

WSCO: RDLU Notes from 1/17/18 mtg

Meeting began at 6:30 p.m.

Committee members present: Derek Johnson, Hoka Miller, Karen Reid, Kareem Smith, Carol Swenson

Guests: Brian Miller, Katie Haas

WSCO Staff: Monica Bravo

1. Introductions were made around the room. Carol mentioned the Robert Ferguson will be missing RDLU meeting this winter and part of the spring because of his teaching schedule. Monica will look into whether he can keep his voting privileges with an excused absence.
2. The committee accepted the December 2017 Notes.
3. New Committee Leadership Elections. The committee discussed leadership and whether we can have co-chairs or Chair and Vice Chair on staggering terms with Chair at 1 term and Vice Chair for 2 – in that in the second year the Vice Chair will become chair. Monica and Kareem will check bylaws on how much leeway the committees have in setting up terms. In the meantime, it was moved that Kareem Smith become the Chair for one year, Carol Swenson Vice Chair for 2, and Karen Reid Secretary. Seconded and approved per board approval of structure.
4. Hoka hands the chair of the committee over to Kareem. A motion was made to thank Hoka for his years of service, guidance, entertainment, and stewardship as leader of the committee. Second. Approved.
5. Updates. Monica reported on a variety of West Side Projects.
 - a. Smith Avenue Bridge. It seems to be on track for the re-decking. A discussion on negative business impact (Capital View) with the closure. There seems to be no monetary support from MN DOT or City – as was provided for Light Rail construction.
 - b. Corridor branding project. Monica reported that on February 20th there will be a corridor branding project meeting. Corridors under consideration are Smith, Stryker and Cesar Chavez. WSCO will also be conducting outreach regarding the Commercial Vitality Zone funds for District del Sol.
 - c. Alamo Bar: There will be a public hearing on February 7th at City Hall (Council meeting) about adverse actions. Regarding continued shootings within the area. Monica reported that neighbors have been providing testimony but felt intimidated and WSCO didn't want to ask them again. Written testimony is acceptable and should be sent to all the Council members. Written testimony will be put into the record. Brian Miller offered to testify and would like more background information. She said she will email him information.

- d. North Knob. There is a meeting on January 23rd at 6:30 p.m. at Amore Coffee on the Lilydale, bluff stabilization project. Barr Engineering will be there to answer questions etc. Health and Environmental Justice team has also been invited.
- e. Hunt Weidner: There seems to be some glitch in moving the project forward – sewage/waste removal. There doesn't seem to be the capacity by Public Works to handle increase residency. It was requested that Lucy Thompson from PED come out and brief us on next steps for City and HW.
- f. Moratorium on development: Monica met with Council Member Noecker on WSCO's work to developing a development score card. WSCO is seeking a moratorium on development until the score card is complete. This would not impact projects already in the planning stages (NeDA, Sherman Associates, HS) or underway. There is a score card meeting on Thursday (January 18th). WSCO would like the new PED Executive Director, Dr. Bruce Corrie, to be invited to attend a study planning session with WSCO/community/CURA. Brian asked if WSCO was seeking input from developers. Monica said they have (NeDA) and will increase information gathering. Brian suggested Colleen Carey of Cornerstone Group and perhaps Steve Wellington.
- g. Stryker Market/Stryker Garden Site. The City is eager to get something built. There have been numerous outreach / surveys on what the neighborhood wants. Karen remarked that NeDA is ready to go with a housing project. She does not believe a mixed – use or commercial project will financially work at the site given traffic and building costs. She will reconnect with a realtor NeDA has used on commercial properties to find the owner. Including the market site will add flexibility on what can be done on that block.
- h. Cherokee Park Playground: Parks and Rec is upgrading the playground in the Spring. Karen asked about Parque Castillo. It keeps getting pushed back. Now they say Fall 2018.
- i. Smith Avenue festival. There were talks about a festival to draw visitors to Smith Avenue. Committee thought if there was one, it should be celebrating the opening of the bridge!
- j. 430 S. Robert: Karen reported that Cermak Rhoades architect was looking at the feasibility of building a 2 story commercial building that would house La Clinica's dental clinic on the first floor and neighborhood offices on the second. This issue is parking.
- k. Karen reported on the December meeting of the LMRWMO (Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization) and provided Monica with material from that meeting for WSCO to disseminate. LMRWMO helped secure the grant to address North Knob.
- l. Oakdale homeownership development: Karen will bring preliminary thoughts/plans to build three units of ownership housing on Oakdale. The topography is challenging and NeDA is working with Lunning Wende architects on options. Minnesota Housing Finance Agency is providing construction financing and value gap financing (a grant) to help build the units. The Met Council is also provide funds for site improvements.

6. RDLU Work Plan: Carol presented the draft work plan. It is ambitious but not all items need immediate attention. Carol had identified committee members to take the lead on topics. Brian was interested in looking housing development west of Wabasha (on the Flats). Monica reported the Rutzicks (All Inc) have a development idea they would like to run by WSCO. The own land along Plato (and Water Street?) to the west of Wabasha. Brian and Karen were interested in meeting with them. Carol asked the committee to review the plan and email her your leadership choices. The committee will review / finalize the plan in February.
7. Because of competing WSCO scheduling, the February meeting was moved to Thursday the 22nd.

The RDLU meeting ended at 8:05.