

WeCAN General Membership Meeting
Minutes
September 9, 2014
Prepared by Leah Rounds

Agenda

- 6:00 Pot-luck dinner and silent auction
- 6:25 Call to order and Announcements
- 6:30 Police officers report
- 6:40 Presentation regarding rezoning for improvements to the Yeshiva Toras Chaim Campus at Stuart and Conejos – vote on approval
- 6:50 Update on St Anthony's Redevelopment including presentation by Nava Development on block 1 condo development and rezoning for additional height
- 7:15 Vote on approval of rezoning of block 1 – discussion on preliminary approval of rezoning on block 2
- 7:30 Adjourn

Minutes

Call to order at 6:20pm by Co-President Chad Reischl

Brenda from the Denver Public Library on fundraising for the library endowment fund

- Denver passed a bond in 2007, which included the building of three new libraries, and one is coming to the West Colfax neighborhood
- The city and tax money are paying for the establishment of the library
- Fundraising will ensure our neighborhood library has access to money to buy specific resources and programming that fits the needs of this neighborhood.
- \$150k raised so far; goal is to raise \$200k
- WeCAN will get a study room named after it for the \$5k being raised
- Silent auction items are available to bid on
- Library will hopefully be opening in mid December

Time allowed to bid on library fundraising silent auction and potluck

Jude of Confluence Ministries

- Whiz Kids tutoring program is looking for volunteer tutors. The program tutors students from Colfax Elementary on Wednesdays 4:30-6pm and 5:30-7pm
- Confluence offers ESL classes, GED classes in English and Spanish, and starting Spanish classes on Monday evenings

Denver Police Report, District 1

- Paul Jimenez is new to District 1, he previously served in District 4, was a sergeant for the Vice and Narcotics unit, and at DPD internal affairs
- Denise Gomez is the new Community Resource Officer. Contact information: cell 720-708-0788 and Denise.Gomez@denvergov.org. Work days are Monday-Thursday
- General information on vehicle thefts, theft from motor vehicles, etc. Lock cars, don't leave valuables in car, park in well lit areas, etc.
- October general meeting DPD will share information on the Light campaign and establishing a Neighborhood Watch.
- Crime across the city and District 1 is currently down
- Q&A
 - Seeing less criminal activity along the gulch since the light rail went in? Crime seems to go in waves; currently crime is on the decline. Always be cautious, and if you see anything out of the ordinary don't hesitate to call DPD. 911 for emergencies and 720-911-200 for non-emergencies. For reoccurring neighborhood problems contact Denise
 - Are the maps of incidences available? There is an online version available. Denise will talk to Commander Pazen about getting some print ones available for the next meeting. There is a Commander Advisory Group (CAG) every third Monday of the month at 6pm at District 1, where Commander Pazen shares stats of the West Colfax neighborhood and surrounding areas
 - When are DPD officers getting body cameras? It is currently a pilot project in District 6, but there is funding in place to eventually outfit officers across the city.

Sherry Kirshbaum and Rabbi Wasserman regarding rezoning for improvements to the Yeshiva Toras Chaim Campus at Stuart and Conejos

- Will be remodeling the current Yeshiva school building and building a new dorm for the students (replacing the current dorm on Perry and Colfax)
- Want to stay in this community and be a part of the re-growth
- Planning to build a 3-story dorm (roughly 14,500 sq. ft.), remodel the school, remodel the social hall, put in a new parking area, and build a new basketball court
- Currently in the rezoning process for the new dorm building and would like community support
- Q&A
 - What is happening to the old dorm on Perry? The building has already been sold and the boys need to move out for the 2015 school year
 - Will the building be LEED certified? Not going for the LEED certification, but will be using green and sustainable practices

- Will the design be adapted from current EFG designs for the streetscape?
This new zoning requires more landscaping be done
- What is at the northern most part of the plan? A new basketball court for the boys
- Motion made to approve the re-zoning for this project from PUD to CMX3, seconded, and all voted in favor. Motion carried

Announcements

- WeCAN still needs three newsletter delivery carriers – contact Bill Baker at 303-946-8230. It takes about 1-1 ½ hours once a month
- WeCAN's Board Meeting: Will be on Sept. 17th at 6pm downstairs, all are invited to attend – we are looking for new leadership in the coming year, so if you'd like to make a difference in the WeCAN community, please consider attending.
- WeCAN's next General Meeting: will be on Oct. 14 at 6:00 pm. We will be having an update on the sustainability program and kicking off a porch light safety initiative where all interested attendees can get two free fluorescent light bulbs (one for them and one for a neighbor) to light up their front porches at night.
- Recycle metal to support WeCAN: call Bill Baker, 303-946-8230 or email bigbuddy2@comcast.net. Over \$7k has been made to fund the newsletter
- “Box Tops for Education” program, bring your box tops to WeCAN meetings and Leah Rounds will take them to the local schools to support their programs.
- Susan Shepherd is up for re-election for council this May 2015. Richard (WeCAN member) endorses Susan and is holding a Meet and Greet at his home to help with the campaign. It will be held Thursday, Oct. 2 from 5:30-7:30pm. RSVP to Susan's campaign manager

Cameron Burtron from the EnviroFinance Group on the redevelopment of St. Anthony's

- NAVA Real Estate is in development for building on Block 1
- There are current street closures near the site. Roads are all being redone and streets through the site will be put back in. Starting with the streets surrounding the site, but this should be done within a few weeks
- By December most horizontal work will be complete
- Foundations are starting to go in at block 6

Brian Levit, a co-founder of NAVA Real Estate, established in Denver, presented on their preliminary designs for block 1 (16th-17th street and Raleigh to Stuart)

- Will bring home ownership on the lake. Many buildings in the area now are rentals. NAVA will build high-quality for-sale condos. Need rezoning to build 8 & 12 stories for this project to go through
- Block 1 offers views of the lake and mountains.

