

Union Square Neighborhood Council - Third Meeting January 10, 2018

Attendance

USNC Voting Members:

Mike Firestone, Ben Bradlow, Joanne Berry, Michele Hanson, Andrea Lizama, Ann Camara, Pennie Taylor, Afruza Akther, Tori Antonino, Ganesh Uprety, Ann Camara

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Neighborhood Resident Members: 14

Co-Facilitators: Peter Insley, Pennie Taylor

Agenda

1. Welcome & Introductions
 - Pennie announced the co-facilitators and welcomed the group
 - There is a portable microphone from SCATV to record the meeting
2. Public Comment (10m)
 - General discussion about ethics violations: Asked specifically at beginning of first meeting that bylaws be left alone and begin electing officers. Identifying self as a board officer in the press 11.2, ethics 13.a, 13.c. Personal agendas are getting in the way of transparency.
 - i. The board appreciates voicing concerns. Because it's a new committee there is a learning curve. We are as transparent as we can be but there has to be discussion on the board that's been created. There need to be meetings that don't include public discussion. Each parcel has a year timeline. Could you provide resolution to some of these issues?
 - ii. Tori Antonino- We haven't been doing enough to be transparent. We need to have an informed discussion on open meeting laws. I have participated in some of these pre-committee meetings. All discussions need to be on a public listserve.
 - iii. Listserves are not a good vehicle for doing the communication we want to do.
 - iv. Pennie Taylor: There is a lot of labor that goes into every step that we have done. There needs to be an order of operations for how things move through committee.
3. Committee Check-ins:
 - Built Space: Upcoming Union Sq permits, dev items, zoning (10m)
 - i. Tori Antonino- Meeting has yet to be convened on this, hoping to do so in the next week. Will there be a listserve for the Built Environment Committee?
 1. There will be an update in the Communications Committee Update
 2. We need to determine the best media to hold these discussions
 3. Ben Bradlow: Clarification on types of meetings that have been occurring: there are some informal issues that arise in new institutions. One particular issue is establishment of committees. It's inevitable that some informal encounters

occur to get to a formal establishment. Each committee has met informally to develop a formal proposal for the board. There has been no closed meeting of any committee. We are moving toward a transparent structure as laid out in the bylaws.

4. Wig: I'm a member of many state board and committee, it's hard to bootstrap. Transparency is a big issue. Elected bodies do it 100% at a larger scale so it can be done. It will only get more difficult.
 5. Ben Bradlow: Open Meeting Laws discussion have been tabled at the last two meetings.
 6. There are a lot of stakeholders that aren't here, and some who question the legitimacy of the election and do not feel represented. We need to all have empathy for each other
- ii. Tori Antonino- Plan is to meet with Ben to find out how communications with the committee will work.
- o CBA Committee updated report, outreach (10m)
 - i. Jacob: Reportback on Sunday meeting. Minutes of the meeting has been sent out to the board and posted publicly.
 1. Organizational outreach- How do we engage the community to learn about the CBA process?
 2. We created an evolving list of stakeholders to reach out to in the beginning stages of this process.
 3. Replicate the USNC Working Group outreach process.
 4. Need a membership form, physical and digital. Peter Insley to do so
 5. Review of previous processes around CBA (LOCUS, CAC, UNION UNITED, etc)
 6. Jacob volunteered to come up with a draft of a flyer with a brief statement about CBAs and what to expect from a meeting
 7. Translation- everything that we have done so far has been exclusively in English. We are committed to changing that:
 - a. Ben Bradlow-Portuguese
 - b. Peter Insley- Spanish
 - c. We do not yet have other language connections figured out
 8. Glossary- list of development terms, translated
 9. Budget- We have a treasurer but no bank account. Relying on in-kind donations for these first efforts
 10. Motion to decide a date for a bigger more publicised event, need at least 2-3 weeks notice. Propose Wednesday January 31 and Saturday Feb 3 with duplicated program. Some informational component and some participatory component.
 - a. Discussion: Joanne Berry- Is this initial event to be part of Communications or CBA committee?
 - i. Jacob- This is a way of building membership so committees should work together. CBA committee would be creating the materials and Communications

