

# WeCAN General Membership Meeting

## Minutes

March 13, 2012

Prepared by Leah Rounds

## AGENDA

- 6:00 pm Healthy potluck
- 6:20 pm call to order & announcements
- WeCAN Do Great Things award & new member drawing
- Denver Police Officer report
- Redistricting issue and vote
- Presentations by Nicole Stahly with Denver Parks & Rec and Shannon Spurlock from DUG regarding the proposed West Colfax community garden (to be built in the Lakewood gulch near Tennyson St.)
- Adjourn

## MINUTES

WeCAN Do Great Things awarded to JPUN (Jefferson Park United Neighbors) for all their work on the Sports Authority Field signage

The meeting was called to order at 6:20pm by Chad Reischl after a healthy potluck.

### Announcements

- Colfax Elementary is putting on the play “Little Red Riding Hood” on April 23 and 25, 2012 at 5:30pm. \$3 for adults and \$1 for kids for tickets as a fundraiser for the school. Jude of Confluence Ministries will be selling tickets at the next meeting as well
- Public Works Meeting regarding stop light removal on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Streets: Thursday March 15<sup>th</sup> at 6pm at Lake Middle School. This is an opportunity to get information and raise questions and comments.
- WeCAN Annul Garage Sale, Sat. June 2, for donation pick up call Barbara Baker, 303-257-9808, [thanksb@comcast.net](mailto:thanksb@comcast.net), proceeds go to a Rebuilding Together project to do safety remodeling for a senior citizen in our neighborhood. Barbara has applications for seniors, veterans, and disabled for the Rebuilding Together project.
- 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.
- Representative Pabon will be hosting a town hall meeting on Monday March 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm at Fairview Elementary, 2715 W. 11<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- Land use committee meeting: Wed March 14, 6:00pm, 1400 Osceola St.
- Alley/Graffiti Clean-Up: May 19<sup>th</sup>
- Recycle metal to support WeCAN: call Bill Baker, 303-946-8230 or email [bigbuddy2@comcast.net](mailto:bigbuddy2@comcast.net)
- WeCAN Board of Directors meeting on Mar. 21, 6:00pm downstairs at 1400 Quitman. All are welcome
- Next meeting April 10<sup>th</sup>: We will be watching a documentary about West Colfax

Denver Police Officer Jay Wittenberg

- In the next year the West Colfax area should see a lot more cop cars patrolling the area. A Problem Solving Project (PSP) at level 1 will be focusing on the 121 Precinct (17<sup>th</sup> to the gulch and Federal to Sheridan)
- Reported offenses in January 2012 have decreased 34% as compared to January 2011. More statistics were made available in a memo handed out by DPD.
- DPD is partnering with Crime Stoppers to provide rewards for any information regarding juvenile and repeat-offenders with firearms.
- Concerns were raised with the increased traffic on 14<sup>th</sup> between Wadsworth and Sheridan. It may be due to the road construction; this is Lakewood's jurisdiction

Ben Stetler (WeCAN co-President) announced that WeCAN will be pushing for increased membership this year (currently 240 members with the goal of having 500 by the end of the year).

- Encouraged all in attendance to reach out to neighbors to ask them to become a member of WeCAN and sign up to be on the listserv.
- With greater number of people, the more influence WeCAN can have when talking to officials.
- Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNOs) are given particular weight and are recognized in Denver, as per the RNO ordinance Article 3 Section 12

