

## **Dunbar Spring Neighborhood Association Minutes for February 20, 2012 General Meeting**

Meeting called to order 7:10 pm

Sign in and introductions

### **Treasurer report**

Balance is still \$1451.71. Some discussion about difficulty with disbursing funds, possibility of opening a bank or credit union account. There seem to be some obstacles that would make this difficult or impractical, so no action is taken. Diane Raab, our treasurer, also announces that she will not be running for reelection this April, so we will need to recruit a new treasurer.

### **Announcements**

Ian Fritz announces that this year's Pie Party will be April 28 at the Whistle Stop Depot. Time to break out the rolling pins and get baking.

Karen Greene announces that the book bike has been a great success. It will be at the Festival of Books, which is March 10-11. She is also now the community representative for the downtown library, so anyone with concerns related to the downtown library can contact her. She also shares the book *Dunbar to Destiny* which is a good read about the history of the Dunbar School.

Turtle announces that the little library on their corner is up and going and it's been interesting to see what books end up there. She encourages neighbors to stop by and trade books.

Sky Jacobs announces that the Dunbar Spring website has been down for a while, so he's talked with Ian Johnson and has agreed to take it over. He's moved all the files onto his own server and he may revamp it at some point.

### **Discussion**

Roy Drachman introduces himself. He is a broker who is working with the party that is in the process of buying the property at the southwest corner of Speedway and Stone. They currently have made a deal with David Ollanik and his partners to buy their portion of the land, but they'll also need to buy the city owned parcel to make the development work. They had planned to use provisions in the Infill Incentive District (IID) to avoid rezoning and expedite approval, but half of the land is now not part of the IID, so that is probably not possible anymore. Their original plan was to try to get the project built before August 2013, but with the amount of time that has passed and without the IID, the soonest will probably be August of 2014. They also need to know if the city will sell their parcel. They are under the impression that the city will only sell it if the neighborhood is in agreement with the plans. If it includes the city property, the structure will most likely be along the outer edges, with parking on the inside. The property is currently in escrow, and Drachman emphasizes that design for the site has not even begun, and that it is far from certain at this point whether the deal will go through.

Karen asks if there might be anything other than student housing in the development. Drachman says probably not and the maximum will be 300 to 400 bedrooms. The developer is Rick Schmidt, who was previously working with Royal Properties, the group that developed the student housing at Stone and University and who also gave the neighborhood some landscaping and traffic circles.

Natasha Winnik asks about the height. Drachman says it will probably be four stories, so they can build wood frame. He says they'll also incorporate rainwater harvesting and they'll work with us as much as possible. He also mentions that David Ollanik has said he may still try to develop the land himself if the deal does not go through.

Turtle mentions that David Ollanik had believed that the IID provisions could still be used even if only part of the property is in the IID. It sounds like this is probably not true, but there may be a case for it and the new owners may choose to argue it. Drachman says that even if they do and win, the project will still be delayed.

Drachman talks about the 9<sup>th</sup> Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue student housing project (at the Crescent Electric site) that he is also working with. They have 2.5 acres there and plan to build 195 bedrooms, and they also are planning to do an Individual Parking Plan to reduce the on-site parking requirement from one per bedroom. He thinks that the project we're looking at will probably be a similar scale.

Natasha asks if the designs of these projects take historic neighborhoods into consideration? Drachman says we should look at the website for Royal Properties to get an idea of what it may look like. He's not a fan of projects like the District, and he doesn't see why the developers wouldn't make an effort to make it compatible. They don't have any interest in building anything super modern.

Ian Fritz says that he likes projects with less parking and that prioritize transit, bicycling and walking. He notes that the location is a very bikeable and walkable so he doesn't want to see a parking spot for every bedroom. Natasha says that parking overflow into the neighborhood can be an issue, but she agrees with less parking spaces.

Drachman says that the Schmidt family will come to the neighborhood as soon as appropriate to discuss the project. Natasha asks if they might consider affordable housing along 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, as in previous plans. Drachman says he doesn't think that that would fit with current plans. Brad Lancaster mentions the student housing project at Stone and Lester that has incorporated some mixed uses and wonders about its success. His general concerns are that the project incorporates some mixed uses, that the entrance be from Stone or Speedway, that there be traffic mitigation for visitors, and that the project does not exceed the height of the hotel along 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

Drachman tells us that if things go forward, they will try to work with us from day one.

Roy Drachman leaves the meeting.

