

**Community Forum Meeting  
Meeting Minutes  
January 22, 2009  
7:00 p.m. City Council Chambers  
Moderator, Kathie Snodgrass**

Captain John Mullan – Kathie Snodgrass (Rep)  
Emma Dickinson –absent  
FarViews/Pattee Canyon – Ray Aten (Rep)  
Franklin to the Fort – Jon Salmonson (Alt)  
Grant Creek – absent  
Heart of Missoula – Absent  
Lewis & Clark – Greg Gullickson (Rep)  
Lower Rattlesnake – Absent  
Miller Creek – Absent  
Moose Can Gully – Lyle Guerts (Rep)  
Northside –Absent  
Riverfront – Gwen Hoppe (Alt)  
Rose Park – Absent  
South 39<sup>th</sup> – Jeff Stevens (Rep)  
Southgate Triangle – Hans Christiansen (Rep)  
University District – John Snively (Rep)  
Upper Rattlesnake – Jan Hoem (Rep)  
Westside – Absent

City Council Liaison – Absent  
Neighborhood Liaison – LaNette Diaz

**Others Present**

Bridget Kilroy

**Quorum**

Quorum is present.

**Adoption of Agenda**

*Mr. Aten* moved for adoption of agenda. *Mr. Stevens* seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of CF Minutes**

*Mr. Christiansen* motioned to approve meeting minutes from November 13, 2008. *Mr. Gullickson* seconded, all in favor.

*Mr. Aten* motioned to approve meeting minutes from December 18, 2008. *Mr. Stevens* seconded, all in favor.

*Mr. Stevens* motion to approve interim meeting minutes from January 6, 2009. *Mr. Christiansen* seconded all in favor.

**Consent Agenda**

1. Community Forum Leadership Team recommends electing the following slate of nominees to the Community Forum Leadership Team, term to begin January 2009: Don Nicholson; Ray Aten; Hans Christiansen; and Greg Gullickson.

*All in favor to adopt consent agenda.*

**Public Comment (non-agenda items from audience)**

Jan Hoem introduced Bridget Kilroy as the new representative for Upper Rattlesnake. She attended a recent meeting at Planning Board on the Zoning and Subdivision Rewrite. Roger Millar and Laval have been here to explain it. Initially it appeared to be to update the language and clean it up to make it a more useable document. But at the meeting on Tuesday, Roger Millar said, "the zoning regulations for every piece of property in Missoula will change". Some of those changes according to Don MacArthur will be substantive; in some areas the amount of namely multi-family dwelling units will be twice as dense. It really is important to get the residents of neighborhoods to attend the meetings to become informed of what these changes will be. The regulations are very confusing as they stand now so a rewrite is needed. The people who are working on this, Kirk Bishop with Duncan & Associates and OPG staff encourage folks to let them know if there are things that people 'can't live with' in the draft. Some of the changes include: building heights, mixed commercial-B&B's in every neighborhood or not, cluster and conservation cluster development, density is changing, there are some really good ideas but the point is people need to be informed and make desires known. Ray Aten said that zoningmissoula.com has everything on the website for review for the public. Jan Hoem said the executive summary is very abbreviated; if you don't understand it, call OPG staff and ask them for clarification. Question was asked if the *Missoulian* has summarized this. Jan said no, there are so many details that what is really needed is an explanation of what will happen in the neighborhood where you live. OPG staff is available to come to NC meetings to talk about those details. Unidentified female, asked if there was a written summary for her neighborhood somewhere? Jan replied, the information is not separated out by neighborhood. LaNette Diaz commented that Tom Zavitz, OPG planner, will provide a map with current zoning and a summary of what that is changing to and what those changes look like. It takes a small amount of time for him to extrapolate this. Lewis & Clark requested this and included it in their newsletter; Heart of Missoula requested it as well and included in their newsletter.

**Neighborhood Liasion Report–LaNetteDiaz**

- Upcoming Neighborhood Training Series – Workshops and Schedule.

The Neighborhood Orientation was held last night there were 15 attendees of those 12 were new folks interested in Neighborhood Councils. The training included how to get involved in NC's and why, a little about meeting management, neighborhood programs and resources and to how to engage the city in neighborhood issues.

