

WeCAN General Membership Meeting
Minutes
February 14, 2012
Prepared by Leah Rounds

AGENDA

- 6:00 pm call to order & announcements
- WeCAN Do Great Things award & new member drawing
- Denver Police Officer report
- Christine Smith-Dreier from “Lead Free Kids” will be presenting on free lead risk assessments and a free lead blood testing clinic coming up in March
- With all of the exciting projects our neighborhood is embarking on, WeCAN’s voice is more important than ever. Councilwoman Debbie Ortega will speak on the importance of Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNOs) with respect to accomplishing community objectives
- Adjourn

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 6:10pm by Ben Stetler.

Announcements

- WeCAN collects non-perishable food items at its meetings for the food bank at the Set Free Church; please bring donations to our next meeting
- Denver Digs Trees – 2 options this year, Street and Yard trees are available. Order by February 15th (sooner is better) at www.theparkpeople.org
- Land use committee meeting: Wed Feb. 15th, 6:00pm, 1400 Osceola St.
- Recycle metal to support WeCAN. Call Bill Baker, 303-946-8230 or email bigbuddy2@comcast.net. Close to \$3,000 has been collected in the past year
- Rebuilding Together Metro Denver (RTMD) is in the preliminary planning stages with WeCAN for a project in West Colfax this summer. Applications for homeowners will be available at Confluence Ministries or you can call Barbara Baker, 303-257-9808, thanksb@comcast.net. Services are only available to homeowners. RTMD is a national non-profit that helps disabled, senior, and veteran homeowners remodel (anything from putting in a shower grab bar to redoing entire walls, doors, windows, etc.). There is a need for applications from the neighborhood for a local business to sponsor a project, and RTMD will find a larger sponsor. Hope to start a project by late July or early August of 2012.
- Newsletter volunteers wanted to volunteer their time to help distribute the WeCAN Newsletter once a month. This is a badly needed position for approx. 160 houses and 1.5-2hrs of time a month.

- WeCAN Board of Directors meeting is February 22, 6:00pm, downstairs at 1400 Quitman. All are welcome to join us.
- Next month's WeCAN General Membership meeting is March 13, 2012.
- RTD Decatur-Federal station planning has a informational and feedback meeting on Wed. Feb 29, 2012 at Fairview Elementary School, there are two sessions, 2-3:30pm and 5:30-7pm. There will be an overview of the planning process and small group discussions on what people would like to see in their community
- RTD has a meeting on March 1, 2012 for the Sheridan parking structure, more information at the RTD website West Corridor link

WeCAN Do Great Things award was given to Lake Steam Baths who has been in the community for 80+ years. If you know of an individual or business that deserves this award please nominate them

Drawing for new member – gift certificate donated by Lake Steam Baths

Denver Police Officer was not in attendance, no DPD report this month

Presentation from Christine Smith-Dreier from “Lead Free Kids,” a healthy homes program through the NE Denver Housing Center

- Currently concentrating in West Denver
- Have been working in the surrounding area with Head Start programs
- A flier was made available explaining the program and dates for testing
- Free risk assessments are available for households with children under 6 or pre-1950 homes. Inspect the property to help occupants make educated decisions on how to reduce or eliminate risk to lead. Housing is provided if there is a home that needs to be fixed-up.
- For more information, comments, or questions contact Brendan Doyle at 303-377-3334 ext. 231 or bdoyle@nedenverhousing.org

Councilwoman Debbie Ortega shared information on the importance of RNOs, and the significance they can play in a neighborhood in setting priorities, having a voice, and in helping shape policy

- There is a RNO ordinance, which requires cities to notify and communicate with the neighborhood on any work that is to be done in the area. As more RNOs were created it gave them more power and to be more proactive. For example, the city will provide contractors with a list of affected neighborhoods, and your city council person serves as a liaison between contractors and RNOs. When Denver recently revised its Zoning Code, WeCAN was there to insure that Main Street zoning remained in place along Colfax Ave (in order to maintain the intentions of the former West Colfax Partnership and the West Colfax BID)
- Last count, Denver had 230 RNOs (homes and businesses)

- Question on the amount of power RNs have in planning and rezoning. It depends on if a zoning change is needed. Important to pay attention to the notices and agendas that come out weekly to the council, and your ability to come to those meetings.
- WeCAN currently has 240 members, how does an RNO go about asking for council help? It depends on the issue. RNOs should decide on an issue and work with city and government offices to focus there. Traffic issues are usually ongoing. WeCAN has the opportunity to be involved in the St. Anthony redevelopment. Identify priorities on where you want to have a voice and focus there.

Additional information that Councilwoman Debbie Ortega shared

- Beginning the redistricting process, there will be public meetings to look at maps and give feedback. NE Denver has grown the most. There's been a decrease in the overall number of precincts, making them larger (54k people in each). There are currently 3 map variations with no consensus on any of them. They must fit certain Federal criteria (be continuous, compact, and equal number of people). There may be a shift in councilpersons. The new boundaries will go into effect in 2015.
- Shared Kaiser Health Insurance plans, with premiums at \$18 for individuals and \$36 for a family, but there are criteria to receive this.
- WeCAN is working on getting a community garden at Nettie Moore Park (12th and Utica) and would like to see more security in getting this project pushed through. Currently working with Denver Parks and Rec and the city, and WeCAN would like to see the garden pushed to the next level (canning, selling, etc.). Ortega supports these efforts to get the garden moving forward with a plan for this Spring

Adjourned at 7:40pm

Respectfully submitted,

Leah Rounds

Secretary

West Colfax Association of Neighbors (WeCAN)