

Minutes  
WEST BANK COMMUNITY COALITION  
Board of Directors Meeting – Transitional Meeting  
Wednesday, January 16, 2008  
6:00 p.m., Brian Coyle Community Center

I. Call to Order – 6:05pm

2007 Board Members Present:

Continuing - Jim, Jennifer, Warsame, Russom, Abdille, Anne, Robert, Laura, Doris, Jean

Not continuing – Marvin, Abia, Africa

2007 Board Members Excused: Todd (continuing)

2008 Board Members Present: Robert, Doris, Abdirizak, Ben, Abdille, Jim, Russom, Anne, Jennifer, Jean, Warsame, Laura

2008 Board Members Excused: Abdifatah, Todd

Presenters/Guests: Tim Mungavan, Cam Gordon

II. Approved Agenda with changes

III. Approved October Minutes (Robert moved to approve the minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> - Russom, Marvin abstained)

IV. New Business – Part I

- A. Organizational Capacity Building: continue discussion of Cedar-Riverside NRP Structure (presentation by Tim Mungavan)  
Tim introduced himself, described the West Bank CDC, and explained that the CDC board has been helping the WBCC with capacity development. The CDC has been providing limited staff support to the WBCC. Through that relationship, the CDC recognized that there were some problems with the contract between the WBCC and the Mpls NRP. On 10/17/07, the WBCC board passed a resolution that identified those problems, outlined some possible solutions, and empowered the WBCC executive committee to engage the NRP steering committee in a discussion about them and report back to the board. Tim passed out a written report to the board (attached) with an update of the current situation (including the steering committee's decision to incorporate as an independent organization and contract with Mpls NRP) and a proposed resolution for adoption tonight.

Robert asked for clarification about the \$400,000 for possible WBCC staff funding in the Full Action Plan. Laura clarified that in the Full Action Plan, all the staff funding pertaining to NRP programs is in one \$400,000 line item and that the plan language only says that these funds “may be” used for WBCC support.

Doris asked for clarification about the possibility of the NRP becoming a competing designated citizen participation organization. Tim clarified that the NRP steering committee has not presented this possibility but that he has some concerns because of the City's current review of its Citizen Participation Program.

Ben asked about whether the proposal is a moot point since the steering committee is not a democratically elected organization. John Bueche said that the steering committee's task would just be implementing the NRP Action Plan and described the incorporation decision as a way to clarify bureaucratic matters and not changing as a change in the neighborhood's participation process. Robert asked John whether he thought a plan modification would have to be reviewed by the WBCC. Cam clarified that any change of \$25,000 or more would have to be approved by the neighborhood (e.g. the membership of the neighborhood organization) but thought that the answer to Robert's scenario was not entirely clear.

Abia described the experience of working with a mediator last year in the attempt to establish a better working relationship between the WBCC and the NRP steering committee. She expressed disappointment that the steering committee did not respond to the WBCC's request to discuss the organizational issues. She wished the steering committee success and urged them to be inclusive, work for the good of the whole neighborhood, and establish a democratic organization. She expressed the desire to move on with the current plan (incorporation) but asked for more details of what the future administration of and financial resources for the WBCC and the steering committee would look like.

Abdi expressed that he does not understand Robert Thompson's opinion that the WBCC is incapable of administering NRP. He questioned how a new organization could do a better job than the WBCC.

Jean asked for clarification about the role of a fiscal agent since the steering committee is looking for a fiscal agent. Laura clarified that part of the role of a fiscal agent for the steering committee would be to fulfill the oversight role that the WBCC has been trying to fulfill.

Doris expressed that the current system is inherently flawed in that it would never allow the WBCC to have a role in the NRP process in this neighborhood. The steering committee has all the money. The downtown staff is saying the WBCC is not good enough. She expressed that the system was doomed to fail.

Robert expressed that Robert Thompson's attitude towards the WBCC has been abominable. He has not changed his view of the WBCC board a bit over the last two years. He expressed that he understands the background and history that guide Robert Thompson's concerns but expressed that Robert Thompson has refused to have an open mind. Robert expressed support for sending a letter disputing Robert Thompson's critique of the WBCC.

