

Minutes of Fairhaven Neighbors General Meeting

Wednesday February 6, 2008

Meeting called to order at 7:06 pm.

Board members present: Vince Biciunas, Elinor Pravda, Michael Lilliquist, Glenn Denkler, Jim Johannessen, Ralph Thacker, Janet Simpson, Sue Kaun, Thom Prichard, and Paul James.

Board member absent (excused): Bob Keller.

Treasurer's report was accepted. There is \$311.45 in checking and \$866.17 in savings. Minutes of the January meeting, which had been circulated among board members online, were summarized and approved.

(A clarification was made that minutes are *approved* and treasurer's report is *accepted*.) The board agreed that although the treasurer's report and minutes are circulated among board members online, their acceptance and approval will be done at the in-person meeting.

Michael suggested considering nominal dues for discussion at the next meeting. Glenn suggested we might want to wait to see how the tree sale goes. Ralph pointed out that since we're working on the bylaws, we could have a discussion on dues at the same time.

Election for 5 board members: Nominating committee members were Ralph, Migo, and Paul, and there were six candidates. Paper ballots were distributed and counted by Jim Johannessen. Elected were: Glenn Denkler (incumbent), David Carlsen, Janet Simpson (incumbent), Michael Lilliquist (incumbent), and Stuart Plotnick.

Committee Reports:

WTA passes: Michael reported that the WTA has agreed to give us a discounted price, and to cover printing costs and to print up literature to advertise the passes at the places they will be given out—Fairhaven merchants and the Fairhaven Library. We will be paying \$1000—our award from Northwest Regional Power—for \$1500 worth of passes. Maureen at WTA is working on tracking how the passes are used—such tracking is not done now, but she realizes the advantage of doing so. Michael reported strong support from Chuck at Village Books, and from Paper Dreams, Renaissance Celebration, and the library. The only reason people could think of why a merchant would not want to participate would be room to show the literature and store the passes.

Maureen would like to partner with other neighborhoods—Michael will take this to MNAC. We will need to do a thank-you letter to Northwest Regional Power. It will probably be two to three months before the passes are ready.

MNAC:

1. Michael reported that the Parks and Rec Open Space Plan is due for an update (it's a chapter of the Comprehensive Plan), and there was to be a meeting this night, to which Michael was going.

2. Traffic plans were discussed.
3. Louise Bjornson talked about street trees.
4. Linda Stewart talked about a second Planning Academy to happen in the spring, to work on neighborhood leadership skills.
5. Stormwater projects were discussed—not pertained to Fairhaven.
6. Dean Kahn of the Herald has a new column called Now and Then.
7. There will be an MNAC retreat to redefine its mission Feb. 3rd.

There are serious implications re the expansion of Bellingham open spaces, including private and school district open spaces (i.e., the country club).

Haskell Rezone Request: Michael gave a background about the issues. Fred Haskell was told by the City to hold off on a rezone request until our Neighborhood Plan was updated, but now the planning director is considering the possibility of docketing Haskell's request before the Neighborhood Plan revision is approved. Board members read a draft of a letter to Tim Stewart responding to Haskell's request. Michael pointed out that any meeting with Haskell should be hosted by the city, not Fairhaven Neighbors. It's Tim Stewart's decision whether or not to docket the rezone request. He checked with Michael about how we felt about it, which is why we're discussing it now. Our Neighborhood Plan is now with staff, and its status is unknown. There may be conflicts with the Comprehensive Plan in the Transportation section. There is a clear basis for accommodation with Fred Haskell in the Land Use section of the Neighborhood Plan. One of the issues is going for a variance allowing non-permitted uses rather than a rezone. Essentially what Fred wants is a residential component. There was discussion about the difference between a variance and a rezone, and implications in case the land is sold before it is developed. There was also a discussion about whether to send a letter now or wait to see if the rezone is docketed by Tim Stewart. The preponderance of opinion was that meeting with Fred Haskell would be a positive move, and sending a letter that we are open to such a meeting is the first step. We are looking for a win-win situation.

Further discussion involved the status of our Neighborhood Plan—we need clarity about shortcomings in the plan. Also, we have to deal with the issue of consensus, since there is a small group of people in Fairhaven who may never agree.

