

Minutes of the Coalition of Norwalk Neighborhood Associations Meeting

**Monday, March 13th, 2006
City Hall, Room A300, 7:30 PM**

**Next Meeting: Monday, April 10th, 2006
City Hall, Room 333, 7:30 PM
(THIS WILL BE ANOTHER ROOM CHANGE)**

Attendees:

Dan Grundman (NASH)	Maribeth Becker (ENNA)
Jill Montesanto (Save Cranbury)	Anna Mae Schaab (Silvermine Crossing)
Al Raymond (Spring Hill/Hospital)	Diane Witkowsky (Spring Hill/Hospital)
Dick Vicenzi (Shorefront Park)	Diane Lauricella (ENNA/LWV)
Pam Garrett (Harbor Shores)	Diana Paladino (Spring Hill/Hospital)
Ernst deFlines (RCA)	Don Nelson (TAC/Clean and Green)
Joseph Sette (West Norwalk)	Marija Bryant (Historical Commission)
Bob Wagman (West Norwalk)	Paul Littell (Village Creek)
Laurel Lindstrom (ENNA)	Gladys Didia (Spring Hill/Hospital)
Bitsy Farnsworth (Harbor View)	Jerry Crowley (Harbor View)
Tony Doumele (Silvermine NASH)	Julie Burton (Rowayton Advocates for Zoning)
Nancy Esposito (West Avenue)	Mark Wilson (Washington Row I)
Hal Alvord (Norwalk DPW)	Chris Perone (State Rep)
Mike Coffey (Common Council)	

The meeting was called to order at 7:35p.m.

Minutes of the February 13th, 2006 meeting were approved.

Master Plan and Proposed Zoning Changes – Marija Bryant discussed the demolition moratorium resolution that the Historical Commission has passed. This moratorium would temporarily freeze demolition of structures that are 50+ years and have architectural, historical or neighborhood significance. They are asking for a 1 year moratorium, so that during that time frame the city can finish its Master Plan and enact zoning changes that would better protect neighborhoods.

All in attendance agreed that the CNNA should support this demolition moratorium and possibly go even further and push for a development moratorium. Associations in agreement should send letters to the Planning Commission, Zoning Commission, Mayor, Common Council endorsing these moratoriums.

Common Council President Mike Coffey mentioned that the ordinance committee of the Common Council was having a meeting on March 21st to look into this. Mike Greene, Walter Briggs, Dorothy Mobilia and Peter Nolin will be in attendance to discuss this issue.

Danny Grundman read "Reflections on Residential Zoning in Norwalk" - from NASH member and certified architect, Lee Levey. Lee's letter can be found on the CNNA website. (www.norwalkneighborhoods.com)

The group agreed to form a subcommittee to work on zoning. (Marija Bryant – chair, Jill Montesanto, Bob Wagman, Maribeth Becker, Diana Paladino, Dick Vicenzi and Chris Perone). This group will start with 3 or 4 issues so as not to get overwhelmed. A few potential ideas were: McMansions, D-Zone, Architectural Review Board.

A suggestion was made for each association kick in some money to fund a Planning professional to give us ideas.

Proposed Rowayton Zoning Change – Julie Burton representing Rowayton Advocates for Zoning (RAZ) discussed the grassroots campaign that she is championing to reduce the size of residential structures in Rowayton. They currently have over 400 signatures in support of a proposed zoning change that would limit the lot coverage and roof heights in the B-Zone.

Those in attendance agreed with the spirit of the proposed change and agreed to endorse it. However, the group was concerned about the possibility that these changes could create a new set of problems that we could not yet foresee. Even with these concerns, the group still thought it was a good first step toward tackling zoning changes. The group felt that it was important to support this amendment since its ultimate intention was to protect the character of the neighborhood.

The group agreed to speak at the Zoning Commission Public Hearing on March 15th to lend support and made the following resolution to that effect:

“The CNNA votes to approve this zoning amendment as a first step toward changing zoning regulations. Upon completion of the Master Plan, the CNNA recommends that the Zoning Commission revisit the various zoning schedules for other potential changes.”

West Ave Redevelopment Plan – The Redevelopment Agency (NRA) will be voting on the West Ave plan on March 15h. From there the plan will need to be approved by both the Planning Committee of the Common Council (April 6th) and the full Common Council (April 11th).

The NRA encouraged associations to speak in support of its plan at the upcoming Common Council meetings. However, members had several concerns that they felt would keep them from supporting the plan – namely eminent domain, a vague definition of blight, the amount of public subsidies, and the parking garage.

Many associations are not specifically opposed to the plan, although they have varying levels of concern about the plan. It was agreed that a letter should be drafted outlining these concerns. Due to the short time before the NRA vote and the lack of a public hearing before then, the group felt that it was a good idea to convene a press conference. The conference was set for 3PM on Tuesday March 14th.

Stuart Avenue Update – Diana Paladino expressed her concern that the demolition signs were still up on the houses that were due to be saved. It appears that the developer is not “playing nice”. At this point the options are limited.

New Business – Hal Alvord distributed handouts outlining this year’s clean-up. All neighborhoods North of I-95 will be on April 29th (District 1). All neighborhoods South of I-95 will be on May 6th (District 2). This cleanup will concentrate on litter (not bulky waste). After bagging the litter, place it in a secure location at your site so that DPW crews can pick up on Monday morning.

Please contact David Shockley (dshockley@norwalkct.org or 854-7810 ext 6782) with the following info:

- 1) Your group’s intended cleanup location(s)
- 2) Number of gloves and bags you will need
- 3) Site location where you will place your bags and
- 4) Name and contact info for your cleanup team leader

Hal also mentioned that several neighborhoods had recently submitted plans for neighborhood tree planting - specifically Harbor Shores and Farm Creek. If you haven’t done so yet, please submit your association’s tree liaison info and your boundaries to Maribeth Becker ASAP. The Tree Advisory Committee is currently compiling the list for this year’s tree planting. Don’t be left out!

Adjournment was 10:17 PM.

Respectively submitted,

MB