The next training is February 18th, Controversial Issues Dialogue. The National Coalition Building Institute Director Ami Thurber will be presenting skills for controversial issues. Sometimes moderation of those discussions needs to be done within Neighborhood Councils. This workshop will address how to listen first to underlying concerns on all sides; be able to identify common ground and reframe the debate; and skill development for life. This is open to NC's and Community Council's and is limited to 50. This will be an excellent training. It will be held at the Fire Station at 3011 Latimer St.

In lieu of Community Forum on February 26<sup>th</sup> will be Team Building & Surveys. This is open to all NC leadership teams. There be a team building exercise which will show a fun way to come together. Many neighborhoods want to conduct surveys to look at priorities of what residents want the NC's to engage in and promote in their neighborhood. These two concepts are combined as a strong team is needed to do the surveys; it is a lot of work and commitment, but it is also fun.

The final training, Facilitation & Meeting Management, March 18<sup>th</sup> is open to all residents. This is a toolbox of skills to utilize: agenda planning outside of the strict rules of public notice law; active listening and adult learning-styles in how to present information; various facilitation tips-how to write on a flip-chart in a

colorful creative way; and an opportunity to practice with peers in small group break-outs. This will be active, engaging and fun.

Mr. Christiansen said he liked having a representative of the Community Councils at the training last night, would like for them to come to CF sometime and talk to us about what they do and develop a cooperative working relationship. LaNette will contact the county representative with this request.

### **Committee Reports**

None

### **New Business**

Proposed addition to the CF bylaws to allow for voting by email in certain situations. (Ray Aten)  
In reference to the CF bylaws, 6.4 is the proposal would be a new subsection. LaNette Diaz added this is **only** for pertinent items that must be **voted** on prior to the next meeting; would not occur otherwise. The contracts (for the grants) were urgent in that they needed to be signed and implemented. Mr. Christiansen asked if the City Attorney had been consulted regarding the legality. LaNette replied if it is in the Bylaws it can be allowed. Ms. Snodgrass read 6.4 into the record.

## **6. MEETINGS**

*6.4 In the event a quorum was not reached at Community Forum and pertinent items must be voted on prior to the next meeting an email vote will be initiated by Community Forum Leadership Team. Decisions by email vote shall be made by a majority of designated representatives that respond via email and vote via email.*

LaNette Diaz said that for expediency, it would be imperative for a quick turnaround. People who do not have email-there is one CF rep that doesn't have it-could be called and a hand delivered letter could be solicited.

Ms. Hoem expressed not liking this amendment, have not needed it in the past and by doing this by email we eliminate the normal communication and discussion. LaNette reiterated, this would not replace information not being shared at CF first, it is in the event a quorum is not met and pertinent and urgent action is necessary. The interim meeting did work; folks came for a 15 minute meeting. The Neighborhood Project Grant Funds program is urgent. Often the approval process ends up occurring in the December meeting and often folks are out for the holiday. Ms. Hoem suggested specifying for Neighborhood Project funding. Mr. Guerts suggested in anticipation of such a vote, a week before the regular meeting ask who will be attending to determine if there will be a quorum. LaNette commented that maybe it is not valid to do this, want to have the discussion however. Mr. Stevens said there have been a number of instances in past years where a quorum has not been present; usually not critical but this is a valid proposal. There are some instances where decisions need to be made in a timely fashion and aren't which is a problem. He further suggested that the amendment provide for an email or hand delivered letter vote. Bridget Kilroy asked who is considered in this vote. LaNette indicated the Community Forum representatives, this body here tonight. The vote would be initiated by the CF leadership team through me more than likely to originate the email vote process.

Mr. Aten suggested changing the last line of the amendment to read: *Decisions by email vote shall be made by a majority of designated representatives. Their response may be via email or hand-delivered letter.*

Mr. Christiansen indicated he does not want the leadership team to vote on this; any business that needs to go to CF, he doesn't want the leadership team to be making that decision. LaNette clarified the CFLT would not be approving, they would be initiating a vote of the CF just not in this venue. It would still have to be a quorum of Community Forum vote. Ms. Snodgrass offered as far as language...decisions initiated by email

or phone notice shall be made by a majority of designated representatives. It was decided that some wordsmithing to this amendment needs to happen; share suggestions with LaNette and this will be brought to Community Forum in March for further discussion. LaNette shared that another item that is of urgency is the Bus Tour, the proposal is presented the month prior to the tour, if no quorum present then the Bus Tour date would be thrown-off, that is another thing this could pertain to.