Warsame expressed that there is danger in having someone who is critical of the WBCC create a new organization. That person is likely to create an organization that is in conflict with the WBCC.

Robert reiterated that Robert Thompson has the power to decide who is on the steering committee. He also expressed that he does not think that there is anything wrong with the steering committee incorporating and doing the work of implementing the plan. He expressed concern about any slowing down of the NRP implementation in the neighborhood. He expressed that he is most concerned about the WBCC maintaining the role of the designated neighborhood organization.

Africa expressed that she thinks Robert Thompson is a nice person but that there must be some miscommunication between the WBCC and Robert Thompson because she does not understand where his criticism of the WBCC is coming from. She expressed that if the steering committee really has a complaint, they should express it.

Abdille also expressed disappointment with Robert Thompson's critique.

Jennifer described her experience at a steering committee meeting (to work on the incorporation process) where the only tangible complaint that the steering committee stated was a criticism of WBCC financial policies.

Russom suggested that Robert Thompson be invited to a WBCC meeting for a discussion. Anne expressed that she did not see any benefit in inviting Robert Thompson for a discussion and suggested that our neighborhood may need an advocate in order to get him to hear our opinion. She expressed that she does not feel that we would get anywhere by continuing to try to speak directly to Thompson.

Cam expressed that the WBCC should respond to Thompson stating that the board thinks that the WBCC is a capable organization. He offered to help advocate for the WBCC.

Robert moved the following revised version of the resolution Tim presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Abia, passed.

**Resolution**  
**West Bank Community Coalition**  
**January 16, 2008**

***Re: Relationship with Cedar Riverside Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP)***

***Whereas the WBCC has found the relationship between the NRP and the WBCC as described in the contract between the two parties as problematic and***

***Whereas the WBCC, in a resolution passed by the Board on October 17, 2007, directed the WBCC Executive Committee to engage the Cedar Riverside NRP Steering Committee and NRP staff in discussion about this issue and***

***Whereas the Steering Committee and NRP staff upon hearing about WBCC concerns and without consultation with the WBCC decided to move toward incorporation of the Steering Committee into a new NRP organization that would function independently of the WBCC and***

*Whereas the sole reason offered for this action is NRP staff's verbal critique of the performance of the WBCC which appears to be arbitrary, unsubstantiated and totally lacking in due process and*

*Whereas problems with the new NRP organization have not been addressed*

1. *If the new entity is democratically accountable to the neighborhood, it could create a competing organization that would further fragment the community*
2. *If the new entity is not democratically elected, the NRP will not be accountable to neighborhood residents and businesses.*

***Therefore be it resolved that the Board of Directors of the West Bank Community Coalition authorizes the WBCC President to send a letter to the NRP Policy Board and others containing the following major points:***

*The WBCC is willing to consider supporting the proposed incorporation of the NRP Steering Committee if the following issues can be adequately resolved:*

- The critique of the WBCC provided by NRP staff as the rationale for excluding the WBCC from playing a role in the future Cedar Riverside NRP activity*
- Clarification of the role of the new organization*
- Clarification of the role of the WBCC in democratic accountability*

*While the WBCC believes the reaction of the SC and NRP staff is unwise for neighborhood and for the NRP program, we believe any further conflict about these matters would also be unwise.*

*We sincerely hope the Steering Committee can make the NRP program a success.*

- B. Budget 2008/CIP contract – Robert moved to pass the draft 2008 WBCC Budget, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Warsame, passed, Marvin abstained

#### V. Officer Reports

##### A. Treasurer's Report

1. Financials – distributed to board members

##### B. President's Report

1. Executive Committee minutes 11/17/07 & 1/13/08 distributed to board members
2. Exit Interview w/ State Auditor – they said we were doing a great job
3. End of year spend down of 2007 CIP money – All the remaining funds were spent. The Cost Analysis of each expense was distributed to board members
4. Board of Director Vacancy Announcement (1 Renter Resident Seat, term through the 2008 Annual Elections)\* – Abdirizak Abdi was elected to the board in November 2006. After missing 5 meetings within 12 months, his seat was originally announced as vacant at the October 17, 2007 board meeting. At that time it was announced that the seat would be filled at the December 19, 2007 board meeting, that being the next board meeting. The December board meeting was canceled due to Eid. No applications were received for the seat in either December or January. The seat will now be filled at the February 2008 board meeting pending receipt of notice from interested candidates. Note: Abdirizak was elected in November 2007 to a new term on the board.

