

Council of Neighborhood Association (CONA) Meeting Minutes

March 12, 2019, 6:35 pm

Present: John Kennedy, Spicewood; Patrick Murray, Prospect Hill; Peter Dorfman, Near West Side; Olivia Dorfman, Near West Side; Inta Carpenter, Arden Place; Elliott Orivg; Elm Heights; Tim Mueller, Elm Heights, Steven Layman, Arden Place; Don Granbois, Covenanter; Mary Morgan, Covenanter; Beth Hollingsworth, Covenanter; Ralf Shaw, Blue Ridge; Paul Ash, Mc Doel; Elizabeth Cox-Ash, Mc Doel; Jan Sorby, Bryan Park; Jon Lawrence, Bryan Park; Tom Schafer, Park Ridge East; Judy Berkshire, Eastside; Marc Cornett, Bryan Park; and Cynthia Bretheim, Prospect Hill.

Secretary's Report: President John Kennedy asked for approval of the secretary's report from the December 2018 meeting.

- Don Granbois moved to accept the minutes and Paul Ash and Tom Shafer seconded. The minutes passed by voice vote unanimously.

Treasurer's Report: Secretary Elizabeth Cox-Ash reported that CONA has \$584.99 in checking and \$2019.45 in savings. Green Acres Neighborhood Association has \$246.43 in their saving account.

Announcements: None

Transportation Plan Discussion: Jon Lawrence gave an update on the Transportation Plan schedule and the committee's general criticism of the Plan.

Schedule:

- Wednesday, March 20th – Initial deadline for Council Members to sponsor amendments
- Friday, March 29th, at Noon – Council Work Session to discuss amendments, the prospect of other amendments, and how to proceed with further deliberations
- Friday, April 12th – Release of sponsored amendments
- Monday, April 29th at Noon – Deadline for the public to submit amendments to the Council Office
- Friday, May 10th at Noon– Council Work Session to review amendments and also the deadline for Council members to sponsor additional amendments
- Friday, May 17th – Release of weekly Council Legislative Packet containing amendments
- Wednesday, May 22nd at 6:30– Council Special Session to further consider Resolution 19-01 and the Transportation Plan.

Basic criticism of the Plan:

- Make street topologies to fit/respect existing context.
- Dedicated parking spaces for all downtown areas for loading
- Connecting two streets should fit the context of both the existing streets.
- Too heavy on biking and not enough attention to waling
- Blowing out streets to get more balance between biking and auto traffic but not mindful of street context or housing needs.
- Needs more planning for street markings/lighting/more sidewalks and ways for pedestrian to move more safely around Bloomington. (aging issues)

- Nothing in document about Pete Ellis and the inevitable increase in traffic because of the hospital move.
- Nothing in Plan about Sare road and expected increase in traffic due to I-69 Fullerton Pike connection.
- Conflicts in plan should default to pedestrians and enhancing public realm.

Jon continued to talk about the proposed street widths and that in informal discussions transportation representatives said the city will not change the existing streets to meet these specifications.

There was a general agreement that a better plan is needed and that if the city is to only use the typologies for new streets then it should say that and address how existing streets fit this plan. General agreement that a disclaimer at the beginning of the Plan referring to the need to be sensitive to the street character and context might help. Steve Layman said this would be important for street widths and ROWs.

Beth Hollingsworth stated that downtown there is a need for trucks to unload and if the street is only one way, this creates congestion and danger. Don added that dedicated parking could help remedy this situation.

Marc Cornett added that long streets are treated as having the same context all along its distance whereas the context might change radically. Street might be narrower in some spots, house setbacks might vary, parking needs change along a street that runs for many miles across and through the city. How this is treated needs to be clarified.

Tim Muller added that the primary statement added to the beginning of the Plan is really important and it should include that front yards, trees and setbacks be respected.

Patrick Murray gave a major stormwater improvement as an example to have tight language.