We have heard that Ward I is not interested in continuing the charrette process. Claire Zugmeyer feels like we've been getting mixed messages. Vince Pawlowski tells us that he thinks Phil Swaim is still interested in working with us. Natasha suggests that we ask him to help us outline some general ideas that can be applied to any project, since this development is still far from certain, and it's good to be proactive. There seems to be agreement on this, assuming Phil Swaim is willing to do it. Brad asks if we should come up with some preliminary wishes before inviting Swaim. He suggests starting with the letter we initially wrote. Everyone present seems to be okay with Phil Swaim. Ian will work up the list of our initial ideas and send them out to everyone at the meeting. Paul Buckwalter brings up past neighborhood plans, we should look them up and have them ready for meetings, and also make sure they are recognized with the city.

Historic commission – Paul relays a concern from Casey Hayden that the invasion of student housing into West University has eaten away at the historic district and if enough structures are demolished, the entire district may be lost. She is concerned that this may be a problem in Dunbar Spring as well. Ian agrees that damage to our historic district is a real issue, as it is consistently eroding. He believes that it requires an education process. Paul mentions that there is also a state threat to historic districts. Vince suggests that we move the vote to next meeting and invite representatives from West University. Karen thinks she remembers why this came up – the

state historic commission did not hear about what was happening in West University until very late, so we thought we should write them just to keep them informed about what is happening here. Paul mentions that it would be good to take a look at plans. Brad suggests working on a collaborative document about what we want and don't want in future developments and send this to the historic commission. Ian moves to table this to next meeting, Vince seconds, no discussion, motion carries unanimously.

HAWK signal – Harrison Smith explains that there are plans to install a HAWK pedestrian signal at 10<sup>th</sup> and Speedway, and Ian Johnson (not present) had asked if the neighborhood could see about writing a letter to make sure that the signal has provisions for bicyclists. Brad says that the request should include removal of part of the wall to allow bikes to ride along the former 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue route north of Speedway without conflicting with pedestrians entering the Catholic Community Services. Ian Fritz moves that he and Brad be given authority to approve a letter written by Ian Johnson on behalf of the neighborhood to request that provisions for bicycles, including removal of part of the wall be included in the HAWK signal at 10<sup>th</sup> and Speedway. Karen seconds. No further discussion. The vote is unanimously in favor of having a vote without prior announcement, and the motion carries unanimously.

## **Committee Reports**

The garden will be discussed first because Brad needs to leave soon. Vince presents Terry Pawlowski's report:

### **Community Garden Report – 2/20/2012**

Beginning in June of 2011, Cress Landers began to pay only \$50 of our water bill per month and we were responsible for the rest. Since June, we have been responsible for a total of \$550.34 for our water use. As our yearly rent collection totals only \$624, by the coming June we will be in arrears.

We need to raise rents, find an outside source for money or prevail on Cress to pay more of our water bill.

I am asking the neighborhood association to put on the agenda for next month an agenda item to deal with this situation. At present the garden has \$11.20. Brad has promised \$100 for the garden but, as today is a holiday, it has not yet come in the mail.

I have enclosed my paperwork to assist in the discussion.

Terry Pawlowski

Brad mentions that in the past there have been some abuses of the irrigation, which now all seem to have been remedied. The refugees had used too much water, which cleared out the surplus from the account. There had also been homeless bathing with the water, but the spigot has been removed and the valve box is screwed shut. The water bill is now a minimum of \$75 per month, which means that we can't break even with current prices. Brad suggests raising the \$4 plots to \$6, and the \$8 plots to \$12, and even with that, we will be right on the border. Terry also needs \$36 to pay current bills. Brad recommends that the rates be raised next month.

## **Discussion**

We return to a discussion of reinvestment project art, which had been removed from the agenda because the artists had cancelled, but the bench locations still need to be discussed. There are two artists teams of two, four total artists working on benches. There may be extra money but this not for sure. One artist team has a set price, and the other wants to speak with us. There is money for two benches, or if we are lucky, three. The locations

we had previously agreed upon are the southeast corner of 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and University by the bulletin board, the northeast corner of 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and University at Robert and Dirk's house, the northwest corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue by Ian and Turtle's little library, and at the southeast corner of University and Main, by the Dry River. The city wants to know our priority of locations so they can approve them. The agreement is to make 10<sup>th</sup> and University first priority, and 9<sup>th</sup> and University and 10<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> tied at second priority.

### **Committee Reports**

Downtown Links – nothing new.

DNARC – Karen Greene announces that last DNARC meeting was very interesting and they actually discussed the possibility of DNARC disbanding. There were questions about their purpose and relationship to Downtown Tucson Partnership, who has some conflicting desires. Next meeting is March 5, and we'll see what happens then.

Dunbar Coalition – Lisa Scoblink is ill, but she will have a report next month.

Ian moves to approve last month's minutes. Turtle seconds. Motion carries unanimously.

Meeting adjourned.

*Minutes submitted February 27, 2012 by Harrison Smith, secretary*

*Next meeting Monday, March 19, 7 pm, at Dunbar School*