committee can coordinate bringing materials to wider public

- ii. Wig-Issue about boundaries of CBA:
 - Previous speakers at CBA events characterized them as 1% of the value of the development. Is the USNC regarding fiscal and built form as outside or inside of the CBA?
 - 1. Ben Bradlow- This may be covered in Mike's letter and how we are recognized. Should the CBA schedule tied to the progress of the letter?
 - 2. Mike Firestone- Process of establishing legitimacy of organization as a community voice, The scope of the CBA depends on that process. We should schedule the big meeting because it's an opportunity to make good on the commitment made by Bill that, whether or not people feel the elected board represents everybody, we need to have a mechanism to bring people in. There is some value to having just one day.
 - 3. Michele- We have always done 2 in the working group.
 - iii. Ann Camara- Last week we took votes on the committees and their outlines being accepted. Wasnt the CBA outline not accepted?
 - 1. Jacob- We tabled that and it is not on the agenda today.
 - 2. Ann - how do we go on planning events without an accepted CBA?
 - 3. Michele- The formation of the committee was accepted by the structure of the proposal was tabled.
- b. Pennie: Motion to vote on dates proposed
 - i. Ben Bradlow: Seconded
 - ii. Point of clarification- what happens on these days?
 - 1. Jacob: information about CBAs and presentation of previous proposals. Then an opportunity for people to make their own proposals.
 - 2. CBA committee will compile a report that will be brought to the board.
 - iii. Michele Hansen- If we are doing so much at each meeting it will be good to have two

- iv. Joanne Berry- Interested in checking in on what US2 is anticipating
 - 1. Wig- important for someone to understand full scope of the development and react to that
 - c. Vote: 11 ayes
 - o [Firestone Letter](#) Discussion (15m)
 - i. Peter Insley- Let's take a few minutes to read the letter
 - ii. Mike Firestone- "Firestone Letter" will not be the final name of the document
 - iii. Mike Firestone
 - 1. Introduction of neighborhood council and specifically the board
 - 2. Solicit formal recognition to of our role in negotiating a CBA
 - 3. Establish our position as a recognized body on significant developments in the neighborhood.
 - 4. Critiques of my own letter- a lot of history went into engagement. We would like to act as the voice of the community. I don't think just the fact that the election occurred is enough to establish that we are this voice. We should announce some intentions to bring everybody into what we are doing.
 - a. We just agreed to host two participatory meetings to bring the community in (CBA education events). Letter should discuss more about what Communications committee intends to do.
 - 5. Ben Bradlow- Fantastic letter especially with proposed additions. Would only add description of committees and working groups we've established
 - 6. Mike Gintz- Important to communicate that board is a process not an entity. When we talk about bodies that have complete transparency, they are part of a framework of existing government. Emphasize that actions to increase inclusion are being taken.
 - 7. Colleen- In the spirit of inclusion, we should consider implications of hosting meetings in a police station which excludes segments of the population
 - 8. Simon Hill- There's an ideological component which misrepresents. On the surface it looks like 700 voters is a good thing but its not representative of the 16-20,000 people in wards 2 and 3. Suggesting that the election was remarkable is a stretch.
 - 9. Dennis- Piece is inconsistent with own council legitimacy "we have begun a series of membership meetings" There is a board but no official membership
 - a. Section 3 first paragraph- change "Union Sq residents" to "Union Sq citizens"
 - b. Mike Firestone- The word "citizens" can be problematic. I tried to adhere to words already used by the council to describe itself. Confusing to people the difference between "board" and "council"

