

Minutes for the CKNA Meeting - January 22, 2018
Creston School Cafeteria - 4701 SE Bush Street

Board Members Present:

Rachel Davies
Jason de Parrie-Turner
John Legler
Darian Davies
Elizabeth Durham McPherson
David Hackney
John Gethoefer
Michael Geffel
Joe Hovey

7:00PM - Introduction:

Meeting opened with Rachel welcoming the group and introducing each of the board members. She then gave a brief description of what the Creston Kenilworth Association does; talking about various projects that are going on within the community as well as various events that we host throughout the year. Rachel described a little bit about the population makeup of the Creston Kenilworth neighborhood, noting that we would like to have more Renters and Minorities participating as board members so that it reflects the community as a whole.

Rachel then laid out the agenda for the meeting, and laid down some ground rules with regard to questions to the panel re: Homeless Shelter at 6144 SE Foster Road.

7:15PM - Community Announcements:

Rachel shared that there is a Village Coalition Houseless Event on January 31 at Loaves & Fishes Center, 3925 Milwaukie Ave in Brooklyn from 6:00-8:30.

7:20PM - Update on the Neon Bike Improvement Project:

Michael Geffel gave a brief description of the project and noting that he had submitted an application to PBOT for grant money to improve the bicycle path around 52nd and Foster. Unfortunately, the application was not approved. But SE Uplift has recently offered a Grant program for the neighborhood; therefore, Michael submitted an application to them as well. Waiting on feedback.

7:30 - Panel Discussion re: Homeless Shelter at 6144 SE Foster Road:

On the panel were the following speakers:

- Hayden Miller, Constituent Relations and Policy Liaison, Commissioner Jessica Vega Pederson's Office
- Seraphie Allen, Policy Advisor and Community Liaison, Mayor Ted Wheeler's Office
- Marc Jolin, Director, Joint Office of Homeless Services
- Stacy Borke, Director of Shelter Services, Transitions Projects
- Christian Gaston, Policy and Research Director for Multnomah County

The Association had submitted prepared questions to the panel, all of which came from within the community. They were as follows:

1. How will the shelter be funded? Will any money come from the Lents Urban Renewal fund?

2. Please outline the decision making process for choosing this site, specifically addressing these issues:

- Was the community engaged in searching for possible shelter locations? Why or why not?
- What facts demonstrate that this location is appropriate for a homeless shelter? Were these facts made public before the decision was made to choose this location?
- Describe why this site was determined to be advantageous for its proximity to transit and job opportunities.
- How was the proximity to schools and day care facilities taken into account in the decision, especially considering that the shelter will allow people with criminal backgrounds including assault and sex crimes?
- Why are you seeking public input now? What specific decisions can the public be a part of?

3. Were any zoning laws waived or modified for this shelter?

4. The Creston-Kenilworth neighborhood is one of the densest neighborhoods in Portland. In addition to this 100-bed shelter, the city is also planning to build a new 200-300 unit apartment complex at SE 30th and Powell where no residences existed before. Concurrently, private developers are adding density (e.g. lot splitting & new apartment complexes). What plans does the city have to offset this increase in population density in our neighborhood?

5. In the past 6 months, the neighborhood association has heard plans for a temporary winter shelter that will eventually become a 200-300 unit affordable housing complex on SE Powell (by the Portland Housing Bureau), a private developer who is planning affordable single-room occupancy units in cooperation with Street Roots (by Guerrilla Development), and now a 100-bed shelter. This feels like a rapid uptick in services within a small area. What coordination is there between the city, county, and private developers to ensure that new services are located where they are needed while avoiding over concentration in any one neighborhood?

Marc Jolin started answering the questions in order, noting that the City General Fund would pay for this Shelter. With regard to Question 2 - he talked about the process by which they chose this site. But at that point, the meeting soon took another turn, as members of the community began "reacting" to his answers and asking more questions. Rachel made the attempt to have the panel finish answering the questions and then she would open it up for questions from the group. Again, that took a different turn as people felt they had additional questions to ask, and were concerned that there would not be enough time to get thru them all. Rachel then asked that the group - rather than just "shout out" their reactions / questions - actually raise their hands and she would identify them to speak. Upon being called the individuals would then give their name and their location with regards to the shelter placement.

Ty Bech, a Creston Kenilworth neighbor, was one of the more vocal members of the group. He was concerned about the timeline on lease signing - to be done on January 25, 2018. He felt it was being rushed, knowing that in May, 2018 the zoning laws would be changing, and the designated shelter space would not be allocated to handle 120 people but rather a number much less. The panel did not really reply to his comments, but rather kept alluding to the fact that the Landlord was growing impatient and the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners needed to vote on the Lease. That vote could go one way or the other; and if they voted "NO" - then the shelter would be dead. And the City and County would need to look elsewhere.

There was also discussion among the panel and the community re: the closing of the Hansen Shelter for fiscal reasons and whether the Foster Shelter would be a replacement shelter.

The main topics of concern expressed by the community throughout the evening were: project being RUSHED, drug use (inside and outside the shelter), camping around the shelter, the proximity of the shelter to the Alternative School and the Day Care and its effect on the kids, dogs and feces, the actual size of the shelter itself, the fact that the lower income areas are always the ones bearing the brunt of Homelessness, the lack of transparency from the City's side with regard to this whole project, lack of trust in the panel members, the total disregard by the City for the Civic Process of engaging the community in this project from the beginning, lack of police & safety patrolling, the responsiveness of Transitions Projects and the Mayor's office to community reports of increase in crime and disturbances, and finally, the fact that the shelter will put more stress on a community that is already stressed out with existing crime in the area. A few people asked the panel for various types of reports that were done prior to choosing this location for the shelter, as well as reports on crime within the immediate area of the Willamette shelter in Sellwood.. For instance, the shelter leaders point to crime being down or unchanged because of the Willamette shelter but they refer to Sellwood-Moreland crime stats. Not the 1/4 mile circle Portland maps provides. Christian Gaston said he would provide those.

Ty Bech made a plea to the panel to please delay the Lease vote on Thursday, and allow him and a few other community members to be on a steering committee with

members of the panel, having equal clout as each of them. He expressed concern that the community had very little time to be engaged in the process and wanted more time. The other option was to continue to show up at meetings and continue to protest the manner in which the way this was handled, as well as the actual location. By forming a steering committee with members of the community, he felt confident that they could resolve the issues around this shelter.

From the panel's reaction - it appeared that they had little control over the vote. They again alluded to the fact that the County Board would be the ones voting. And they expressed the opinion that if the vote is delayed, they will lose the shelter as the landlord will probably not agree with the delay.

Towards the end of the meeting - around 9:10 - Ty Bech then asked if the CKNA Board would send a letter to the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners asking that they delay the vote this Thursday, January 25, 2017. The Board would remain neutral with regard to the shelter itself, but rather asking that more time be given to allow the community to be more engaged in the decision making. Rachel asked if anyone from the CKNA Board would make the motion and John Gethoefer made the motion to "write a letter asking for the Multnomah County Commission to delay the vote on the lease for 6144 SE Foster Road to allow for more public dialogue. CKNA has not taken a formal position on the proposed shelter site." Joe Hovey seconded that motion.

Rachel then opened it up for a vote with the Board members. The motion passed with Jason de Parrie-Turner "abstaining" and Elizabeth Durham McPherson "opposing". Ty agreed to work with John on drafting the letter and would get to him by Tuesday morning, January 23, 2017. This would give enough time for Rachel to review the letter and make any comments prior to submitting to the County Board.

9:20PM - Meeting adjourned.