

WeCAN General Membership Meeting
Minutes
March 10, 2015
Prepared by Leah Rounds

Agenda

- 6:00-6:20 Potluck
- 6:20-6:30pm Call to Order and Announcements
- 6:30-6:40pm Police Officers Report
- 6:40-7:00pm Sustainability
- 7:00-7:20pm Arroyo Project
- 7:20-7:30pm Wrap Up
- 7:30pm Adjourn

Minutes

Call to order at 6:20pm by Co-President Ben Stetler following a pot-luck dinner

Announcements

- Thank you to all who came to the St. Anthony's recent rezoning hearing, the rezoning passed unanimously by the council. WeCAN helped to organize 75+ letters from the neighborhood.
- Our next board meeting is being held next Wednesday, March 18th at 6:00pm at Confluence Ministries. Board meetings are open to general members.
- WeCAN is a non-profit organization that does not charge for membership. We raise all of our money to keep the organization running through our metal recycling program. Please contact Bill Baker (bigbuddy2@comcast.net) if you have anything you would like recycled. The cost to you is \$0.00 and Bill will pick up your item(s) at no charge. It is a great way to stay green and help our organization out.
- Please sign up to be a WeCAN newsletter delivery volunteer, route are currently full but alternates are needed. Our organization depends on people like you to make it possible to deliver over 2000 newsletters per month! Please contact Bill Baker (bigbuddy2@comcast.net) if you are able to help out.
- Please donate your box tops for education to Leah Rounds (librarianleah@gmail.com)! It's a great program that helps out our local schools. EACH BOX TOP IS WORTH 10 CENTS. For more information, check out <http://www.boxtops4education.com/>
- Coat Drive: Please bring any new or used and in good condition coat for our winter coat drive. Your coat will go to folks who badly need them. Additionally, you'll be helping WeCAN become a more sustainable neighborhood while assisting us with our Sustainability Project.

- Garage Space Needed—if you or a neighbor has any spare garage space that WeCAN can use to house items for the summer garage sale, please email Barbara Baker at thanksb@comcast.net

Councilwoman Susan Shepherd, District 1

- The Rodolfo “Corky” Gonzales library opened February 28th, and over 3,000 community members came through the doors that day. There was a celebration of Gonzales’s life with family members present. The new library offers a great children’s space, ESL programming, resume and work assistance, and more. There will be a coffee cart run by Girls Inc. called Bold Beans. It will be run by the teen girls on the evenings and weekends, allowing them to learn skills (handling money, making coffee, etc)
- Block 1 rezoning of the St. Anthony’s redevelopment did go through. Can build up to 12 stories, with it tapering down to 2 stories. These are the first for-sale condo projects in NW Denver in a very long time. Redevelopment will continue on the site with retail and offices
- There will be affordable housing units built at Colfax and Perry for low-income seniors
- Pot holes are abundant right now with the many freezes and thaws. Report them to 311 or the PocketGov App. More permanent fixes will take place in the spring.

Councilman Dan Pabon, District 4

- Update from the State Capital, 63 days into session
 - Work-force development package – the West Colfax area hasn’t rebounded as quickly as some of the surrounding neighborhoods
 - Work Act will provide 21st century skills training and be put to work in energy, construction, and technology
 - Colorado is 1 of 20 regions that is hiring for technology. Can get trained to code, connected to employers, and be put to work. Done through a grant program
- Contact Dan with any questions or concerns: 303-866-2954 or dan.pabon.house@state.co.us

Officer Gomez, DPD District 1’s Community Resource Officer

- Women’s self-defense class (15yrs+) is April 11, 9:00am at 2800 Osceola. Kid’s self-defense class (7-14yrs boys and girls) is the same day from 2-4pm
- Can always email Officer Gomez with questions, denise.gomez@denvergov.org

Commander Pazen, DPD District 1

- Crime in Denver and in District 1 overall is down. West Colfax, Villa Park, and Sloans will be an area of emphasis for District 1 is 2015.

- There are 144 Officers in District 1 and 100k+ residents, DPD needs continued support and assistance from neighbors, crime prevention is key.

Lt. Levins, DPD District 1

- Crime stats handed out. They can also be found on DenverGov.org and RAIDSonline
- A few major accomplishments by the District since these stats were updated – Feb. 1st arrest of several burglars in the area, went 32 days without another burglary in the neighborhood
- Need help from the residents, don't leave things in your car that would tempt a break-in.
- Leave porch lights on, there is a 67% decrease in vehicle related crimes when porch lights are left on. Free light bulbs are available at the Cop Shop.
- West Colfax has been prone to car theft. Made 19 arrests 3 weeks ago, and there has been a decrease in car thefts since.
- Early 90s Honda models are targeted. If you own one you can get a free club from the district station

A thank you to the 3 volunteers serving on the Zoning Action Committee (ZAG), they advise WeCAN on zoning concerns in the neighborhood.

