

Minutes SPCC General Quarterly Meeting October 8, 2005

The quarterly general meeting of the Squire Park Community Council convened at 10 A.M. at Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center. This meeting marked the third consecutive quarterly meeting attended by more than two dozen Squire Park neighbors.

The featured guests were Margie Slovan, Cedric Simpson, and Tony Brouner who had been associated with the late, lamented *Seattle Star* and who, along with cyn gabriel, are trying to establish a new community newspaper. In the words of Cedric, the goal is to create a newspaper “not the same as” the *Star* but with local news not found in the *Times* or *P.I.* Tony stated that they can’t do this unless they are sure that there are potential readers and advertisers. Hence the effort to go to community meetings.

The publishers asked for help from people in the neighborhoods that would be served by the paper. There are opportunities to help at various levels. For example, volunteer distributors might be used. Neighborhood people could “take ownership” of distribution boxes and volunteer every couple of weeks. By cutting the costs of distribution, as well as the cost of office space, the publishers of a new newspaper hope to be able to succeed where the *Star* did not. Another change in the business plan could be an effort to pursue advertisers beyond the merely local. They would try to concentrate on Central and Southeast Seattle advertisers, but would not ignore the revenue that might be gotten from bigger businesses.

They estimate the circulation would be approximately 12,000. Bi-weekly is the present model, but they could go to weekly if revenues permitted.

Those attending the meeting said good things about the *Star* and expressed the opinion that a similar newspaper is needed in the Central Area.

Sabey/Swedish CAC Bill stated that the Department of Neighborhoods is in the process of forming a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to review the development on the former Providence Medical Center, now Sabey/Swedish campus. The CAC should include at least a couple of people who regularly attend Squire Park C.C. board meetings. The importance of this committee’s work was emphasized. The Squire Park Community Council has written to the Director of the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) expressing the position that no master use permits be issued unless and until the projects have been reviewed by a CAC.

Street Reclaiming Committee Barb Biondo reported on the work of the “traffic/street reclaiming” committee. She described the several goals, including the taming of vehicle traffic and creating neighborhood gathering places. The committee has received a grant from the Washington Insurance Commission (WIC) and is applying for a Department of Neighborhoods (DON) small and simple grant. The proceeds of the grants would be used to hire a traffic consultant and to do focused outreach to people living in the neighborhood. The area of concentration is generally from 14th Ave. to 23rd Ave. and from Jackson to Union. The goal is to avoid a small-area solution and to do a neighborhood-level plan. (A meeting attendee asked why the boundaries excluded the area west of 14th since 12th is the major north/south street on the west of Squire Park. Barb said the boundaries are not set in concrete, and the goal is to get as many people as possible involved. The area of effort will be limited, at least in part, by the amount of money available. It was also noted that 12th has received quite a bit of attention, at least in relation to improving its pedestrian appeal. Barb stated that there will be a street reclaiming workshop involving someone from City Repair from Portland some time in the winter. The committee needs help to do its work. (Also, Barb noted that David Engwicht, the father of traffic calming, would be appearing in Seattle on October 23 and 24. All are encouraged to attend one of the Engwicht functions.

Go-Around-the-Room Discussion In an attempt to give everyone a chance to speak, everyone, in turn was asked to describe a community issue of importance to him/her.

- Kim expressed a concern about traffic and the impacts of increasing housing density. Also, concern about the ugliness of much new development and the high prices.
- Joy stressed the importance of resisting more upzones.
- Theresa expressed a concern about increased crime, particularly on the street.

- Eric and Miyoko are concerned about a lot of apparent drug activity on the street near their home, along with gunfire.
- Willie stated that he had lived in that area for a long time. The illegal activity seems to go in cycles.
- Someone stated that it seems that there needs to be a crossing guard at Bailey-Gatzert School. It was pointed out that there is an organized "walking school bus" program for B-G that might help compensate for the lack of a crossing guard.
- Alex put forth the idea of creating a preservation district to help preserve historical structures. He noted that he had tried to discuss with Sabey the possibility of moving the 18th and Cherry house rather than razing it. He identified at least 16 possible nearby locations to which the house could be moved. He also noted that, to his knowledge, the neighbors near 17th and ? had gathered signatures for a traffic circle, but so far no circle has been installed. Regarding drug activity, he suggested that the E. Precinct Police park its mobile unit near the AM/PM mini mart where drug activity is prevalent.
- Amy stated that there are frequent car collisions at the traffic circle at 22nd and Spruce. She doubts that that traffic circle (or any traffic circle) slows vehicle traffic. She lives near Spruce Park where there is also some drug-selling activity. Their blockwatch has been a somewhat effective way of dealing with crime problems and building community. Regarding density, she advocated a change in the Land Use Code to allow detached Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's). This is a way to allow some existing residents to stay in the neighborhood and to increase the supply of affordable housing.
- Bryan is concerned about incompatible development allowed on lots zoned for multifamily development but adjacent or near to lots having single-family homes. He is also interested in working on traffic calming issues.
- Barb talked up the idea of the community council as a vehicle for change.
- Sarah described efforts to make the streets more pedestrian friendly in her block.
- Margaret is attending a SPCC meeting for the first time. She was glad to get the SPCC Newsletter on her doorstep and wants to learn more about the neighborhood.
- Tenaya is attending her second SPCC quarterly meeting. She attended the July meeting with her two young children. She would like to see more diversity at SPCC meetings.
- Bob has thought about coming to meetings for a long time, but put it off. He had been concerned that the meetings would be not much more than "gripe session" but has been pleasantly surprised that there was more positive discussion.
- D.J. is attending her second meeting. She is surprised to hear so many comments about street crime as she doesn't see this in her immediate neighborhood. She suggested contacting the owners of the AM/PM mini mart and offered to help do so. (Amy said that the owners of the AM/PM go to the East Precinct Crime Prevention meetings and are aware, apparently, of the many complaints.)
- Lottie said that there are one or more apartment buildings in the neighborhood where drug activity is concentrated.
- Paul touted the success that blockwatches have had. Also, he described the history of installing many of the traffic circles related to the 12th Avenue Plan.

All attending were given information about the monthly East Precinct Crime Prevention meetings, and the secretary said he would send details by e-mail to those who expressed crime-related concerns.

The meeting concluded with a presentation by Daryl Vange and Michael Durich(sp?) regarding the proposed development on the Goodwill Industries site. The project will replace the existing Goodwill buildings with new facilities. Beyond that, there is a request for a rezone of the site to NC3 85. (It is now zoned Industrial.) Also street vacations will be requested. The emphasis will be on housing, about 400 units, but also there will be 600,000 square feet of retail (approx. 40 stores). Two stores will be larger than 100,000 square feet. The size of the site is about 40 acres. Northgate, by comparison, is about 60 acres. The retail development will have neighborhood-serving components and stores with more regional appeal. The plan is to start construction in 2007 and for completion in 2009-2010.