does this rule inhibit a parking ramp? It inhibits parking. A resident noted the MCAD/MIA/CTC complex is a profound destination and that people are mostly driving. People come park and then operate as pedestrians.

**CI 1 Motion: The Whittier Alliance Community Issues Committee moves to support the Pedestrian Overlay district proposal. Motion carried 22 / 1 / 1**

**2624 First Avenue South – Greg Langford**

Greg returns to address the CI after the Housing Advisory Group reviewed his plan and made recommendations. Michaela spoke on the group's discussion including the façade, the interactions with adjacent buildings, narrow lot concerns, front stoop, and similar exterior issues. Greg introduced the duplex project and reviewed the site plan on handed out material. He pointed out the rain garden and eco ground surface. Specific dimensions were reviewed.

Jim asked Greg to talk about the Housing Advisory Group's concern. Greg noted one concern was that the front patio looking should reflect a more brownstone look. The committee wanted more definition along the sides of the property building. More definition was also asked for the windows. The specific window materials were reviewed. The roof level material will be a rubber surface. A resident commended Greg on using eco-surface for the garage driveway. All units will be for sale. The front will be limestone with real brick running from the front to the sides. Folding patio doors will be put on the front. The other exterior material will be Hardie board made of a cement base. Jim Roscoe asked about the occupancy status. Greg is still going to live in the upper unit.

**CI 2 Motion: The Whittier Alliance Community Issues Committee moves to recommend approval of the conceptual site plan at 2624 1<sup>st</sup> Ave S. Motion carried 23 / 1 / 2**

**2528, 2530, 2532, 2534, 2528, 2548, 2550 Nicollet Avenue South – Kandiyohi Group/BKV Architects – Craig Wilson, Ted Redmond, Huey Fung**

Michael Krause spoke on behalf of Kandiyohi. They focus on sustainable urban redevelopment projects. Huey Fung who owns the subject property hired the developers and asked for potential proposals at that site. The partners pointed out their credentials in neighborhood involvement. Current proposal reflects regulations on Nicollet. Proposed uses will include auto-orientated use. Kandiyohi is doing three levels of underground parking of more than 200 spaces on-site. Green technologies include solar hot water systems and functional green space will be included.

The 2001 Nicollet Redevelopment Plan was introduced to CI. Three areas targeted for density were at Nicollet at Franklin, 26<sup>th</sup> and Lake Street. These corners now have Eat Street Flats, Arts Quarter Lofts, etc. The plan did identify the Ice House as an opportunity site. A 2002 GIS map of the site was reviewed to show the committee potential connections from the nodal point of the proposed site and other facilities such as Convention Center. The historic value of the AZIA building and Ice House was considered along with retail functions supportive of current businesses. The ACE Hotel Group was approached as another component. The ACE Hotel Group renovates older buildings to find unique niches for their aesthetic.

The group looked at patterns on Nicollet, examining the void spaces between each building to create more opportunities. There is capacity for much more space than what is being developed at the current site. There will be retail on the north off of Nicollet and a southern one off of Nicollet. Includes an entrance for the hotel space. The Ice House in the back can be set as a four court for the Ice House but internal retail opportunity.

The upper floor of AZIA will be renovated into conference rooms which go out into a mezzanine overlooking the Ice House. Second floor commercial is being looked at. The third floor hotel component is along Nicollet. The model of the Master Plan was reviewed. Upper level green terrace along the interior buildings. The elevations were reviewed. Services occur at the rear of the building (to the west). A green wall system on the rear utilities access. Ted spoke on the green roof system. In terms of an Asian theme, looking at creative use of roof space including a rock garden. Roof water will be collected and retained for a water feature. Looking at rice paddies on the roof. The group very consciously made the roof space at the rear quarter, the site was opened up to the south and southwest to capture the evening sun. ACE has a lot of access to international to national retailers and restaurants who could locate within this building. 18 hotel rooms on top of AZIA, 29,000 sqft of total commercial retail space. Intent of parking in excess of 200. The City is changing its parking requirements for restaurants and those are not out yet. New standards may allow the project excess parking. The development will provide more parking than other projects.

