

## Union Square Neighborhood Council - Meeting May 23, 2018

### Attendance

USNC Voting Members:

Ann Camara, Michèle Hansen, Ben Baldwin, Ben Bradlow, Bill Cavellini, Tori Antonino, Pennie Taylor, Joanne Berry, Jacob Kramer

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Neighborhood Resident Members: Simon Hill, Gary Trujillo, René Mardones, Andy Greenspon, Greg Hill, Debbie Musnikow, Wig Zamore, Jessica Eshleman

Co-Facilitators: Rachel Weil (arrived shortly before executive session segment )

### Agenda

1. Welcome and intros
  - a. Bill started off the meeting with introductions. Agenda will be different than the one posted- Erik Neu is not here to discuss his item.
  - b. Public comment has been split in two, separated to the beginning and the end. As an experiment, only board members will be allowed to comment on items in between the comment periods.
2. Approval of minutes of 5/16/2018 meeting
  - a. Michèle- Motion to accept
    - i. Ben Bradlow- Seconded
    - ii. Vote: 6 yes, 1 abstention
3. Public Comment on tonight's agenda
  - a. René- Good idea to limit the discussion just to board members to keep meetings shorter. Perhaps tonight the board will vote the final list of the negotiation team. This is a concern not just for me but Union United. There are no people of color and only one woman. When we came together with Union United, the big goal was to have those voices represented.
  - b. Gary- I respectfully disagree with some of what René said. The co-chairs have been reasonable in calling upon people. I don't think there has been any systematic discrimination. *(Post-meeting note from Gary: I may have misunderstood what René was saying, which may not have been about participation in meetings, as I had thought. Given what is recorded above regarding René's statement, I would agree with him, and go a bit further – not only is it important for women and minorities to be represented on the CBA negotiating team, we also need those who are passionate about what is important to other segments of the local population who would, for example, advocate for a design of integrated indoor civic space ("community center"), as I said at a previous meeting. If all these values are not well represented in the negotiating team, we may have reason to question how good a job was done of getting the word out about nominations for this position.)*
    - i. I'm disappointed that participation of non-board members will not be allowed during the main discussion in tonight's meeting, particularly that involving the letter to the Board of Aldermen. USNC wants to claim to represent the community, but if people don't have a chance to participate fully it's hard to say we're representing anybody but board members.

- ii. I have circulated an alternate draft of the letter, so if I'm prohibited from taking part in the discussion I would have to say everything I want to at the present time:
    - iii. We need to be diplomatic in the way we express ourselves, even to US2. We are at their mercy to some extent, and we're imploring the BoA to help us get US2 to agree to the City's amendment. Propose that given that the meeting of the Design Review Committee that was supposed to happen tomorrow has been postponed, we may have more time to work on the letter.
  - c. Simon- In agreement with Gary. We don't need specific percentages of people. We just don't get that many people volunteering so we have to take what we can get. I don't like the limited public comment period.
    - i. I'd prefer a strongly-worded letter, and see the present one as rather "wimpy."
    - ii. About the letter to the Design Review Committee. Description of D2 parcel, framed with buildings. That was the by-right concept, not part of CBA. The community center would have gone into that 15.5 acres. The mayor never would have supported it because he wouldn't have been able to get money out of US2 or tax from the building, even though it would have been better for the community.
  - d. Greg Hill- Does neighborhood council have an outreach committee? I haven't received any communication on that.
  - e. Joanne- Apologies for my absence the last few weeks. I've been dealing with family emergencies.
    - i. I spent time at MEPA today. There has not been a filing for this project from US2. However, doing some ground work to determine what needs to be done once that comes through. There is quite a bit of contamination along GLX and Boynton Yards. From what I've read, there has not been any cleanup so I will be continuing to investigate that matter.
4. Review of letter to the Board of Aldermen asking for delay in transferring part of D2 land to US2 until they accept Covenant change language that the city proposed
- a. Bill- I separated these letters and if I misinterpreted it then I apologize. We may want to consider separating letters to BOA and DRC.
  - b. Ben Bradlow- I was not a lead author of this letter. Full correspondence on this letter is available on the Board Google Group. In what I've seen, I haven't heard any major substantive inputs into the design related issues. I've made inputs as to the tone of the letter, with additional inputs from Erik and Mike Firestone. All this to say- I haven't heard anything that leads me to think we are in great need of delaying this letter. Many members of the community have been asking to get the ball rolling on this for a long time and I wish to respect those wishes by sending a single letter soon.
  - c. Jacob Kramer- The part dealing with the transfer of land to US2 is not going to be relevant to the DRC. We can take out that part. It makes sense to register with the BOA our aesthetic problems so they have a sense of how mature the process is, there will be a delay on design side.
    - i. Bill - So it's appropriate to have two letters?
    - ii. Jacob- Yes but take out land transfer

