

WeCAN General Membership Meeting
Minutes
May 12, 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
- 6:40-6:50pm Tony Frazzini, Director of Motor Vehicles presents “Skip the Trip” to the DMV
- 6:50-7:00pm Earthlinks presentation by Carol Maclennan
- 7:00-7:30pm Southwest Alternative Care Recreational Cannabis License Discussion
- 7:30pm Adjourn

Minutes

Call to order at 6:25pm by Co-President Ben Stetler following a pot-luck dinner

Announcements

- May 16th is the first clean-up day schedule to take place in the neighborhood. We are taking suggestions for alleys that need to be cleaned up. Please contact Diana Dietvorst at the end of the meeting. A thank you to all who have helped put the day together.
- Garage Sale Items and 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. Additionally, if you have items that are in good condition and would like to make a donation contact Barbara Baker. Been doing this project since the beginning, it generates funds for the EWeCAN Cares Fund. Will be June 6, on the SW of Colfax and Utica.
- 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/>
- 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.
- 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.

Carol Maclennan, volunteer at Earthlinks

- Earthlinks is a non-profit organization that offers a gardening program and social enterprise for people who have experienced homelessness.
- Been in Denver for 19 years in North Denver, were gentrified out, and bought a ½ acre on 13th and Decatur. Have put in 400k worth of improvements, a garden, and mural; putting down roots in the neighborhood.
- Participants are volunteers, they make the products, get counselling, and often volunteer extra hours. Proceeds from products go back as stipends for the participants.
- Open Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm. Carry Earth friendly products, with locally grown ingredients.
- The people involved in the garden and workshop come from very diverse backgrounds (there is an engineer, chef, gardener, carpenter, social worker, and more). Participants must have experienced homelessness and have a willingness to become a part of the Earthlinks community.
- Located in Sun Valley, but feel like a part of West Colfax. Have been working hard to be a part of this community.
- Earthlinks 5 minute video was shown, introducing the business and their work
- Strive to be a positive, respectful organization.
- All are invited to stop in, brochures and bookmarks were available
- Always fundraising and looking for donations, have a mortgage, and looking for ways to expand.
- To help at Earthlinks you can volunteer at a workshop, staff an event, host a home sale, invite the organization to come speak, work in the gardens and with participants, or shop (products were available for purchase in the lobby area).
- Q& A
 - How do people participate in Earthlinks? There is 50-75 people in the program each year, and the average stay is 2 years. Must have experienced homelessness, be below the poverty line, show up, have a willingness to make a change, and be respectful. Only so many people can be accepted. Orientations occur about six times a year. Or you can refer someone to the office location. Last year 75% of participants sustained stable housing, received monthly counselling, set personal goals, get support and a sense of being a part of a community.
 - How can you purchase products? Cash, check, or credit card

Dan Shah of the WC BID

- The WC Food Co-op will be showing “Food for Change,” on Wednesday, May 20th, at 6pm at Confluence Ministries. A film from 2014 about food co-ops in the US. There will be beer, food, and conversation.

- June 11th is a planning meeting on “Reimagining West Colfax” for an event on August 16th. Will be looking at what can be done to rework Colfax, and make it more bike and pedestrian friendly. Event will also have drinks and food.

Diana Dietvorst, Clean-up Day

- This Saturday, May 16th is the neighborhood clean-up – graffiti removal, alley clean-up, help a resident with an outdoor project, community garden, and gulch clean-up.
- Let Josh or Diana know if there certain alleys that should be cleaned up. If you want to get involved sign up with Diana or ECM.