Mr. Aten summarized that it is important that all NC's have a chance to vote whether they have email or not and people are supportive of that. If we could come up with a mechanism for everybody to express themselves that would be good and in those few instances where a quorum not present at previous meeting that's okay. Ms. Hoem expressed objection but think we are headed in the right direction.

### **Ongoing Business**

Still taking more volunteers to be on Community Forum Leadership Team (Ray Aten)

Mr. Aten respectfully requests that people reconsider their decision not to be on the leadership team and volunteer.

### **Neighborhood Council Updates**

- **Lewis & Clark**—had a general meeting last week, discussed the zoning rewrite, OPG staff present and discussed the Sentinel HS sign proposal.
- **Southgate Triangle**—nothing new to report
- **Moose Can Gully**—nothing to report.
- **Farviews/Pattee Canyon**—our neighborhood parks master plan has been completed and was presented to Parks Department last week and will be presenting to the Parks Department operations in a couple weeks, moving along to get it moving in the neighborhood. Have some signage concepts. Did easement research and documented encroachment upon easements in some cases.
- **South 39<sup>th</sup> St.**—after 4 yrs of trying our NC has succeeded in securing a grant from Fish, Wildlife & Parks for construction of the Tonkin Trail in the amount of \$17,800. Originally applied for \$19,800. We are pleased to receive this large award. City has in addition pledged \$10,000 from the cash in lieu of fund to help pay for trail construction. This September will be applying for \$3000 from the Large Project Grant Fund.
- **Upper Rattlesnake**—Councilman Strohmeir asked for a prioritized list for infrastructure in the Rattlesnake, neighborhood representative Bridget Kilroy attended. Mary Louise Zap-Knapp and Bridget Kilroy have taken the chair positions and Harold & Jan Hoem will still serve on the LT. Elections will be held at the spring general meeting for additional LT members.
- **Cpt. John Mullan**—our general meeting will likely be March 18 and will likely have a community picnic in May.
- **University**—nothing new to report.
- **Riverfront**—nothing new to report.
- **Franklin to Fort**—will meet next Tuesday the 27<sup>th</sup> at a new location, the Friends Meeting Hall 1861 S. 12<sup>th</sup> St. W. Elections will be held at the February meeting.

### **Presentations**

Interactive Discussion on Maintenance Districts and how to best get the information out to neighborhoods (Bruce Bender, Chief Administrative Officer, City of Missoula) Power Point Presentation.

LaNette Diaz explained that this presentation is to start talking about ways to fund infrastructure, which includes chip sealing, street cleaning, snow removal, as well as sidewalk, curb and gutter improvements. As a Community Forum, we have talked about the need to maintain the aging tree population in Missoula. It was decided to direct LaNette to develop an informational presentation to take to NC's on maintenance districts – what they are, how they get set up, what they would pay for and what other cities currently spend in those

maintenance districts. After the presentation, a survey would be utilized to determine what people want to see and would be willing to pay for directly. Then the City would set up appropriate maintenance districts based on those wants. This funding system guarantees that a certain amount of money per household is dedicated spending for those items in an ordinance, it doesn't go into the general fund. This is a draft of that presentation and is a time for feedback and interactive discussion. What questions should be asked on the survey? What are some of the stories that we can relate to people's lives and how this impacts them or some of the ways to create a personal connection to what we are talking about so that it is more understandable?

Bruce Bender said the Mayor's Office had an intern working on the research for this presentation, namely what other cities budget for and what they are doing in regards to maintenance districts. See attached power point presentation for presentation content.

