

## **Regent Neighborhood Association Meeting, May 28, 2014**

Members present: Jon Miskowski, John Schlaefer, Mary Czyszczak-Lyne, LD Oakley, Mary Sarnowski, Ronnie Hess, Ron Rosner, Dan O'Callaghan, Betsy Greene, Eric Steege, Jessi Claringbole, Charlie Peters, Jen McDonald, Marcia Vandercook.

Guests: Joe Heggstad, Jim Walker, Charlie McKenzie, Greg Sessler..

1. **Minutes** of April 23 approved, with the correction that Betsy was not there twice.
2. **University Avenue Corridor Plan.** Jon brought sparkling cidee and proposed a toast to the successful passage of the University Avenue Corridor Plan, with thanks to everyone for their hard work.
3. **Elected official report.** Shiva reported that she met with Karin Wolf about the ideas presented by Professor Dennis and his landscape architecture students for improving the Walnut and Highland underpasses. The most feasible idea is one involving corrugated metal that would cost about \$100,000 for both underpasses. Karin has a grant opportunity coming up at the beginning of June and is willing to submit a proposal. 1000 Friends of Wisconsin has also volunteered to help with fundraising. This would be a city staff project; they would handle all the necessary approvals and the city would be responsible for installation and maintenance. Ron expressed an interest in seeing other work before deciding on one of the student projects. Dan said the city's willingness to devote staff time to this would be a significant advantage, and Mary S. said she thought this was more work than we had volunteer power to take on. A motion to support the city's initiation of the project was approved, with Ron opposed.
4. **Landmarks Commission and ordinance.** Jon said that RNA received a letter from David Mollenhoff asking RNA to participate in an alliance of neighborhoods and others interested in supporting the Landmarks ordinance in light of other work going on to modify it. Shiva said she has been working to form a working group of alders to look at possible changes, since some of the language in the ordinance is obsolete and makes decisions difficult. The working group will review the changes the Landmarks Commission has recommended and hold a meeting in each historic district. The idea is to get the full cross-section of opinions and do the detailed work in advance before bringing this issue to the full council. In addition to Shiva, the working group will be Alders Rummell, King, Clear, and Schmidt.

Jon said it is not clear what the role of the proposed alliance would be and there's not provision in the RNA bylaws that allow us to have another organization speak for the RNA. John said he thought the impetus was to do independent research in addition to what the city staff and alders are doing to make sure historic preservation interests are considered. Ronnie thought it was appropriate for the neighborhoods with historic districts to work together to have their own voice. Dan didn't think that the RNA board should delegate its voice to another organization to speak on its behalf; we should follow the issue ourselves. Shiva said she would appreciate having

an RNA board member attend the meetings held by the alder group, and John volunteered to do so and report back. The letter was received but not acted upon. Jon will respond to the request.

5. **West High Scholarship donation.** RNA member Martha Vukelich-Austin has requested a donation to a scholarship fund in honor of retiring principal Ed Holmes. The scholarship will help West students attend college. A gift of \$1000 to the scholarship fund was approved.

6. **By-laws.** Jon presented proposed revisions to the by-laws that he and John worked on. Notice to the members was too short to adopt them at this meeting, but they can be adopted at the next General meeting. The proposed by-law changes eliminate the required connection between committee chairs and board members, so more people serve at large and committee chairmanship is assigned separately. Committee chairs can also be officers.

Betsy asked why the change is being proposed. Jon said recruitment for committee chairs and board members is made more difficult by requiring the person to be both. At-large positions were created to give people an easier entrée to the board than through a committee. The by-law changes also eliminate term limits except for the president, who can serve one year with an option to renew for one year. A provision has been added for removal of a board member with notice. LD said that the changes allow fewer people to do more for longer – the size of a quorum, the number of people who can act, and the number of years officers can stay in place. The board decided to defer action on the changes until the September meeting. Discussed changes will be made to a next draft version which will be reviewed again at a fall meeting.

7. **Board member election.** Jon presented a slate of officers for next year, but the necessary quorum of members was not present. Approval of the new officers was deferred to the June meeting.

Minutes submitted by Marcia Vandercook.