

CCEA Community Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 16, 2011 6:30 PM

Young American Center
Brooks Waldman, CCEA President, Presiding

The meeting was called to order by Brooks Waldman, President of the Board of Directors for CCEA. He thanked Barbara Metzger, CCEA member for taking minutes of the meeting as the acting Secretary/Treasurer was involved in membership.

Following introductions, there was a brief announcement from Lois Court, our Representative to the State of Colorado. Her visit was not part of the agenda, but she stopped by to leave forms for any of her constituents who may be interested in communicating questions or concerns with her office.

Fillmore Plaza Opening & Events Council

Julie Bender, President of the CCN BID (Business Improvement District) gave an energetic update on the exciting event planned for the opening of the new Fillmore Plaza/hybrid street on June 25, 2011. A free street event is planned to highlight this new, improved venue within Cherry Creek. Julie welcomed the inclusion of all the surrounding neighborhoods with representatives to the Fillmore Events Advisory Group, and finished her remarks with the introduction and comments by the CCE representative to the group, Diane Huttner.

Storm Drainage & Street Paving Projects

The main item on the agenda was introduced with the presentation by Lesley Thomas, Deputy Mgr. of Public Works ("PW"). She was accompanied by Mike Anderson – Stormwater Drainage, Pat Kennedy- Paving, Tom Blackman, and Cindy Patton, all of Public Works. Lesley's presentation was a summary of the recent presentation given by George Delaney, Manager of Public Works and Deputy Mayor, to the Land Use and Transportation Infrastructure Committee of City Council. The presentation focused on information and events leading to the PW request for a substantial raise in charges for two funds: The Sanitary and Sewer system and The Stormwater Enterprise Fund. The graphs strongly suggested that the increased rate hikes were a necessity. Members in the audience did not question the need for rate increases, but did question how the proposed plan to garner funding for necessary projects and to eliminate "surprise" billings would be managed. Several members voiced a lack of confidence in how Public Works would guarantee the management of their plan and avoid the conditions that allowed the situation of the past to reoccur.

Ms. Thomas explained that because of the financial straits of surprise billings and increased project needs, along with the stressed economic situation, projects that would have been ready for bids had been delayed. She reported that part of the Public Works plan for more sustainable, future funding would be debt financing of \$30 million in the fall 2011, although she could not commit to the date. City Council would need to approve such a bond issue. We were told that this funding mechanism would assure the completion of the delayed projects, but that the Bayaud Outfall project for CCE has not only been delayed, it is designated as "preventive" rather than a priority project and will not be re-scheduled for its original timeframe. The Public Works decision is that this project will not be scheduled for construction until 2015. Being informed by Mike Anderson that we should be pleased that the small Bayaud Outfall project (around \$10.5 mil.) made "the list" of projects did not appear to negate the facts with which the CCE group reminded the City staff: the project was already ten years delayed, the project was included in the updated Master Plan as a necessary upgrade and had made the scheduling list prior to the "surprise" billing incident and PW could give no commitment to guaranteeing the date of 2015.

This announcement and what it meant for continued delay in basic infrastructure, the question of re-paving, the risk of economic loss to Cherry Creek East because of its detrimental effect on real estate values and the subsequent lack of re-development of existing vacant parcels, met with negative sighs, groans, and hands being raised for follow up questions.

Re-paving was the next announcement. Pat Kennedy confirmed that as a neighborhood, Cherry Creek East streets were one of the worst neighborhoods in the city of Denver. He told us that there were individual streets that were far worse, but as a neighborhood, we were one of the worst.

Re-paving of our streets would only be done after the Stormwater improvement project was completed in 2015. That was met with the same apparent disbelief. Mike Anderson distributed a handout offering “options” for re-paving. CCE could wait until after the completion of the Bayaud Outfall project or we could re-pave those streets not affected by the project, which should be identifiable in another year. This was not well-received. It was noted from the audience that the unpaved streets would be an eyesore compared with those paved and add additional risk and question about the real estate value for affected parcels. Pat explained the 6-year repaving cycles and agreed with the resident who proposed that in fact, Cherry Creek East had missed out on the repaving cycles because of the awaited Bayaud Outfall project. Once again, there was not apparent support for the argument that delaying re-paving in the past was smart because of the development within CCE.

The streets of Cherry Creek East are in such negative condition, that Pat confirmed only a complete re-paving (milling and overlay) would bring them up to acceptable standards. Pat reported that the entire cost of re-paving all Cherry Creek East streets would be \$1 million. It was understood that if all streets were re-paved and then the Bayaud Outfall was constructed in 2015, the cost of re-paving the affected streets would be about \$250,000. Several residents commented on the disparity in re-paving of Cherry Creek north residential streets, while leaving CCE streets untouched. It appeared that the audience was not content with the decisions put before them regarding the Bayaud Outfall project re-scheduling and the re-paving of streets.

Events

The meeting continued with an update on the Municipal Band Concert scheduled for July 17th at 5:30 p.m. in Pulaski Park. Nancy Hayward and Barbara Metzger have organized the event, hoping to encourage the park as a venue for social events and City-sponsored concerts. Thanks were given to Jeanne Robb and Nora Kimball for garnering the band on such short notice. Also mentioned were Bush Development and Zeppelin Development for their contributions toward printing of flyers, free cupcakes and free water bottles for the first 75 attendees.

Update on GREENhouse Project

Mickey Zeppelin and his architects presented an update in the design process for greenHouse Phase II and III. They described the charrette sessions and how words and concepts and visuals combine with brain-storming to invigorate their goal of creating an energetic and vibrant living experience for their project that enhances their property and the surrounding properties. Residents appeared to be positive about the design process and the direction of the plan.

Update on Steele Creek Project

Phil Workman, representing Bush Development, reported that negotiations were ongoing with two different hotel possibilities, and that they were quite satisfied in this economic environment with their ability to maintain the existing ownership of Steele Creek properties and extend ownership to another property.

The meeting extended beyond the normal time limit and was adjourned without further announcements or discussion. Next meeting, Thursday, October 13th