- d. Bill- Can we have some discussion on the two or one letter issue and whether we can tolerate a delay?
  - i. Pennie- Good to keep BoA apprised of critiques. Good to remove land transfer section for DRC. Sooner the better to get this out
- e. Ben Bradlow- If we end up with two slightly different letters I can live with it, but I'd prefer a single letter. Key authorities on these issues begin to see the interrelatedness.
- f. Ann Camara- Same as what Ben said.
- g. Jacob- I am persuaded that we can keep it holistic in agreement with what Ben said.
- h. Pennie- Motion that we write one letter that addresses the concerns, sent to both BOA and DRC
  - i. Michèle- Seconded
  - ii. Discussion:
  - iii. Ben Bradlow- Process of finalizing the letter. Want to address stylistic issues
    - 1. Bill- Let's vote on one letter or not first, then discuss drafting.
  - iv. Vote- 7 in favor of one letter, 0 opposed, 2 abstentions
- i. Bill- I'll entertain a motion for how this letter gets finalized. Basic draft is out there. Input from Gary Trujillo, Erik Neu and Mike Firestone should be considered before letter is finalized
  - i. Jacob- I incorporated Mike Firestone's feedback into the letter that has been circulated. I have not incorporated Erik or Gary's edits.
- j. Ben Bradlow- We should set a deadline for when revised draft is circulated. Are people amenable to approval via email? If not, it has to be addressed in meeting next week. Some issues are more sensitive than others.
  - i. Jacob- This seems consistent with spirit of process thus far. No edits have substantially changed the content.
  - ii. Michèle- Gary, is your letter more of wordsmithing or is there content change?
    - 1. Gary- Mostly changing tone. I found original draft some unnecessary aggressive tone. *(Post-meeting comment from Gary: I also added language in various places to make more clear our intent and desire.)*
    - 2. Jacob- President Ballantine was clear to me that they like to see concise communications
- k. Jacob- Motion to give preliminary approval to this letter, pending a draft revision, which will be circulated via email 5/24 (tomorrow). People will have 24 hours to review. Approvals of that will be accepted via email. A majority of board members approving will be sufficient to send it. One of the board co-chairs will send to both DRC and BoA. We can discuss who else we want to CC.
  - i. Michèle- Second
  - ii. Tori- Circulation- public or just board members?
    - 1. Jacob- CC entire list, unless there is disagreement
    - 2. Tori- want the public to be able to see the new draft and make comments to be accepted by the board.
    - 3. Jacob- I don't accept that amendment. Motion is to review

comments we've received so far by Erik and Gary.

4. Tori- I do not wish to make this an amendment to the original motion.
  - iii. Vote on the motion- 8 yes, 1 abstention
5. Approval of draft letter to the Design Review Committee for June meeting asking for rejection of US2's current D2 parcel plan and a new process for an alternative; and organizing for the meeting
  - a. Addressed in item 5
6. Public Comment
  - a. Simon Hill- *USNC-public* and board mailing lists are both open formats, it's just trickier to get to the board for folks who don't know how to do it. Things that are put directly into public are steps less.
    - i. I circulated email from George about DRC having limited ability to consider things that are already on the table. If you put things into the letter for design review it might confuse them, so to speak
    - ii. Bill Cavellini- My understanding is they have a limited purview
  - b. Wig- I don't have a prejudice between 1 or 2. You could make a blanket statement that different bodies in the city have different decision making responsibilities but you want them to understand the full context.
    - i. I was at the Assembly Square meeting for a large project. May be some occasions that don't require a lot of deliberations but can be a big help.
    - ii. Assembly has very little open space in plan. Can be reworked to have more open space, but could help the public greatly.
    - iii. Jacob- That is something the USNC public list is great for. Second step is request for secretary to send in Tiny Letter.
  - c. René- I am reading Gary's letter. This is an alternative correct? It seems that the last few paragraphs lay out a strategy for how the BoA can recognize the USNC. This is the same strategy used in the past. It took a long time for US2 to come up with a counter proposal. For me, it's weird to see that the board is trying to use the same strategy again, knowing that US2 might take this opportunity to delay the approval process. Requires more discussion about strategy to get recognition from BoA. Should look into legal advice before moving forward with this letter.
    - i. Gary- Second what René said. We need to do this right. The need we have here is to have some high level discussions about strategy. It's important to have as many people from the community involved as possible. Asserting our right to be recognized is not a winning strategy unless accompanied by evidence that we are representing the community.
    - ii. Gary- I'd be willing to work and help Jacob edit the letter, to make it shorter if that's what we all want.
    - iii. Joanne- Only concern with legal counsel is legal bills. We are fortunate to have an attorney working with us guiding the tone in a way that is appropriate. We have tried to bring in experienced members of the community. Many are not willing to come to these meetings (**Mike Firestone**, the attorney being spoken of here, arrived immediately after Joanne made this statement.)

- d. Michèle- Where does DRC intersect with MEPA? Not at all. Who is the major party that we should direct our protest toward?
  - i. Wig- Individulas on DRC have the authority. Can copy to whoever else you want. DRC does make decisions on building designs. Not the same kind of decision framework that MEPA uses.
- e. Simon Hill- BoA is going to recognize this board – it's not debatable. I would chase them to get on the covenant process
- f. Jessica- Some questions from people in the community.
  - i. Process of distilling CBA report into items brought to the negotiating table?
  - ii. Will there be an election cycle next December?

7. Next meeting date and time

- a. Wednesday 7pm at Public Safety Building

8. Executive Session for the Board

- a. Jacob- Motion to enter executive session for matters of strategies, procedure and personnel
  - i. Pennie- seconded
  - ii. Vote: 8 yes, 1 abstention