#### VI. New Business – Part II

- A. Doris moved to appoint Laura Silver to University District Partnership Alliance steering committee (appointment to be shared with Doris Wickstrom), 2<sup>nd</sup> – Anne, passed

#### VII. Transfer to New Board\*\*

##### A. Election of 2008 officers

1. Robert nominated Laura for president. No other nominations. Laura was declared president.
2. Jim nominated Abdi for vice president. No other nominations. Abdi was declared vice president.
3. Robert nominated Jennifer for secretary. Jennifer accepted the nomination but expressed that she will have more difficulty this year due to family obligations. No other nominations. Jennifer was declared secretary.
4. Jim nominated Jean for treasurer. No other nominations. Jean was declared treasurer.

- VIII. Cam Gordon Report
  - A. Councilmember Gordon distributed his written report for January 2008.
  - B. Councilmember Gordon described a Neighborhood Investment Fund that is being designed as part of the City’s citizen engagement process. He reported that the sentiment on the City Council is that the multi-jurisdictional NRP Policy Board will likely be disbanded.
  - C. Councilmember Gordon expressed his willingness to convene a meeting regarding NRP in Cedar-Riverside. Abdi encouraged Cam to follow through with that offer. Robert reiterated that it would be best to meet with a smaller group and expressed that he does not think that Robert Thompson is a bad person but that on this issue he seems to have blinders on.
  - D. Doris asked about the Bina encroachment. She announced that City staff has not made any changes in its estimates of the value of the land (\$12,000). Councilmember Gordon said he has not seen the staff report. Councilmember Gordon said he has heard that CRBA’s position now is to support the land sale to Bina. Councilmember Gordon said that there are now some City Council members interested in pursuing legal action.
  
- IX. Jen moved to approve the 2008 Board Meeting Schedule that was distributed, 2<sup>nd</sup> – Ben, passed
- X. Jean asked to have time at the February Board Meeting to express his thoughts about the NRP steering committee and Robert Thompson.
- XI. Jim announced that Abdifatah and Todd had excused absences.
- XII. Laura announced that the WBCC needs representatives for Central Corridor CDC and District Collaborative Council. Descriptions of the organization were distributed to board members. Laura asked board members to consider whether they are interested or know of anyone who may be interested in serving as a representative on either organization.
- XIII. Ben introduced Mary Benezuti, the new CHANCE program coordinator (CHANCE is a U of M, Humphrey Institute program, [www.hhh.umn.edu/projects/chance/](http://www.hhh.umn.edu/projects/chance/)). He announced that (1) the next CHANCE meeting will be on January 25 and (2) the Brian Coyle youth center will be hosting a basketball game soon.
  
- XIV. Adjourned – 8:00pm

\*WBCC Bylaws, Article V Section 8 - VACANCY : A vacancy, no matter how it is caused, shall be filled by a majority vote of all remaining directors. Once a vacancy has occurred, it shall be declared at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. Nominations must be submitted in writing to the president at least 5 days prior to the following regularly scheduled board meeting, at which time the new director will be elected. A director elected to fill a vacancy will serve out the rest of the unexpired term of the director who left the board.

\*\*WBCC Bylaws, Article VI Section 2 - TRANSITIONAL MEETING: The first meeting of the board of directors held after the annual meeting will be set aside as a transitional meeting with the purpose of completing any old business, and transferring any remaining business to the incoming board. During the transitional meeting, the outgoing board of directors will retain all rights and responsibilities afforded directors under these Bylaws, and may vote on any motions presented at the transitional meeting. As the last agenda item of this meeting only the incoming board will nominate and vote for the president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer for the upcoming business year. These new officers must be elected from the incoming board of directors. Upon election of officers, the incoming directors will officially assume their duties, begin tenure, and take charge of all WBCC business and records.

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Submitted by

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Approved by

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date