

Fairhaven Neighbors General Meeting, Feb 1, 2006
Fairhaven Park Pavilion, 7:00 p.m.

In attendance: Michael Lilliquist (recording), Thom Pritchard, Joan Bachleda, Brooks Anderson, Elinor Pravda, Sheldon Pravda, Vince Biciunas, Janet Simpson, Sue Kaun, Mary Lou Stern

1. Discussion of FN email list. Is Deborah Frost is no longer maintaining the list, Vince Biciunas has taken over this job. The city would like to be able to distribute information to FN. What email address can they use? It was agreed that the city should use the email address as given on the fairhavenneighbors.org website, which is Migo Biciunas address. Thom will let the city know.

2. Treasurer's report, submitted by Glenn Denckler, but given by Thom
\$2,016 in checking
\$1,953 in legal defense account
\$2,092 in savings

Just about \$6,000 total

Legal expenses for Padden Creek protection effort:
\$7,767 paid so far to lawyer Philip Buri
\$1,033 photocopying expenses for legal appeal
\$475 expenses for depositions

\$10,000 approximate amount due to Phil Buri

Although Buri has let it be known that he does not expect full payment for all outstanding bills, we should still expect to raise more money to help pay the outstanding amount. The idea of a spring fundraiser was mentioned.

3. Status of legal appeals and negotiation process.

There was a big 3-hours meeting called by the city's attorney, Alan Marinner, including representatives from FN, our lawyer Phil Buri, developers Mischaikov and Westrop, city planner Steve Sundin, and the developers' architect, to attempt to reach a negotiated settlement out of court. Alan Marinner tried to control the meeting, and worked to reach a settlement; it seemed clear that a negotiated settlement was the goal given to him by the city. Buri laid out our position very well. Mr. Mischaikov was clearly upset and at times lost his cool.

The end result was a preliminary settlement that should be very pleasing to FN members and supporters, in which Padden Creek will receive substantial

protection. The details are still confidential and yet to be finalized.

Thom was of the opinion that this represents a genuine victory, and that any success that we achieve should set a positive pattern for other neighborhood groups. There was a general consensus that our positive and non-confrontational approach paid off, as well as the great amount of effort put into this appeal by so many people. We tried to present ourselves as the ally of the city, and we should not rub the city's nose in their past mistakes now that they have admitted mistakes.

4. General discussion about the role of the neighborhood association in the city's planning process. There is a need for greater public input earlier in the process, and we need to be allies of the city, to have the city view us as resources, so that we do not have to engage in a similar legal battle in the future.

5. City-wide issues.

The Southside coalition generally meets every 3rd Wednesday of the month, and the Association of Bellingham Neighborhoods meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month.

Our own Ralph Thacker is now president of the ABN. His "platform" will be the principles of 1) transparent government, 2) early and continuous public involvement, and 3) the preservation of neighborhood character.

6. Ski-to-Sea weekend.

Ralph appealed for help in organizing and running an international music stage on the Fairhaven Village Green during Ski-to-Sea weekend. Anna Williams and the merchants association of Fairhaven runs the whole "It All Ends in Fairhaven" event, and we would be working under their umbrella. Ralph believes that sponsoring the music stage would give FN another, positive public "face," as well as help to build a positive relationship with the merchants association.

The four FN board members present agreed that this would be a good idea. Elinor and Sheldon tentatively agreed to lead this project, with Ralph supplying them with a few booking leads.

7. Ralph reported that he has invited a group of city officials together to maintain some focus on Fairhaven and the Little Squalicum ends of the waterfront, given all the attention being paid to redevelopment of the central G-P part of the waterfront. Ralph has proposed a commission of 1) neighborhood representatives, 2) local business representatives, and 3) port businesses. The commission should focus on the "early action items"

identified by the Waterfront Futures Group.

Ralph was unanimously elected as FN's official representative to such a commission, should it be formed.

The private Bellingham Bay Foundation, which includes developers David Syre and Ken Imus, has been working to propose a more creative approach to redevelopment of the waterfront, while the Port's efforts have been focused largely on expansion of the marina in the old G-P lagoon.

8. The 1989 Agreement between the City of Bellingham and Concerned Southside Citizens.

Many aspects of this important agreement were never enacted by the city, as legally required. City attorney Alan Marinner was apprised of this agreement by an earlier meeting with Michael, and he (Alan) suggested that a letter needed to be drafted from the neighborhood(s) to the city council, requesting that the agreement be honored. The 1989 lists the five neighborhoods now in the Southside Coalition of neighborhoods. The idea of drafting and sending a letter to the city council from the SSC, including FN, was unanimously endorsed by voice vote. Sue Kaun and Michael will follow up.

Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Michael Lilliquist, Fairhaven Neighbors Secretary