

Magnolia Community Council
Board of Trustee Meeting during the Covid Pandemic. Informal
On Zoom

April 21, 2020 minutes

Present: Trustees David Kaplan, Carol Burton, Stephanie Ballard, Lynn Hogan, Alison Grevstad, Steve DeForest, Janis Traven, Pat Craft, David Moehring, Stephen Faciszewski, Mary Hoverson, Leslie Helm, Bruce Carter.

Guest: Parker Dawson

Informal Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Stephanie Ballard, President

Parker Dawson, assistant to Andrew Lewis—District 7 Director, was in attendance. They have assembled a new “Seattle Committee on Performance Auditing” that will be looking into expanding the current function of the auditor. Looking beyond just reactive auditing of past projects and looking at auditing future biannual work plans. Some of the members include Sean from ProTech 17, Estella Ortega from La Raza, Cheryl Broom, Bob Thomas, Lavonne Griffin, previously an auditor from Portland.

Smith Cove Park – Bruce Carter and Carol Burton questioned and described the status of the west side of development. Phase One – no toilet facilities, no access to water, no beach volleyball courts, a smaller dog park. To date the project has been held up and reduced in scale. There was a 6 million dollars in the Park District legislation to develop the park. We do not know when the east side may be developed.

Magnolia Community Center – there is 1 million dollars allocated from the last six year’s budget to make much needed improvements and safety hazards – exposed wiring, bathroom repairs, etc. To date none of the work covered by this money has been done. There is an upcoming new six year budget for community centers, and there is concern that Magnolia will not be considered during this round since there is still the money unspent from the previous round. Parker states that Andrew Lewis is lobbying for additional funds in the new budget round for the Magnolia Community Center.

Carol Burton brings up that the Parks Department has never had an external audit.

Discussion of strategies for holding the Parks Department accountable for where the funds have gone and when the work will be completed. Parker recommends MCC draft a letter to request an internal audit on these projects. Discussion about building a coalition of other involved community groups and interests to broaden the scope of the request. School board members, after school community groups and recreational groups that all use the Community Center. The volleyball group that raised funds for Smith Cove.

Pat Craft states that the city has a history of neglecting Magnolia.

Leslie Helm and Parker discuss the ongoing project for a bicycle/pedestrian trail connecting Smith Cove and the dead end of 32nd Ave. W. Their office is working with the civil law department and the attorney’s office to find a way forward. Previously there has been a binding agreement with the Magnolia Community Club restricting bicycles as they were considered vehicular traffic. Janis has tee shirts.

Janis Traven suggests a proposal to package reconstruction of all 3 bridges (Ballard, Magnolia and West Seattle) as the city considers how to fund the repair or replacement of the West Seattle Bridge. Parker will check with Jacob Thorpe about this, as he covers transportation issues for Andrew Lewis. Parker worries about the mayor’s response to this proposal as there is a forecast of a 300 million dollar shortfall in the city budget due to Covid.

Stephanie Ballard brings up the recent crime happening in Magnolia. Bruce Carter highlights the effects of the pandemic on the small businesses and asks what is in place to address their needs and how can we help? Discussion of burglaries to the Magnolia Garden Center, Seven Hills Running Store and the Mail Stop. Pat Craft calls attention to the Chamber of Commerce website where small businesses can access information on loans. There will also be an upcoming meeting on Thursday at 1pm with the police department to discuss the recent criminal activity. Parker states that 50 of the 250 small business economic relief fund grants were given to businesses in District 7. He will follow up with us after checking with Katherine Sims in the finance department about additional aid being planned. Currently they are working on hygiene stations and rapid housing in response to the pandemic.

General discussion on creative ways to help our local small businesses and new ways for them to reach customers. Virtual storefronts for Magnolians to shop – something is being done already in Ballard this way. Pat Craft welcomes any and all suggestions and ideas. Farmer's Market is planned to start on June 6th. Janis Traven suggests they consider extending it to a second block to space vendors out. Pat and Parker discuss having the city make the permitting process easier for this to happen. Request for Andrew and/or Parker to attend the first Farmer's Market and possibly the SummerFest event (if it happens). Parker to coordinate with Pat regarding sharing a booth with the Chamber or having space for one for themselves at the Farmer's market.

Janis Traven shares there is an upcoming public meeting on the BIRT project on May 21st from 11:30 to 1:30. Reports on the status of the Interbay Village – so far no one is sick there. They have an urgent need for masks. If anyone would like to donate time or materials, please let her know.

There is a Mayor's meeting for the Central district/District 7 set for this Thursday.

David Moehring asked Parker if there was any opportunity for additional community input on the Albertsons/Safeway development if the mercy bill passes on April 1st to have Design Review Boards bypass community input. Parker replied he did not know. Mary Hoverson thinks that penalties for developers should be reviewed, and points out the parking situation both around the development and the bus stop on 28th will be adversely impacted in both neighborhoods, and the scale of the building being out of place at 7 stories vs. 6 stories. Pat Craft requests additional advocacy from Andrew Lewis's office. Steve Faciszewski asks David Moehring if there is a position the MCC board should have a stand on? David M. responds the role of MCC is to represent the community. Discussion of the biophilic experience of the immediate existing neighbors. The advantages that will be there for new residents versus the disadvantages for the neighbors who lived here before. The chamber and community support the development. There are questions on how to mitigate the 7th story if there is no hope in changing the zoning approval that is already in place. Carol Burton suggests there should be consideration of mitigation for the lack of a grocery store in south Magnolia during the 2 year construction period. Advocates for something to hold it's place – a pop up grocery store or similar. Other ideas from community members are use of glass on the ends so it doesn't appear so solid, central courtyard or decks, landscaping. Alison Grevstad suggests we ask the developers if they'd be willing to host a webinar to replace the originally cancelled review/meeting at Pilgrim Hall that was to take place in March. Stephanie suggests this could happen on our next regular board meeting date and David Kaplan advocates that this take place another time and we reserve our Tuesday meeting time for the Trustees to meet. David M. shares images from the next round of the Albertsons/Safeway development.

General discussion of Zoom etiquette and features. Meeting Adjourned at 9:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Alison Grevstad, Recording Secretary

Links/Resources from Chat:

19:27:47 From David Moehring : Perhaps collaboration with Martin Westerman, Co-director / 206-427-9039 Seattle Green Spaces Coalition / info@seattlegreenspacescoalition.org

19:53:10 From Parker Child Dawson : <https://www.seattle.gov/mayor/covid-19>

20:03:46 From David Moehring : MCC post link? This link could be of use for those in Magnolia with children typically relying on school lunches: School Sites for Student Meal Support: Seattle Public Schools has 26 schools that are serving as a hub for student meal support during the closure. These schools provide sack lunches prepared by our central kitchen for all Seattle Public Schools students Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m., for the duration of the school closure.

https://www.seattleschools.org/district/calendars/news/what_s_new/coronavirus_update/resources/student_meals