Some points:

- Maintenance districts are perpetual, ongoing and fall under a yearly assessment process approved by Council; whereas improvement districts exist until the project bond is paid off.
- Improvement Districts-they are a recent inclusion in street maintenance. Typically on SID's you sell a bond and you can spread out the cost. This works as an annual pay-off at 100%. How could you assess the full cost and pay it off in one year. Improvements are usually unique to the beneficiary of an area; how do you assess everybody in the district for a specific improvement. Concept of having everyone in the city in the maintenance district, if you install sidewalks in a particular neighborhood why should everyone in the city pay for it? That type of situation could be an improvement district. Bruce indicated he is not sure of how this ordinance is used and who is using it. Jeff Stevens suggested doing some research on this ordinance (improvement districts) find out who introduced it in first place and has it ever been used?

What are maintenance districts?

- created by Ordinances
- have specific boundaries
- provide funds for specific types of maintenance-be it streets, parks, or trees
- very prevalent: of the largest 6 cities in Montana, only Missoula lacks them

Types of Maintenance Districts: Parks, Streets, Open Space/Storm Drain, Lights/Fire Hydrants, Trees, Urban Forest – Missoula is interested in **Parks** and **Streets**

Montana Code Annotated: Maintenance Districts

- 7-12-4001: Park Maintenance Districts-mowing, irrigation, turf repair..recreation facility maintenance, tree trimming, replacement & removal, recreation equipment...etc.
- 10% of the electors of a proposed park maintenance district must be petitioned and approve the district. \*This is before the legislature currently to change that 10% requirement.
- 7-12-4401: Street Maintenance Districts include but not limited to...chip sealing, seal coating, overlaying, general cleaning...cleaning and repair of traffic signs, curb and gutter repair...
- 7-12-4402 drafted through Resolution
- 7-12-4405 Improvements –requires ordinance –improvement include [new] traffic signs, new curb and gutter construction, sidewalks and widening of streets.

Which cities have/use districts:

- may be an inaccurate reflection on the Storm Water District in Great Falls, Helena and Kalispell, they have the utility.
- Billings: Parks, Streets, Storm Water
- Bozeman: Streets, Trees
- Great Falls: Parks, Streets, Storm Water
- Helena: Streets, Storm Water, Trees, Open Space
- Kalispell: Streets, Storm Water, Trees

How much do they cost: (graph hard to read, #'s too small to make out)

- Based on per capita cost. Billings, Great Falls and Bozeman are assessing similar amounts
- Helena and Kalispell assessing more for streets than others
- Parks assessments are all over the board

Annual costs: (graph hard to read, #'s too small to make out)

- These are assessed on sq. ft. lot size as property tax
- There is differentiation on downtown areas city to city. Billings provides more services in their downtown.
- Billings and Great Falls does not assess commercial
- The Park Maintenance Districts in Billings number in the 100's and differentiate; quite an accounting challenge to manage.

How much money do they generate? [Street/Park]

- Billings ~ \$4 million/\$600,000
- Bozeman ~ \$2 million/\$0
- Great Falls ~ \$2.5 million/\$350,000
- Helena ~ \$2 million/ \$160,000
- Kalispell ~\$1.5 million/ Several small individual districts at \$20,000 each

What Contributes to Maintenance Funds:

- Streets: gas tax, maintenance districts, general fund
- Parks: maintenance districts, general fund
- Trees: maintenance districts, general fund

How is the money used?

- Streets: sweeping, sealing, overlaying
- Parks: turf repair, trial repair, mowing, playground equipment, etc. (maintenance, not improvement)
- Trees: leaf collection/removal, trimming, tree planting/removal

Discussion:

The concept of a maintenance district is a revenue source to provide more services of some sort that are specific. What are the deficiencies that a district could go toward improving? Last year's citizen survey indicated most citizens were fairly satisfied with services; big discontent was with traffic congestion. The city is at a point with general revenue generation that it will either have to increase property taxes to meet increasing costs or create something like this. Other cities have moved most of street costs into districts and the general property tax pays for services like police and fire and parks. Street maintenance budget is dependent on the gas tax; state has not increased this tax since 1993. There would have to be some movement of current general funds for street maintenance to the districts in start-up. That would have to be worked out.

