

**Jackson Place Community Council
Quarterly Meeting
December 10, 2007, 7:15-9:00p
Jackson Place Cohousing (800 Hiawatha Place South)**

Tentative Agenda

7:10-7:20 – Introductions

7:20-7:50 – Committee reports

7:50-8:10 – Presentation by Barbara Alsheikh, King County Tax Advisor, and questions

8:10-8:30 – Open Discussion Roundtable

Meeting convenes at 7:15

Introductions

Deborah Bartley introduced the Board members, gave a brief overview of how the Board works, etc. Steve Van Oel started an icebreaking exercise asking people to state a positive image or memory of Jackson Place. Some of them: Snow days...spending childhood playing hooky in the neighborhood parks...attending the old Colman school...fixing up the traffic circles...planting trees...seeing the park get fixed up...having fancy French drinks in a friend's backyard...ribbon cutting ceremony at Jackson cohousing.

Committee reports

Traffic (John Schroeder) – John gave brief history and of JP's traffic situation, starting with the failed efforts with SDOT in the 1990s, followed by this year's mobility plan, and finally the recent Bridging the Gap funding. He has asked the SDOT planner to see if there is any pre-emptive work that we can do before SDOT starts work but has not received an answer. We may be partnering with Legacy Partners (Wonder Bread) to work on a pedestrian crossing at 18th and Jackson (tied in with SDOT), and possibly doing the same with CADA for the 17th and Jackson intersection. There is some discussion of redoing the intersection at 10th Ave South and South Dearborn to divert traffic off of S. Dearborn (drivers exiting Northbound I-5 at S. Dearborn currently have to turn east onto S. Dearborn, and one option is to let cars travel north onto 10th Ave South.)

Crime (Vince Furfaro) - Vince updated us on recent activities of the East Precinct Crime Prevention Coalition (EPCPC). Johnny mentioned that Matt from the www.centraldistrict.com website was in attendance, and that site was a good one for reporting crime and many other news items. A question was raised as to whether the police department still sends out crime stats, with no confident answer given.

Outreach (Deb Bartley) – Our newest committee, chaired by Deb, was described. Deb talked about the newsletter coming out, and the process for that.

Land Use (Jill Moe) – This committee hasn't been meeting lately, but will convene once Bill gets back in January, probably in the third week. Says that there is good land use information in the newsletter. Talked about the sculpture park. Multi-family zoning changes. Johnny described the GNA and Casa Latina situation. There were several people in the room who wanted to talk about the GNA, but we asked that we hold off on that until the roundtable part of the meeting.

Presentation by Barbara Alsheikh, King County Tax Advisor

The King County Tax Advisor is an independent agency that assists taxpayers with issues related to taxes. She described the brochures that she brought with her. Much of the information in those brochures at www.metrokc.gov/taxadvisor , although that address will be changing to kingcounty.gov/taxadvisor.

Barbara is a neighbor, living just over our JPCC borders in Judkins Park.

Taxpayers can challenge up their assessments up to 60 days after the assessment. This neighborhood received cards this summer, which unfortunately means that most of us missed the ability to challenge our most recent assessments. It's the culmination of a 3 year process. Barbara described in some detail the brochures.

The 1% cap recently being discussed in the press has nothing to do with your individual assessment.

There is a good chance that if you appeal you will win, although the standard of evidence is like in a criminal case.

If you are zoned LDT, get in touch with her. If the assessor actually visited your site, your chances are not very good.

Took questions:

Q: In my assessment the land value went up, not the house. A: Land always fluctuates more than house.
Q: Critical areas (zones where building is restricted because of natural conditions)? A: Your house is compared to other areas, and any changes that you have to make to fix the situation can reduce your tax bill;
Q: In general, how can we do set up a system that protects taxpayers from being priced out of their home. A: Barbara talked about California and Florida, where assessed value stays the same. Washington State's philosophy is to fairly distribute the cost of services. Senior citizen discount is the only thing that they do. (If you are 61 years and over, and have less than \$35,000 income, you qualify for a tax break.)

Roundtable

Soren told us that Don Carter has died, and raised the idea of some sort of memorial. There was general support.

An extremely lively discussion of the move of Casa Latina into our neighborhood and the recently negotiated Good Neighbor Agreement (GNA).

Claude spoke about not being particularly excited about the Casa Latina move, but not seeing the benefit of not signing the GNA.

Alfred Shiga spoke about being a longtime resident and property owner, and said that city officials just wanted Casa out of Belltown to "clean it up," and how our neighborhood seemed like a place that it could be easily placed. Alfred thinks it will be disastrous for Jackson Place and that the GNA will have no power. He also talked about doing a lot of research on day labor organizations.

Jill supports Casa Latina – thinks they do good work.

Jennifer Habu – Was on the GNA panel; She in the past has fought Labor Ready and Operation Nightwatch. Saw that they had a very bad situation with Labor Ready with homeless and related several stories of cleaning up sleeping areas and harassment.

Steven Araujo, a new King Street neighbor, welcomes Casa Latina. He thinks it is dangerous to talk about our neighborhood "getting dumped" on. His family came from Argentina and were poor and worked hard in this county to make it. He says he worries more gentrification and getting priced out.

Johnny spoke about wanting to be part of a neighborhood that welcomes all people, and feels that the GNA helps us. He hated the way that the Mount Baker neighborhood reacted with respect to a potential move of Casa Latina to the Chubby and Tubby site, and does not want to repeat that here.

Deb: Wants to work together in a positive way.

Longtime resident Tadashi Shiga said that we should not cite a day labor situation by parks, schools, residential area, thinks that there will flood of homeless.

Jane Mueller said she was shocked to hear about the Casa Latina move and wondered why she was just finding out about it.

Johnny said that there has been multiple advertised JPCC meetings with Casa discussed, that there has been traffic on the JPCC Yahoo group about the issue, and that the press has covered it.

Robert Clinkenbeard raised the issue of how JPCC non-Board members could somehow vote on the Casa Latina move and GNA. Was seriously concerned that it would be undemocratic to not allow a neighborhood vote.

Johnny said he believed that an all neighborhood vote would be logistically tricky and said that the Board as an elected body was empowered to make controversial decisions.

Although the discussion remained lively, it was closing time at Jackson Cohousing, and the formal meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.