Alex noted more amenities at the street level should be offered. More detail about what the street level detail such as benches and landscaping should be given so that pedestrians know what they will be looking at. The western face of the building is massive and plain which is mostly the Ice House and that should be addressed. Ted noted they are trying to extend the green wall along the entire west façade. In regards to the green wall, a resident noted concern that maintenance over some time falls off and the visual aspect fails. The pedestrian can experience a cooler effect along the rear. Marian noted appreciation of the contemporary buildings against the older ones. Parking is open to the general public. The Ice House has about 7,000 square feet whereas AZIA has 9,000 square feet. The Ice House is considered an event center for weddings, gatherings, etc. There is also an outdoor market area. This may include meetings, art

fairs, etc. In terms of parking, public parking will be an opportunity. Ted noted the interior space is usable year-round but there are issues in what market will go in. They are trying to make multi-functional spaces. During business hours the public can go into the glass atrium space, see the Ice House, green roof component, and maybe access to the green space. Marian asked about the staircase tower. The stairwell is meant to express circulation from the street into the building. The datum of Nicollet is a two story mass floating over something that doesn't exist. A transition is trying to be made from the two masses.

A resident asked about the development's instigator. What predictions or studies has the group looked at. They noted a need for hotel rooms in the market. Some people do want to be out of downtown where real people live. They want to price the rooms at about 80-85 percent of rates. In fact the Sheraton at the Midtown GM is nearly 100 percent occupied frequently. They are not looking at 25 years forward but in general looking at demand. Jim asked about the structural examinations on AZIA and the Ice House. The group is not really doing a lot of adding of what is existing or what can be supported. The AZIA building will not be gutted and it is not feasible to add a third story to the AZIA building. A resident noted bicycle parking was one per tenant. There is opportunity in the underground parking for that. More street-scaping can be done but the bulk would be within the building. A resident applauded the green space design. She would like more accessibility of the space. Several options are being looked at including a stairwell which goes into the center market space area. They are trying to pull the street into the building but the area will remain private property. A resident noted concern about tour bus parking. The group suggested the hotel would not cater to that clientele. More assessment will be done with CPED on the project later. The CI showed general support of the direction of the proposal.

### **MCAD Campus Facility Planning – Mike O'Keefe, Pam Nordaune**

Mike O'Keefe, President, introduced the MCAD college and its programs. The college is 120 years old. The largest program now is a Bachelor of Fine Arts and Design. MCAD also offers masters in various arts including comic arts and furniture design. The site was previously unified but later split into Children's Theatre and MCAD. The MCAD Board of Trustees asked for the future of the master campus plan. Several buildings and dormitories are nearing the end of their usable life. Since the spin-off from the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, MCAD has leased parking from them. After the expansion of MIA the parking was terminated.

With the need for new parking, possible proposals include: 1) surface lot in the southwest corner, between 2<sup>nd</sup> and Stevens, 2) surface lot between MCAD dorms and MIA parking lot, 3) ramp between 2<sup>nd</sup> and alley and north of 26<sup>th</sup>. Below level parking is being considered but that is incredibly expensive. The longer term look of the campus as placing housing in the southeast corner, services in southwest and north area educational. MCAD is reluctant to eat up green space that is accessible. They do not want to eliminate the green space connection with the neighborhood. MCAD would very much like to strengthen the connection to Nicollet. Strengthens for staff faculty, parents, students to patronize Nicollet. The ramp proposal includes wrapping a façade along the street and would include studio space. One face of a parking ramp could be housing or lofts. There are a variety of creative and alternative ideas

MCAD can meet current requirements or better with a surface lot. It's an interesting to them and to the students. They surveyed students coming to campus. 70% of students live on campus. There is a sense of how other students come to campus. They are in the process of a formal parking study with the City. The final results are not ready yet but it will likely show 200-250 parking slots are needed. MCAD will have other options and we would like to invite the neighborhood into how they can configure their Master Plan better. Pam Nordaune is the external relations person to be contacted on the project. A new parking ramp in the east area would satisfy their parking for a long period and likely provide MIA parking as well. A resident who lives adjacent of MCAD noted previous proposals in 2001 which had been reviewed and did not happen. There is clearly not enough space in the surface lot to cover what is being lost in the MIA ramp. The historic buildings would not be affected. The MIA expressed disinterest in MCAD's parking plans.

### **Old/New Business**

#### **Adjourn**

The meeting was **adjourned** at 8:58 PM. Minutes submitted by Eric James. Next meeting: Minneapolis First Adventist Church at 24<sup>th</sup> and Nicollet. The location is handicap accessible. It's a huge grey church with pillars.