Peter Dorfman suggested that we add language to ensure that the city can not take property by eminent domain. He reported that the city planner suggested that the appendix G be dropped as that was added as an afterthought internally by the engineering department.

Marc agreed that the easiest thing to do is to just have the appendix removed. It was added as a way to get developers to give up land to the city and this has been done on a project by project basis and there is a need to get this more consistent. Perhaps delete the numbers and talk about the goal of each street type might be a better approach.

John suggests that the committee meet again and come back with tighter language that could be made into an amendment.

Jan Sorby reported that amendments will be rewritten by Council attorney and sponsoring Council member.

Judy wanted to add to the list of issues

- that neighborhood streets are being reassigned as major connectors such as Hunter street and this should be eliminated because it would change the character of the street.

Olivia Dorfman added to the list that

- the Trades District doesn't match the Transportation Plan on Fairview and Adams streets.

Jan added that this plan dovetails into the UDO and that the city envisions Hunter as being a major corridor with retail and multifamily. She adds too that Hunter has wonderful historic housing stock and Bloomington has so little quality housing stock that it would be awful to see this high character area destroyed.

Tim stated that a bad plan can be amended but it still won't be a good plan.

Patrick reported that in the past plan 3rd street was going to be blown-out to be 4 lanes wide, but the neighborhood came out in force to stop this. We need to let our council reps know that this will never be a good plan no matter how much it is amended.

Peter volunteered to join the amendment committee

UDO Discussion: John reported that the new UDO draft is now on the city website, as of today.

Tim suggests that we have big joint neighborhood meetings and invite a city planner to explain how it will affect the neighborhoods. He states that the Plan it will go next to Plan Commission and we should notify the Commissioners.

Jan suggested we could give each commissioner a packet with our concerns. Bryan Park has had success with this in the past. But we would have to be specific and it is really the Plan Commission's job to fix bad plans or bad projects.

Judy added that it won't work!

Marc agreed with Judy! And adds that Council can do three things, 1) amend, 2) accept or 3) reject.

General agreement that the city is killing citizen participation and over working council members. Question is asked why we can't slow down on some of these important decisions to ensure people are on board and to ensure we are getting good products for the future.

- UDO update meeting: March 19th and 20th
- March 19th is open meeting at 12:00 in McClosky room
 - 2:30 for neighborhoods
 - 5:30 for the public at MCPL

Judy said that the "general public" meeting needs more bodies to ask questions. Not many people have been attending.

Marc said the presenter talks too much and it's hard to get a question in.

Olivia suggested a Facebook page for CONA. Her neighborhood has had tremendous success with this form of communication.

Jon suggested that we all start reading the UDO but put this on the back burner until the Transportation Plan is completed. UDO should not come up until the fall.

Hospital Re-Use Discussion:

Jon reported that the old original 2015 committee that was basically fired, has been recalled to meeting again!

Elizabeth reported that Mary Catherine Carmichael called Steve Wyatt at Bloomington Restorations, Inc. after their annual meeting to ask if they would join together with CONA and affected neighborhoods for a forum.

Patrick said that he and Councilperson Sturbaum crashed a non-public meeting. He said that the committee asked good questions, but it was unclear what role a master developer will have. He wonders if the RFP is an open document. If we could see the RFP we could see the scope of work.

Convention Center Discussion: Paul went to the meeting. Architect seemed to be lacking essential information such as size, placement or other key issues.

Marc said conventions are dying. No one under 30 goes to one unless it is in a really great place.

Jan asked Mary Morgan her thoughts as before she retired, she was a professional conference planner with IU Conferences.

Mary said people want to make a vacation out of a conference. They want to go to big cities like Chicago, NYC or LA. She reported that when she worked at IU the Conference Center could never get people to stay downtown Bloomington--they wanted to stay on campus because it was campus that mattered to them.

Judy suggested that CONA should not get involved with the convention center. All members present agreed that there are simply too many extremely important projects to attend to and that it is challenging to keep up with all the important activities taking place this year.

Adjournment: 8:20 pm