Discussion on parks districts:

- Funds would go to maintenance related costs; not to constructing or installing new systems.
- Can mean replacement of deteriorated broken facilities, but not expansion or new installation. Does not fund improvements.
- is our maintenance level poor
- is there more interest in improvements

It was expressed that isn't the idea to find ways to make improvements funded city wide rather than expensive SID's to specific residents. This whole idea came out of the Hillview Way reconstruction being funded through an SID of adjoining property owners, not everyone who uses it.

- Would have to examine setting policy to use some of that general fund money for improvements
- If the gas tax maintenance burden was relieved, then it could be used for improvements; that is what other cities are doing.
- In looking at parks, could look at the rationale that by having park maintenance districted, then money from the general fund may be freed up to fund improvements. Would have to be a policy decision, but this could be a rationale for it.

There was brief discussion on city-wide infrastructure bond being used to fund Hillview Way. No other cities are using them. Did look at the local county-wide implementation of a .02 gas tax but the distributors were opposed to it and would have to distribute it between county/city projects.

Need to determine what residents want more of: maintenance and/or improvements. What are the needs? What do you want? Do you want maintenance improved? Do you want parks to be greener? Do you want playfields to be in better shape? Do you want more trees? Are you looking for specific improvements.

Comment made that those areas with highest density have priority in getting curbs, sidewalks and bike lanes. Bruce said if you have an area with high interest in improvement, SID's are the way to directly deal with it. The city does curb and sidewalk projects that cost around \$2 million annually, to think that the city could fund all those projects is not realistic. To find a way to supplement costs to property owners to limit the burden would be desired. It is the hope that by having maintenance districts would free up some of the dedicated money in the general fund to supplement improvements. As far as assessment levels, the law is set up for you to pay for what is in front of your property 100%, if you are on a corner, you will pay a lot more. The council struggles with these large assessments, maybe programs like this could help alleviate those large assessments.

Question asked if improvements could be funded through a city-wide SID. Bruce explained it would have to be created every year and would go to specific projects; the process would be cumbersome and burdensome. Comments made that the failure of the Hillview Way SID process in finding an equitable way to assess large property owners and homeowners.

Ms. Hoem commented that she would like to see an open ended question or something that looks like a timeline and ask how much money would you be willing to pay or see your taxes increase by on the questionnaire. She also offered that Open Space Maintenance would be beneficial to Missoula, in fire management for example.

Other ideas for questions:

Ms. Snodgrass consider adding to the presentation a slide which shows what other cities property tax assessments are in relation to what the maintenance district assessments are. LaNette replied that property

taxes are based on appraised value, which is different in each city; really no way to compare equitably across the state. The burden isn't the same. Staff are trying to figure out a comparison method and how to apply in the research of what other cities assess and get in their tax base. Bruce commented that in the citizen survey, the question 'how much would you be willing to support personally (in taxes and fees) for level or service'. In that poll, 32% would pay \$50 or more for improved services; and 43% at \$40 or less.

Ms. Hoem suggested having a slide that indicates money can be moved from the general budget to pay for maintenance to free up the gas tax to pay for improvements. Get the presentation down to 15 minutes and have a question session. Mr. Aten added having it clarified 'how do we fund maintenance and improvements'.

Discussion on ideas to incorporate in the presentation title: using maintenance districts to fund improvements; describe the need-asking what people want—the same ol same ol, or do you want something better; people will relate to wanting more and better. LaNette would like to present this to NC's at Spring meetings. She will continue to work with Bruce on the survey and will circulate the survey via email for input.

### **Final Business**

#### **Monthly report to City Council—request to report on non-agenda items**

(the monthly report to City Council will be made by the moderator of the meeting. The report made will address all items on the Community Forum agenda for the month. A request for reporting on non-agenda items will occur at Community Forum to ensure pertinent non-agenda are reported as well).

Ms. Snodgrass will do the monthly report. **Mr. Aten** moved, **Mr. Gullickson** seconded, all in favor.

Moderator for the next meeting will be **Mr. Aten**.

### **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Christine Ross*

Christine Ross  
Secretary, Office of Neighborhoods  
City Clerk's Office

\*Copies of any handouts and referenced documents at this meeting are on file in the City Clerk's Office