Councilman Dan Pabon, State House of Representatives District 4

- Session just ended, three big things that came out of the session this year: 1) affordable housing, 2) cost of daycare, and 3) economy recovery in the US, but doesn't feel that way here
- The Work Act will provide technology and oil and gas training. Participants can go to a training partner, who are getting matching grant money from the state for three years, and be put to work to work for that company. Program is focused on workforce skills, jobs that pay \$30-\$50/hr. It's a free program to anyone. Contact Dan if you know someone who would like to get involved. It's the largest work-force development program in recent history.
- Contact Dan with any questions or concerns: 303-866-2954 or dan.pabon.house@state.co.us
- Q&A
 - Is there an age requirement? No. Getting out of high school or community college and looking for skills training. Open to long-term unemployed, or people looking for a second career.
 - What are the type of jobs? Skilled work, oil and gas pipelines, oil rigs, computer programming/coding, construction, trades. Have to have your working documents in place to be in the program.
 - How does it work for the Employers? Takes the burden off training new employees and puts it on a partner. Guaranteed a job after training.
 - How do you refer someone to the program? Email or call Dan.
- The bill will be signed in the next 10 days, then the program will go online.

Ken Snyder of Place Matter

- August 16th will be a Street Festival in the neighborhood, it will be about mobility, giving people more ways to get around, connectivity. Feature pop-up design to help people imagine what it could look like.
- Mobility.Direct tool that you can use on your phone or tablet to do a walk audit. Can report bad sidewalks, where bike lanes should be, etc.
- Contact Ken , ken@placematters.org to learn more

Ben Stetler gave an introduction on the marijuana licensing issue

- Historically in this neighborhood, WeCAN took a vote against the recreation license at the shop located at Colfax and Wolff.
- This is a hot-bottom issue and there are valid points all around, stay respectful and listen to all sides.
- WeCAN will first decide whether or not to take a position on this license, and if yes, the membership will vote on whether or not to support Southwest Alternative Care's application for a recreational license.

Truman Bradley, CEO of Southwest Alternative Care

- Started this business with two childhood friends. Took over the dispensary that was there 3.5 years ago. Been a member of WeCAN for 2 years.
- Recently applied for a retail/recreational license. Would be the only retail location in West Colfax from downtown to Lakewood. 2/3 of Denver voted for recreational marijuana.
- If recreational marijuana is going to come to the west side, Southwest is the company to do it. Business has a clean record, no violations, employees go through yearly background checks. Have won awards for quality. Trying to be a boutique shop.
- Would like to partner with WeCAN and others so that this is done in a safe way.
- Dispensary would be dual use, medical and rec. Medical shop will remain no matter what happens with the retail license. If the rec license is approved, would raise the age to 21+ for both rec and medical.
- Partner with Public Health to put out responsible information, customer education, employee training, and products are stored in child-proof containers.
- The shop has never received any complaints to Truman's knowledge.
- Committed to the community; will be partnering with WeCAN on this year's clean-up day, and will continue to do this even if the retail license isn't approved. Donate to several non-profits.
- If approved, tax dollars will go to local schools. Provides 19 Denver job, 6 employees have recently bought homes, many employees have college degrees and families.
- Can be ensured Southwest will do it the right way.
- Located in the Rose Lady building at Colfax and Perry, are currently in a lease, have no control over the façade. Everyone is invited to come in for a tour. If shop does go rec there will be some rebranding.
- Q&A
 - When will the vote be? Tonight WeCAN will take a vote. The City public hearing is May 20th at 1:30pm in the Web Building.
 - What is the general persona of the rec buyer? Older and more affluent than medical buyers. Growth in usage has been largest in seniors.
 - On the issue of sustainability and being socially and environmentally friendly, do you have a green certified business license? Have a grow house facility in Boulder. Off-set energy usage with wind energy. Currently sell by the gram, it is considered prepackaged that is child-proof and compostable. Business is not net zero energy use, it's difficult for anyone in this industry to be. Have talked with the BID on how to bring in more bikers

- What impact will moving to rec have on the neighborhood? More customers from the neighborhood will come to the store. There are people who are not able or willing to get a medical card, but want to buy. The majority of sales come from the 80204 zip code. Parking is an issue, would like to work with the community on this. Southwest is well-known in the cannabis industry.
- Would you move into St. Anthony's for a more upscale location? Would like to be a world-class location. St. Anthony's isn't an option because of its proximity to a school. There are only about 1 to 1 ½ blocks available in WC for a shop.

Jude DelHierro of Confluence Ministries on the subject of SW's application for a recreational license.

