

Minutes for board meeting of Fairhaven Neighbors – April 11,2005

Time and Location: 8:00-10:00 p.m., at house of Thom Prichard

Present: Glenn Denckler, Thom Prichard, Deborah Frost, Bob Keller, Michael Lilliquist,
Brennan Schumacher, Janet Simpson, and Migo Biciunas

Absent: Paul Shissler, Karl Thomas, and Jim Johannessen

1. Election of new executive officers for 2005. After discussion and unanimous assent, the following were elected to serve:

President: Thom Prichard

Vice President: Migo Biciunas

Secretary: Michael Lilliquist

Treasurer: Glen Denckler

2. Staggering of board terms, to avoid complete turnover of board every three years, with no continuity. Tabled.
3. Discussion of "Conceptual Framework for Making Fairhaven an Urban Ecovillage" by R. Thacker. Several questions were raised, including "who is the target audience?" and "what is the intended purpose of this position paper?" Has the Planning dept begun to incorporate the recommendations of the Bellingham Growth Forum into updates of the city's Comprehensive Plan?

Several members who had read the paper felt that it still needed work, but is a constructive document. Others had not read the paper. It was decided to have each member read over the paper and post comments to the Fairhaven board e-mailing list.

4. Discussion of written statement by Southside Neighborhood Coalition, which may already have been endorsed by other member neighborhood associations. Do we wish to add our endorsement? Deborah will post the full document to the e-mail list, and board members are to submit comments to the e-list by Friday, April 15th (tax day!)
5. Resurrection of quarterly newsletter. To both notify neighbors of meetings and events, as well as to promote social functions such as a block party.

Cost was estimated at \$30 per issue, if hand delivered to people's doorsteps. Several members felt that distribution should be divided up among volunteers, to which there was broad assent.

Who will do it? Lisa Heisey-Moller has expressed interest in the past. Migo will approach her with the idea when she returns from vacation.

6. Brennan brought up the idea of getting a space for the Fairhaven Neighbors association at the Farmer's Market at the Village Green. Michael suggested inviting all member associations of the Southside Coalition to join. Brennan will look into it.
7. Glenn made a motion to establish a policy to distribute general meeting announcements 7 to 10 days prior to meeting time, to help increase turnout. Seconded by Michael, and passed by voice vote.
8. Discussion of signpost at the berm. Migo says that it has been really effective, and other board members have noticed people stopping to read the sign. Migo suggested that the Association spruce up the sign or make a better one to replace it. Migo will take charge of this.

Possible additional locations for notification signs were discussed. Thom said that Preston Shiller might let us put a sign in his yard.

9. Engaging an attorney to advise and represent the Fairhaven Neighbors in dealing with the city.

[Background: At the last general meeting (04-08-05), the general membership voted to authorize the board to identify an attorney or consultant with appropriate expertise in land use laws and related matters to advise the Association. Prior to that, as a result of a visioning process by the general membership, three main clusters of characteristics were identified as valuable to Fairhaven resident and worth working to preserve: the natural context, unique and historic character, and a sense of warm community. The general consensus is that developments which threaten these characteristics should be resisted by the Association.]

The board attempted to clarify the purposes which the Fairhaven Neighbors hope to serve by hiring an attorney. The purposes include:

- a. Identify what legal basis and options we, as citizens and as a neighborhood association, have in our efforts to control, guide, and influence real estate development in Fairhaven. To find out "where we stand;" to identify legal precedents; and to advise where we can most profitably direct our efforts.
- b. Specific goals include, but are not limited to:
 1. What is the legal status of utility easements on 8th street, and who has control of them?
 2. What are the allowable justification for street vacations, such as on McKenzie between 9th and 10th, and how can they be opposed or appealed?
 3. Can the height of building be challenged based upon design requirements to be "harmonious" in scale and proportion?
 4. Can "view be raised as an issue, since view is mentioned in the Shoreline management regulations?

5. What are the procedures for appealing a determination by a planning examiner? By the Planning Commission
6. What issues might arise with the re-design of the McKenzie Square proposal, and what issues can be successfully challenged?
7. How can we influence the possible future re-zone of the Haskell property?

Bob Keller will approach Bob Carmichael about the possibility of representing the Fairhaven Neighbors. Other possible candidates include Tom Resick and Brian Hansen.

10. The issue of building a successful voting bloc on the City Council, to support Barbara Ryan, was raised and then quickly tabled, due to a lack of information at this time.
11. Deborah raised the issue of legitimizing our position by attending and participating constructively in City Council and Planning Commission meetings, both to keep track of developments as well as to simply raise our profile. The board concurred, but no action was taken.
12. The possibility of creating a special membership status for people like Ralph Thacker, who has been very active and contributory but who lives outside of the official neighborhood boundary. Concern was expressed that official inclusion might be mistaken to mean official representation, which all agreed was not the intent.

Michael made a motion to amend the by-laws to create a special category of non-voting membership for people who do not qualify for membership. Deborah then amended the motion to create a special category of voting membership for these who do not qualify, to be voted in by 2/3rds majority of the board. The purpose would be to acknowledge that neighborhoods are more than just geographical entities.

Janet pointed out that amendments to the by-laws must be advertised no less than 5 days prior to a special or regular meeting at which a vote will be taken. The amendment was tabled, and will be re-visited at the next board meeting.

13. Bob said that the Table Tennis Tournament at Cascade Joinery is scheduled for early may, during the Ski to Sea weekend.
14. Brennan raised the possibility of a neighborhood block party, for which people have expressed a lot of interest in the past. Deborah will broadcast the idea on the Fairhaven Neighbors mailing list, asking for someone to take the lead.
15. The next board meeting is scheduled for the following week, Monday, April 18th, at 8:00 p.m. at Thom Prichard's house again.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m. (whew!)

– submitted by Michael Lilliquist 04-12-05