- c. Peter "residents, tenants and business owners"
10. Peter Insley - Reads as if we're begging for recognition.
 11. Mike Firestone- how should we agree on what a final draft looks like? There is nothing consistent with open meeting laws that allows people to send comments to Mike Firestone. Perhaps if comments can be sent to Mike Firestone and Ben Baldwin to be publicly posted.
 - a. Joanne- would you suggest we take the week to make comments, then an updated draft would be posted for comments before a final draft?
 - i. Mike Firestone- We would need to live with some imperfection in that process. Substantive comments should be sent to both Mike and Ben Baldwin, with comments being accepted until Jan 15. We have to produce a final draft, discuss whether to send it or go into further discussion.
 - ii. Jacob Kramer- Seconds moving forward with that proposal
 - iii. Mike Firestone- We are agreeing that we will take comments for the next five days posted publicly. At that point a final draft of the letter will be discussed at 1/17 meeting of the board to determine if that version can be submitted or if it requires further discussion in which case it should be reopened to the public.
 1. Ben Bradlow- We have no mechanism for online voting.
 2. Mike Firestone- We can have a conference call
 3. Mike Gintz- as a person who is not on the board but is a member- the board is empowered to make these decisions, don't have to act as a subcommittee.
 4. Jacob- The mechanism for this is the board only discussion board, which is publicly viewable.
 5. Simon- Why can't the final draft be reviewed in a public meeting before submission.
 6. Gary- Agree with Mike Gintz about having empowered the board to make certain decisions. Elephant in the room regarding election- This could go on for a while once submitted to US2 and the city.
 12. Wig- This letter outlines 3 areas only 1 of which is the CBA. Still unclear how much of area will be developed.

Need to think about scope covering more than just US2 parcels (eg Post Office)

- a. Consider that appeal is to the city for legitimacy
- b. What form of organizations is Union Square associates?

13. Liz- Section 3 reads as a document for residents as opposed to businesses etc.

- Communications digital plan (10 m)
 - i. New web site: Need to find a platform, address cost issues, anchor that links to minutes, active Google Docs/ blog Pages for committees, Maps, calendar, existing docs from process, city, developers.
 - ii. Membership form: Peter Insley drafting.
 - iii. Mike Gintz updated: to remove link to the old discussion groups, to add links to the new discussion groups, and to note that new Committees will be forming and that folks should stay tuned.
 - iv. Amassing existing docs: Tori Antonino
 - v. **Discussions lists:** 2 new: usnc-board and usnc-public
 - vi. Both are 100% publicly readable.
 - vii. Board email list: Open viewable board conversations. Ben Baldwin is admin and will confirm all view requests. Only board members can post
 - viii. USNC Public: Anyone can post, though people must join the group first. The Public list will probably need to be moderated eventually, so we should discuss further about whose responsibility that will be and what rules/code of conduct they'll follow in doing it. Previous list will be present but not accepting new messages. Please use the same conduct as meetings.
 - ix. **Outreach materials to develop:**
 1. Glossary for commonly used acronyms and terms. Will be printed and available at meetings and on website. Start with model from Ben Baldwin, modify for Union Square specific language.
 2. FAQ about USNC
 3. Translations of FAQ, glossary
 4. Outreach Mission: look at models from other neighborhood councils, draft work in progress.
- 1. What does the web site need to include
 2. Currently the web site is on a Markdown web site on GitHub so if you don't know how to edit it is a problem. This is the reason for switching to a more easily updated web site.
 3. Working group discussions channel is open, and other groups are viewable but not open to discussion.
 4. We knew that email communication was not public enough but until now there was no digital way to communicate

1. Gary Proposal to hold a meeting soon
 2. Ben Baldwin proposes to host a meeting soon for the Communications committee
 - a. Jacob Kramer- Seconded
 - b. Ben Bradlow- ask that committee take up all communications issues brought up in this committee and report back to the board
4. Working group updates
- MEPA working grp update (10m)
 - i. Full text of update available
 - ii. First step- get in touch with US2 to determine their plan for submission and follow it to make sure it follows protocol.
 - iii. Wig- There must be a full environmental impact report
 1. The big question for developer is whether to do full blown impact report or to ask for a waiver on phase one and postpone the full report.
 2. If they do seek a waiver the board should determine whether or not to oppose it.
 - a. They tend to give waivers on big developments. Public comments should cover a variety of topics because duplicates get thrown away.
 - iv. Joanne- please contact Joanne or Michele to express interest in joining the working group.
 1. Mike Firestone- we should ask people that we know have expertise if they can join the working group
 2. Ann Camara- There are people who may not have expertise but they may want to learn more.
 - Pennie -Motion to table rest of discussion in order to address Open Meeting laws next on agenda
 - i. Ben Baldwin seconded
5. Open Meeting Laws (10m)
- Tori Antonino- This should be an entire meeting. Move to table this to an entire meeting with presentations. Need to know limitations and benefits.
 - i. Michele- we should take the opportunity now to at least talk about it. Consider that we don't have the capacity or resources to address every issue in depth.
 - ii. Joanne- Let's discuss what would need to be done in order to prepare for this longer open meeting laws meeting.
 - iii. Requirements are pretty straightforward in statute, but what needs more thought is why would we do it? Eg. Legal reasons or activities we want to engage in that impose that obligation. Or just as a good faith effort for the community. Are there realistic constraints in implementing open meeting laws? Are there solutions to those constraints?
 - iv. Ben Bradlow- Emphasize urgency of this matter. A meeting to address this topic needs to happen in the next week or two. We have had discussion about inclusion and openness. Open meeting laws are probably not perfect but are the most clearly accepted standard for inclusion that exists.
 - v. Question about interim between working out open meetings. Will publicizing meetings be open to the general public.

