

**EASTERN NORWALK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**February 20, 2008**

**Minutes**

**Board Member Attendees:** Laurel Lindstrom (president), Diane Cece, Gordon Tully,

**Board Members Absent:** Sarah Hunter, Erik Nees

**Advisory Board Member Attendees:**

**Advisory Board Member Absent:** Nick Overall, Marija Bryant

**Others:** None

1. Meeting called to order at 8:00 PM
2. Public Participation – none at this time
3. Minutes
  - a. Approved August minutes with one abstention (Diane). Approved January minutes as revised.
  - b. Tabled approval of September, November and December minutes until next meeting.
4. President's Report – Laurel Lindstrom
  - a. None at this time
5. Treasurer's report – Diane Cece. Presented itemized report for month ending January 31.
6. Regular Business:
  - a. Watch List Properties
    - i. **Former Gibbs College on East Ave:** General discussion on planned development now proceeding.
    - ii. **Elderhouse:** Laurel, Nick and Marija attended a presentation of the revised plan for an addition to the existing building. The presentation took place at the First Taxing District Commission meeting on 1-10-08. Plan improved from previously but will still need City approvals. No plans submitted as yet.
    - iii. **Klondike Park:** Gordon mentioned that the First Taxing District had won rights
    - iv. **Norden Place:** Laurel has been contacted by Kim Morque to meet next week and discuss the eastern portion of the property owned by Spinnaker Properties. Possible options of development discussed. The western portion of the property, not owned by Spinnaker, also discussed – specifically Gibbs College closing. Gibbs is a tenant of the existing building and a large space will be up for lease when they vacate. Options discussed, some similar to those suggested for the eastern portion of the property with staggered traffic patterns and a use valuable to the East Norwalk community.
    - v. **Former Fitch School property:** up for sale. Various possible best options for site discussed. Currently property has been fenced and the building windows boarded-over. Issue of potential creation of a 'blight ordinance' for Norwalk discussed – pros and cons. Ordinance Committee is looking at ordinances from other towns and consulting with our city staff re need for the ordinance. Discussion by board included: that there are already sufficient regulations to cite 'blighted properties available through health and zoning but difficulty is enforcement related to inadequate state legislation and a back-log in the courts; that the word 'blight' is the legal term that allows for eminent domain (not a good thing); a

blight ordinance has a high risk of being used selectively, subjectively and with political motivation. Board therefore not favorable to the creation of a blight ordinance.

- vi. **DiScala property (parcel 3).** No new activity.
  - vii. **93 East Avenue:** Ruling by judge (see below under NPT report)
  - viii. **Lower East Avenue:** no activity
- b. Neighborhood Issues/Committees
- i. **Zoning & Master Plan:** Laurel indicated that the Planning Committee of the Common Council is still reviewing the plan before it goes to the full Council for approval.
  - ii. **City Budget:** Discussion arrived at board consensus re need for an additional zoning officer
  - iii. **Speeding & Traffic:** Laurel reports meeting with Dick Linnartz and Mike Yeosock of Public Works on 2-15-08 to review plans for Safe Routes to School project for Strawberry Hill Avenue. Plan includes bike lanes and 4-foot wide sidewalks on both sides of the street from Fitch Street to Westport Avenue. A new traffic light would be added at Tierney and at Beacon. The plan should be presented to the public in the spring and construction completed by the end of the calendar year. Adopt-a-Spot at Tierney would be retained once a T-intersection is created.
  - iv. **Neighborhood Flooding:** Diane indicated that the budget process was moving along with funding recommended for flooding control. Public Works has scheduled a public information meeting for March 5 at 6:30 PM regarding draining Olmstead Pond and piping work to be done from Olmstead Place to Raymond Terrace through private property.
  - v. **Crime:** Discussion regarding prior plan for possible ENNA forum with NPD. Many groups currently holding forums because of the recent stabbing death. Board decided to wait until later in spring or summer to hold our forum if we decide to go forward with it. Need for further discussion.
- c. Mayor's Neighborhood Preservation Committee Report – Laurel Lindstrom
- i. Met on February 6. Meeting focused on plans for Keep Norwalk Beautiful 2008. Discussion by board regarding scheduling ENNA Spring Cleanup.
- d. CNNA Report – met January 28. Mike Greene of P&Z updated the group on the major development plans in the city. Julie Burton is now the Coordinator of CNNA.
- e. NPT Report – Marija Bryant absent but sent email report to board
- i. **93 East Avenue.** The judge ruled that the property is protected under the CT Environmental Protection Act because it is 1) listed in the National Register of Historic Places, 2) is under threat of demolition, and 3) prudent and feasible alternatives to demolition exist and were presented in court. A temporary injunction is in place and the Inn is legally bound to do no demolition while the temporary injunction stands. The next step would be a return to court for a permanent injunction.
  - ii. NPT is asking for recommendations for areas in Norwalk to start updated historic survey. Board recommends SoNo because it is vulnerable to development and potential demolitions right now. France Street and Camp Street may also be vulnerable. Cambridge historic inventory referred to by Gordon as an excellent example.
  - iii. Changes to the Demo delay ordinance are being reviewed by the Ordinance Committee with input from the NPT.
- f. Trees, Landscape & Adopt-A-Spots –Nick Overall absent but sent email report to board
- i. East side of East Ave. needs street trees. Nick is starting to contact property owners by mail.
  - ii. Plan for Calf Pasture Beach Road tree-lined boulevard has been on hold but Peter Viteretto currently working on plan, with help from TAC and ENNA.
  - iii. Our Adopt-A-Spots will need clean-up with coming of spring. Sign missing on East Ave. site and needs to be replaced.

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**Board Only** (some of information included above in item #6 may have been discussed during 'board only' part of meeting)

**7. Other Business**

- a. Maribeth Becker resigned as CNNA Advisory Board member since her term as CNNA Coordinator ended in January

**8. Next regular board meeting: March 12, 2008**

**9. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM**

Submitted by Laurel Lindstrom