- There are restrictions on the site, namely single-family homes west of the site. A maximum height of 75ft. is allowed close to the homes on Stuart. Design raised to 12 stories closer to Raleigh
- The design calls for 2 story townhomes on Stuart, 12-stories on the NE of the site, 8-stories on the SE of the site, stepping down to 5-stories and then 2-stories moving closer to Stuart
- There will be 200+ for-sale condos, 70% two bedroom and 30% one bedroom
- Private amenity deck on the top of the building – pool, views, community garden, etc.
- 400 parking spots being built internally (only required to have 179 spots), to ensure enough parking for residents, guests, and retail. Garage will be 100% surrounded by housing
- Retail space will be along the first floor
- 20 parking spaces available to those people just coming to look at the condos
- Will be LEED certified, integrating a health and wellness component (improving air and water quality, efficient energy use, food production, etc)
- Need the rezoning to occur before NAVA goes ahead with the design and gets their price point on the condos
- Building will be set back 30 feet from 17th street, with a corner plaza at Raleigh set back even further
- Currently in the design concept phase, a lot of thought and market research was done of the site
- East side balconies will be popped out, and townhouse balconies will be inset.
- This will be a high-quality building of concrete and glass
- Q&A/Comments/Discussion
 - What demographics will be marketed to for these condos? Young professional, millennials, empty nesters, active adults
 - Will the design incorporate the look of the neighborhood? After the rezoning there will be 9-12 months of the design process, and the look of the neighborhood will be taken into account, but also want the building to look progressive
 - Won't this cause more traffic along 17th street? Were there any discussions with the city on widening 17th street?
 - As the site stands today there would be 800-1200 housing units on these 6 blocks. With the development that is being designed today the residential units will be closer to 800-900
 - Commercial space will be roughly 130k sq. ft. spread over the 6 blocks
 - This is largely a residential project with some commercial space along Raleigh and Colfax
 - A traffic study of the area was done. Likely add a stop sign along 17th at Raleigh, but no recommendation was made to widen 17th
 - There is a trade off between density and traffic. This site is located near bus lines, the light rail, etc.

- This project will bring more traffic, but the traffic study indicated the changes in wait time were modest
 - When is the groundbreaking for the theater? Hasn't been announced yet. They are closing on the site in January 2015, and ground breaking will likely be in the spring
 - What is happening with the boutique hotel? Kulman Group (developer of block 3 and this hotel) will return to a WeCAN meeting to explain their plan. Now proposing more of an extended-stay type hotel. There will be a focus on the common area with a restaurant, coffee shop, etc.
 - In 2010 the city went through a rezoning process. St. Anthony's as a whole was rezoned to CMX5 (allowing for 5 stories). This new rezoning will allow for 3 times the density on this site. Taller buildings should be built internally of this redevelopment area, not along 17th. Sloan's Lake Neighborhood Association has objected to the rezoning of block 1, citing the impact on the park, traffic, etc.
 - Is this rezoning for block 1 only? Yes, rezoning for 12-stories but restricted (can't have 12-stories across the entire block). If rezoning goes through, can't build higher than 12 stories? Correct
 - Will there be a shadowing affect? It has been studied, didn't want to shade the existing houses
 - For ground-floor commercial viability in the area there is a need for density in housing
 - Stuart Street is a protected area; within a certain distance of existing homes new construction must be set so far back. Design guidelines limit height to 3-stories along Perry and Stuart.
- Motion was made to approve the rezoning to MX12 for block 1
 - Discussion
 - Whether for against this rezoning, it will still be an economic benefit for the neighborhood
Will help spur development along Colfax
 - Without the rezoning block 1 it will be 5-story rentals
 - Need to discuss the overall positive impact for the neighborhood, including its catalyzing affect for development in our neighborhood
 - City will look at WeCAN's letter of support when deciding to grant rezoning or not
 - Rezoning schedule – prepared to submit for rezoning now, currently going through Susan Shepherd's office, likely be in committees in Nov and Dec and a public hearing in January 2015.
 - Not the right type of development for this neighborhood
 - Retail along Raleigh will take away from retail along Colfax – another opinion was that it would attract more business along Colfax
 - If zoning remained where it is now then a 5-story rental would go up with roughly 1300 housing units on the entire 6 blocks, 230 units for block 1.

- Motion was seconded, over 90% of attendees voted in favor of approving the rezoning, motion carried

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm

Respectfully submitted,

Leah Rounds

Secretary

West Colfax Association of Neighbors (WeCAN)