- The rec license was denied at Colfax and Wolff because of community efforts. Commander Paul Paizen has come out against this license to Jude. There are 173 shops in District 1 already. There are more shops than 7-11's and Starbucks.
- What vision for businesses do we want along Colfax? Is this specific business an asset to the neighborhood?
- Need to think about the safety of our kids, and families. Issue with edibles.
- A study from Metro State University found that dispensaries are often in low-income and diverse neighborhoods. They're common to find alongside adult entertainment businesses. There are more studies on this issue out there from Harvard, etc. on the effect of marijuana usage in people aged 18-25.
- There was a recent incident at Skinner MS with students overdosing on edibles.
- Can see the professional side of this business, but how much would it be a detriment to our neighborhood?
- Kids are at risk. The Jewish boys' dorm is across the street. Confluence is a block away. There are many non-profits that serve youth in the area. Studies show effects on kids brain, emotions, and motivation.
- Jewish community came together on the rec license at Colfax and Wolff.
- Pot is becoming the mainstream, but is that what we want for the neighborhood?

Open to general membership for discussion and Q&A

- SW is keeping it safe, you are a good businessman. Just because it is legal doesn't make it conducive to family. Adult entertainment is also legal. Trying to build a family friendly neighborhood. Many children on foot in the area. Not welcoming of an increase in this type of commerce, want to see gift shops, bakeries, dry cleaners, etc established in the neighborhood. We are starting to see this happen. This is a community issue. Commander Paizen has says there has been an influx of young people traveling to CO to buy, and sometimes there is an increase in crime around retail shops. There are 170+ places already available. Want a different kind of neighborhood.
- Will you have two locations in WC then? No, SW is not at the Pig N' Whistle location. At the Rose Lady location on Perry. Have a 500 sq. ft. unit.

- What are the rules about distances from schools? 1000ft. Do the boys' dorms on Perry not count? That remains to be decided. Have always been approved and renewed for the medical license.
- If you did get a rec license, how would you prevent shoulder tapping (buying for someone else)? Have security cameras all around. Would report anyone caught doing this. SW has a huge interest in marijuana staying in responsible hands. It is not a very large block, the whole block is on camera.
- This would not prevent a 21 year old from buying and taking it home and sharing it with someone under 21.
- There are example of rec businesses that fit in with the community, in conjunction with delis, shops, etc. There is already a good steward at the helm. SW is already in the trade, and we have a business willing to come to us and do it right.
- Truman: Want to be a boutique shop, providing the best in quality, have won awards.
- Cannabis is legal, no matter what the health effects are or research says. There are rules though. You need to know the rules. It brings in tax revenue
- WC is still a struggling neighborhood (addiction, homelessness, etc.), until things work better, this is risking the health of the neighborhood
- Many people don't want to get a medical card, so they use the rec and pay the tax. It helps with crones, cancer, appetite, and many medical issues. It is not all about young kids. Statistically, majority of users are over 40. NE and KS are blaming CO for marijuana crossing state lines, but you need to be an adult and lock it up. There is no evidence it is a gate-way drug. People who are 70 and 80 years old who are ill and using rec.

WeCAN bylaws may state that in order for a vote to be taken in must have been stated in the newsletter. Want to be consistent on this issue. Ben Stetler will fact check this issue before the vote is published.

Those in favor of taking a vote on this issue, whether or not WeCAN will support SW's application for a rec license. Those voted in favor of weighing in on the issue, 16, Those against, 1.

Must be a WeCAN member to vote. Those in favor of WeCAN writing a letter of support for Southwest Alternative Care's application for a recreational marijuana license, 8. Those in favor of WeCAN writing a letter not in support of Southwest Alternative Care's application for a recreational marijuana license, 9.

WeCAN will write a letter not in support of Southwest Alternative Care's application for a recreational marijuana license.

The WeCAN board meets next Wednesday, May 20, 6pm at Confluence.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50pm

Respectfully submitted,

Leah Rounds

Secretary

West Colfax Association of Neighbors (WeCAN)