MOTION: That the letter to Tim Stewart be rewritten to address (1) the status of the Neighborhood Plan; and (2) the relationship of the Haskell proposal to the Neighborhood Plan and an invitation to talk. There was no second.

MOTION: That Janet's rewrite of some of the letter be accepted. Seconded. Passed: 11 ayes, 1 no.

The revised letter will be circulated via email for approval by a majority of the board. A committee to meet with Fred Haskell will consist of Stuart, David, Ralph, and Janet, with Michael, Glenn, and Paul as alternates.

ABN Report: Elinor reported on the visit to ABN on January 22, 2008 by three representatives of the *Bellingham Herald*—President and Publisher Glen Nardi,

Executive Editor Julie Shirley, and Opinion Editor Scott Ayers. Representatives from each neighborhood gave a summary of what is going on in their neighborhoods. It was noted that only Fairhaven and Roosevelt neighborhoods, of those at the meeting, did not charge some nominal membership fee. Also, the difference between ABN and MNAC was addressed. ABN is independent of the mayor's office. Elinor reported that she would write up and circulate the notes she had from the meeting.

Environment Committee: Sue has asked Jim to be on the committee.

MOTION: To create a committee of Fairhaven Neighbors to work on stewardship issues. Seconded. Discussion included that John Blethen says plant sale money is supposed to go to stewardship concerns. Glenn pointed out how much better it would be to focus on stewardship issues rather than be dealing with lawyers. Jim noted the Post Point Lagoon and Estuary work that is going on, and that later there will be a need for weeding there. Motion PASSED unanimously.

Tree Sale: March 29th. Thom asked if we wanted to have a booth again. He pointed out that we need someone there with plant expertise, and others to help. Last year we only made \$200 and it was a lot of work for Thom and Joan. Vince will call for volunteers.

CSN: The meeting of January 7th and the EIS scoping meeting of January 16th were reported on. The Chuckanut Ridge committee met with Mayor Pike on February 4th. He reported that the developers would be happy to sell the property. Meanwhile, the EIS is still going forward, and will help determine the value of the property.

(At this point Mayor Pike arrived at the Fairhaven Park Pavilion.) Responsible Development (RD) has created "1000 Friends of Chuckanut Ridge" to work on a pledge drive toward the purchase of the land. Vince has joined. RD is a 501(c)3 organization, so donations are tax-deductible. Larry Kimmet pointed out that Google Earth Pro is useful for imaging the area and what development would do.

Mayor Pike said the city is going to do a carbon footprint impact analysis re building in other areas instead of Chuckanut Ridge. He spoke about TDRs (Transfer of Development Rights), but said he prefers PDRs (Purchase of Development Rights), which involve pre-approval. Money flows between property owners. For example, in Old Town the city and the neighborhood have identified places where additional height would be accepted.

What can we do as a city to facilitate this sort of conversation? For instance, construction costs dictate height limitations—concrete construction only pays at 12 stories and above. There would be an upper limit. Re Chuckanut Ridge, 739 unites are potentially vested. What would be done would be negotiated. (Paul pointed out that similar issues are being dealt with in Boulder, Colorado.) There are challenges to getting the policy outlets you want. The city is working on revamping codes and zoning regulations—a task force is to be put in place shortly for a planning academy including neighborhoods, business people, and developers, to look at infill strategies, TDRs, PDRs, etc. The would probably be for next fall. Neighborhoods need guidance from the city.

(At this point Mayor Pike had to leave.)

Traffic: Glenn reported on the 6-year TIP for arterials. The deadline is March 1st for calling for improvement to any arterial that is in the neighborhood (for us that is Old

Fairhaven Parkway). He suggests asking for a crosswalk with blinking lights where Donovan becomes 10th Street.

Re traffic calming for residential streets: We will allow 7 or 8 minutes to discuss this next meeting. As part of the Neighborhood Traffic Safety Program (NTSP), you need 11 points to get action such as traffic counts or speed control. The places we asked for calming last year didn't get enough points. It was suggested that another place might be in front of Eclipse Books, 11th Street between Finnegan Way and Mill Street.

Other business: Thom brought up the "6th Street Campground." What can be done? Janet noted that getting Fred to develop his property would help. Sue pointed out that the Neighborhood Plan deals with that problem.

Stuart requested that at next month's meeting we discuss the bylaws.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Elinor Pravda, Acting Fairhaven Neighbors Secretary