1. This will be on the web site, but committees haven't formed to enough of a degree to have streamlined this process.
2. Important that outreach be made to Union Square Main Streets
 - a. Web site could link to a google calendar that has all committee meetings on it.
- Michele- Motion to have a meeting on open meeting laws
 - i. Pennie- What type of meeting will this be? Require a vote or just informational?
 - ii. Ben Bradlow- there is a webinar each month with a training on open meeting laws. January 18 9:30-11am is the next one. We may want to schedule our meeting after that.
6. Meeting logistics (15m)
 - Spaces
 - i. Greentown labs would need to know more than a week in advance and have details on numbers.
 1. 1/11 there will be a public event at Greentown Labs, giving USNC a chance to check out the space
 - ii. Tori Antonino- We can reach out to Canopy at any time
 - Scheduling
 - i. Ben Bradlow- Propose general meeting Wednesday 1/17, excluding substantive open meeting discussion. 7pm.
 1. Tori to confirm location
 - ii. Open Meeting Laws mtg- Propose 1/22
 1. Tori to confirm location
 - Media Coverage
 - i. Gary- Tori and I will be trained on how to do recording.
 1. Weekly cable show on neighborhood news- Communications Committee should work out which portions of our video to be put on this show.
 - Inclusionary logistics
 - Facilitators
 - i. 1/17 Meeting: Proposal to assign someone for this meeting but send out a message to general public soliciting future facilitators
 1. Pennie- Motion to assign determination of facilitators to co-chairs
 - a. Ben Baldwin seconds
7. Bylaw committee (10m)
 - Tabled for 1/17 meeting agenda
 - i. Ann Camara and Joanne Berry to spearhead report.
8. Public Comment Period
 - This process will be as successful as how involved we get the rest of the community. Need advance notice of agenda and materials. List of membership- who does it represent?
 - It's important that we have an actual membership as stated in the bylaws. Great that it's coming together. Perception is that the "greater board" is not being included. Need to know who the membership is.
 - i. Peter- form is nearly done
 - Question about US2 and who they actually are- Landlord at Green City Growers. Out of Chicago
 - i. User friendly web interfaces- Squarespace and Weebly

- ii. Nondigital communications are important, not just through the internet
 - iii. Emphasize importance of finding a new location
- Meeting times: 7 is way better than 6:30. Weekends should also be explored for scheduling.
- Intersection between extending our outreach and the community benefits agreement. When negotiations come about US2 is going to say they've already been assessed for many regulations and "we have no more money." If there are no representatives that are businesspeople on the CBA committee they may be seen as ideological zealots.
 - i. This adds legitimacy and imparts negotiation wisdom to the committee.
- Tori Antonino-Bow St Marketplace will come before planning board tomorrow night.
- Michele Hansen- Voters in the election should have been used as list of membership
 - i. Ben Bradlow- There was a list of everyone who voted- where is it?
 - ii. Wig- 2 lists- one of voters and one of people interested in being contacted. Last person to hold them was Philip, Karen, and/or Fred. Someone should contact them.

9. Adjourn