Carol McKellen introduced Richard Taft of Rocky Mountain Communities, and Terrell Curtis of The Dolores Project – Presentation of the Arroyo Project

- Arroyo is a project at King-Knox & 12th-13th to build 130 affordable housing units
- The Dolores Project overview – Provides overnight shelter services for women and transgender individuals, been in the neighborhood for 8 years, provides year-round shelter for 50-60 people every night.
- There are 27 units of affordable housing for families currently on the site, want to put in 90 units of work-force (RMC), and 35 units for formally homeless (Dolores). Will also be redeveloping the over-night shelter program. Frontage along Knox Ct. will be redeveloped
- The Dolores Project is asking for a rezoning from 30 stories to 5 stories, a down-zone to be consistent with the rest of the neighborhood
- The concept layout includes a 4 story building with surface parking for the Dolores Project, and 4-5 stories for 95 housing units with two underground parking garages for the RMC.
- Q&A
 - When would the current buildings be leveled? Demo will start in 2016, there are abatement issues. RMC - Moving residents to a site on 17th and Hooker, this will be a temporary relocation with a lot of advanced notice. Still locking down financing for this project. Dolores – shelter guests will stay in place until the new shelter is built. There will continue to be 50

shelter beds and leasing can begin for the 35 units when the new building is complete.

- This issue was brought to WeCAN early because the date for the rezoning hearing was moved up to April 1st. Wanted the membership to have an opportunity to hear about the project. Will be presenting to SLCG tomorrow evening at 6pm at 2246 Irving St.
- Q&A continued
 - What is the rezoning at this site? How does the rezoning fit in with the overall project? Denver recently redid the zoning for the city, and made this plot 5 stories, with a partial piece of the overall plot 30 stories. Rezoning would make this 30 stories a 5 story, being consistent with the rest of the plot and the neighborhood.
 - What money has already been raised for the project? All applications are in to state and federal agencies for low-income tax credits, the Colorado Division of Housing, and the Mayor's office of Economic Development. Robust funding applications are out there.
 - Has there been any opposition to this rezoning? Have met with all the councilpersons that serve area, all have been happy to see the parcel be consistent with the rest of the neighborhood. The project has been well received.
 - This neighborhood, much like West Highlands, is on its way of becoming gentrified, and this project would preserve some affordable housing in Denver. Currently Denver gains only 1k units of affordable housing for every 3k units that are lost.
 - Westridge housing at 13th & Knox is a low-income Denver Housing Authority (DHA) project, it's slated to be redone in 8 years
 - Do you have a relationship with DHA? Not currently.
- These units will serve people with an income no higher than 50-60% AMI, and the shelter will serve people with 30% AMI.
- Want to build a community across these two projects, and hope to include a community garden and a community building with class opportunities.

ZAG Presentation on this request for rezoning

- Have researched this rezoning change and can find no obvious reason to oppose it. It is consistent with Blue Print Denver and the West Colfax Plan.
- The proposed design doesn't fit exactly with the WC Plan, which says designs want to embrace the gulch.
- DHA projects are mentioned in the WC Plan, which encourages mixed income housing. May want to look at making some of these units 80% AMI.
- RMC and Dolores response – The design is still very conceptual and would be happy to work with the neighborhood on the design. Would like to have a better presence at the Knox light rail station.

Motion was made to support this rezoning from 30 stories to 5 stories. Motion was seconded. 19 voted in favor, 0 opposed. Motion carries. WeCAN will write a letter in support of this rezoning for the council hearing.

All are invited to attend the public hearings on this project. Any further questions or if you have an interest in the project, please contact. Richard Taft (RMC) 720-305-9801 or rtaft@rmcommunities.org. Terrell Curtis (Dolores) 303-534-5411 x102 or terrell@thedeloresproject.org

Announcements Continued

- Nathan Stern is opening a second location of his coffee shop, Common Grounds, at 5004 W. Colfax (at Yates) in collaboration with the work program through the Colorado Coalition of the Homeless. Currently running a crowd-funding campaign to raise the last \$10k for equipment, furniture, and supplies. Currently at \$7.5k and need to reach the goal by this Sunday. Pledge envelopes are available or you can pledge online at neighborhoodcatalyst.org/en/westcolfaxcafe
- Extreme Community Makeover works in the West Colfax neighborhood to help with housing improvements and maintenance, ally and graffiti clean-up, etc. On Saturday May 16th EMC, WeCAN, and Confluence is partnering for a neighborhood clean-up day (and again Oct. 17th with Villa Park). If you have project ideas or know a neighbor that needs help, please get in touch with Diana@wecanddenver.org

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25pm

Respectfully submitted,

Leah Rounds

Secretary

West Colfax Association of Neighbors (WeCAN)

