

Fairhaven Neighbors General Meeting Minutes, Dec. 5, 2007

Fairhaven Park Pavilion, 7-9 p.m.

1. Neighborhood Services Coordinator, Linda Stewart

Newly appointed to the now-permanent position within the mayor's office, Linda Stewart introduced herself and answered questions. She says that 20 neighborhood plan amendments have been submitted for consideration (although less than half are from neighborhood associations; most are from individual landowners). When asked about resources, she says she has great access to city staff and an annual budget of around \$1000/neighborhood to fund outreach and communication.

A second citizen's "planning academy" is being considered, designed to help neighborhood associations conduct their business better, through governance education, leadership training and better public involvement practices.

2. Meeting Minutes from October and November

Minutes were submitted but without enough time for review and approval.

3. Treasurer's Report

November and December reports were submitted and approved by email vote of the board.

4. Correspondence

FN submitted a letter to the director of planning in early November, expressing continued concern about the design of Fairhaven Harbor, while recognizing its beneficial aspects and the improvement over the original design

The owner of Rain Country, Vondrachek, has written a letter in which he is upset at FN for opposing his permit application – which is confusing to us, since we do not believe our letter opposed his permit, but simply opposed making a permanent change that would outlast his use. Vince will review the letters.

5. Neighborhood Plan Update

The neighborhood plan update proposal has been submitted to the city, in accordance with the Dec 1 deadline. The five subcommittees worked very hard to meld their sections into one document, consistent in language and style and terminology. Many policies and goals were re-named and re-numbered from the penultimate draft. Due to conflicting advice on whether or not zoning changes could be included in the submission, they were omitted, although some identically-zoned areas were proposed for consolidation.

The city will not make a determination regarding the proposal until early next year.

5. MNAC Report

The city is working on a new newsletter, which is seen as a means of neighborhood-to-neighborhood communication, not just city to neighborhood communication. Right now, the city is seeking feedback only on the look and layout of the newsletter. Discussion of content

is ongoing within the city. Distribution will be electronic only, in the form of a printable PDF document available on line and through email subscription.

Thom Pritchard is stepping down after serving as MNAC rep for many years. The board nominated and approved the recommendation of Michael Lilliquist as the new MNAC representative, and Vince Biciunas as the alternate representative.

6. Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program (NTSP)

The three problem areas recommended by the neighborhood for improvement last year were rejected by the city, due to the fact that the three road segments did not receive high enough ratings, even though the city's own report seems to indicate that speeding is a common problem along parts of them. Glenn Denkler has set up a meeting with transportation planner Chris Comeau to better understand this. The dead line for this year's submissions is April 1.

7. Assoc. Bellingham Neighborhoods

Vince attended the November meeting, but says she cannot do so regularly. Elinor Pravda volunteered to begin attending. Meeting are the 4th Tuesday, 5:30 pm, at the Boys & Girls Club. ABN plans to promote participation by setting up invited speakers for the ABN meetings.

ABN has just purchased a bulk mail permit from the US Postal Service. Our dues to the ABN will allow us to use the permit for our own mailings, as little as \$.14 apiece in the future, but currently \$.25 apiece.

8. By-Laws Revisions

This issue has been on the back burner for a few months, but we should pick up where we left off with the parliamentarian's advice. The central issue concerns membership and voting rights. The city's recommended language, which we have adopted into our by-laws, is troubled by omissions and internal inconsistency. Will we require some sort of "act" to join, such as a simple request to join, or is membership automatic? If we do not want to charge dues, as many associations do, then how do we prevent last-minute non-participants from flooding an election? Would we like to, and how would we, separate the right to participate in neighborhood affairs from the right to vote in association elections?

9. Neighborhood holiday party

Tomorrow, Dec 6th, at the Todd's Victorian house at Cowgill and Chuckanut Drive. Everyone welcome!

10. Community development opportunities

- Home Rehabilitation loan program – For low and moderate income homeowners; through the city's Planning and Community Development department. Contact Lisa Manos.
- Small Potatoes gleaning project – For those with vegetable gardens, next summer. For general information, call 966-2533

- Volunteer chore program looking for volunteers to aid senior citizens. Contact Kristin Horton, 734-3055
- Community Boating Center in Fairhaven – a new 501(c)3 organization; it's looking for more community support for a Dec 10th meeting with the Port to negotiate a long term presence in Fairhaven. Contact Mary Durbrow.

11. Campus Community Coalition

The group has been working for some time on the issue of student renter's and their impact on Bellingham's neighborhoods. They recently published a renter's guideline. Sheryl Davis was authorized by a vote of FN to represent FN association to the CCC,

12. Green Power Challenge grant money

Last year, Fairhaven was one of three neighborhood recipients of a \$1000 dollar grant, to be used in some environmentally beneficial manner. Michael Lilliquist proposed that we proceed with the idea of sponsoring a free bus ridership program to increase out-of-neighborhood visitors to Fairhaven's commercial district. Michael was authorized to begin working on setting this up with the WTA.

13. Improving citizen participation

Ideas include 1) better publicizing of the agenda for meeting, not just that a meeting is being held; say what the meeting will be about; 2) keep putting out the sandwich board signs, and 3) provide food and advertise the fact!

14. Annual Board Elections

Elections will be held at the February annual meeting, per the association's by-laws. The Nomination committee consists of Ralph, Thom, and Migo. The committee will develop a full slate in time for the January 2nd meeting, and nominations will be closed on January 16th. The election will be held at the Annual meeting on February 6th.

Minutes submitted by Michael Lilliquist, FN secretary

Next General Meeting of Fairhaven neighbors: 7:00 p.m. on January 2nd, 2008, at Fairhaven Park Pavilion.