Redistricting

- Every ten years there must be redistricting based on the new census data. The districts must be compact, connected, be equal in population, among a few other criteria. District 1 lost 5k people but overall Denver grew by 45k people with most growth in the NE. These changes won't go into affect until 2015
- There are currently 5 drafts of the changes to the 11 districts. Maps A, C, and D would all divide the West Colfax neighborhood basically in half at either Knox or Perry. Maps B and E would keep West Colfax intact
- WeCAN Board reaction is to keep our neighborhood together and think it is best to keep West Colfax in one district.
- There is strong support from Councilwoman Susan Shepherd of district 1 to keep West Colfax together. She shared that at the recent public meeting on this matter there was also strong support to keep West Colfax together.
- Advantages of staying together include: We do well with one councilperson representing us, requires more volunteer hours to stay in touch with a second councilperson (and the two may disagree on issues and there will be the need for them to stay in constant contact), need for a cohesive plan for the neighborhood, it is difficult to balance two opinions at times, it would be better to work together to attract more business along Colfax (especially with the light rail coming soon), being a cohesive group allows us to pull projects together and speak with a unified voice, the Federal to Sheridan boundary is an obvious grouping
- Opinion from the business district and others that a split could have its advantages: having two councilpersons could create more leverage and influence, opportunity to build a better relationship with the Villa Park neighborhood

- The redistricting committee has two more public meetings and they have received many opinions via email. There is the desire to keep “communities of interest” preserved (these may be economic grouping, cultural, religious, etc. but also include groups who got together on a certain issue) and for the statistical neighborhoods to stay intact as much as possible. Redistricting lines will be voted upon by the committee at the April 30<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- WeCAN has written a letter in support of Maps B or E. There was a motion to vote in support of this letter. Members voted in support.

Susan Shepherd shared her monthly newsletter (sign-up for email version at [www.denvergov.org/susanshepherd](http://www.denvergov.org/susanshepherd))

- Public meeting on March 15<sup>th</sup> at 6pm by Public Works, at Lake Middle School to discuss signal and signage improvements.
- Structural Finance Task Force will hold a public meeting March 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:00pm at Exdo at 3545 Larimer St. and March 31<sup>st</sup> at 9:00am at Cook Park at 7100 Cherry Creek Drive South to discuss the Mayor’s budget. Some areas of discussion include permanent changes in property taxes, a potential “pay as you throw” trash system, and health care and pension programs. Public comments are welcome

Nicole Stahly with Denver Parks & Rec & Shannon Spurlock from Denver Urban Gardens (DUG) gave an update on the Community Garden that will be at Nettie Moore Park (12<sup>th</sup> and Utica) across the path from the playground.

- DUG is currently working on a concept for the garden. The plan and playground improvements will be shown at future WeCAN meetings for feedback.
- Playground equipment is to be updated at the same time the garden goes in (the pit will remain as is and the playground equipment will be separated by age group). Playground will be brought up to ADA standards.
- Utility lines are currently running through the area, so DUG must make sure the concept plan doesn’t interfere with these lines.
- Timeline – coming up with a plan in the next month, must meet with utility company, need to coordinate with the playground equipment going in. Hoping for a Fall 2012 opening with garden planting starting in Spring 2013.
- Community Garden committee will run the program (Parks provide the land, DUG helps set up the program, committee will run it).
- There will be approximately 25 plots available
- Question on when the next community garden can get started. Must have a thriving first garden and good community involvement, then plan forward.
- Gardens will be irrigated by city water (the city allows DUG to tap into the system). It will be a manual water system (no drips, timers, etc.).

Barbara Baker Announced the partnership with Confluence Ministries to hold canning, preserving, and jelly making lessons this summer.

Dan Pabon of House District 1

- Currently half way point into the legislation (Jan-May is the term)

- Focus is currently on: the election year, health care services and contraception, weapons in schools and gun laws, unemployment/loss of health care and getting the economy on track. The last few weeks have been extremely political in the legislation.
- Dan was pushing a law to help homeowners who are in foreclosure and are without recourse. A bill would stop this practice, but it failed along party lines.
- Big goal for the remainder of the session is to get a budget passed.
- Town Hall meeting on Monday March 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm at Fairview Elementary, 2715 W. 11<sup>th</sup> Ave.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm

Respectfully submitted,

Leah Rounds  
Secretary  
West Colfax Association of Neighbors (WeCAN)