

Belltown United

Notes - February 16, 2023

Members in Attendance: Pam Anderson, Jeff Cohen, Tom Graff, Ann Marie Hitchcock, Justin Keogh, Jon Kiehnau, Valerie Heide Mudra

Members Absent: JR Harris, David Levinson

Others in Attendance: Diane Davis, Aaron Asis

Approval of notes: The January notes were approved.

Guest Speaker: Diane Davis - Belltown Representative to the West Precinct Advisory Council

- Diane provided an overview of issues that have been discussed over the last few months at the meetings. These include hiring incentives for police officers, high potency alcohol sales downtown, graffiti, high use drug offenders, LEAD, EBT fraud, Community Safety Officers (CSOs) staffing, and Park Rangers. Jail staffing is a huge concern as the jail operated by King County is still on COVID protocols and are not accepting misdemeanor offenders but at the same time the City is paying for jail space. Another large concern is that there is no regional data base for drug offenses which creates a difficulty for police officers to comply with the Supreme Court decision related to arrests for drug use.

Financial Report:

- **Check Register:** Current balance is \$31,126. Accounts now primarily shifted to Banner Bank. Outstanding invoices total \$11500 (dog park mural and sandwich boards for Belltown Artwalk).
- **OED Neighborhood Economic Recovery Fund Grant (\$100,000).** Both the 3rd and 4th quarter reimbursements have been received. Need to reconcile reimbursements with expenditures.
- **DON Grant:** Aaron has received one reimbursement, still primarily in the planning stage.

Clean Up of Belltown:

- Coastline Church will have approximately 30 volunteers on March 7th to work in the Portal Park. The volunteers may also be deployed throughout Belltown for clean up and graffiti removal depending on actual size of the volunteer group.
- No responses received for a call for organizations to lead a cleanup effort.
- The following property owners have not been responsive to cleaning up their properties or removing graffiti - Rite Aid on 3rd, Bergmans on 3rd, and Mamas on 2nd.
- **King County Parks has provided \$25,000 for use in the Portal Park. A partnership with Seattle Athletic Club is being pursued.**
- SDOT has initiated maintenance of the medians along Denny at Western, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th. Valerie has reached out to SDOT related to the condition of the sequoia tree on 4th Avenue.

Murals:

- Mural at the Dog Park. Artist Myron Curry began but has not yet completed the mural at the Dog Park.
- Aaron is working with Matt on a Mural Map for the Belltown United webpage.
- The mural at the Army/Navy Surplus has been restored.
- Crosscut has reached out the Aaron to do a segment on Belltown murals.

Portal Park:

- Good meeting with the SCL (the Director, Debra Smith) on the transfer of the SCL parcel at the corner of Western and Battery with the parcel at Western & Blanchard.
- The Portal Park and the Portal Park Porch are overseen by a steering committee. This committee has access to funds from the DON grant. Committee is working on walking tours from May thru October to highlight Belltown, ie. arts, history, restaurants/bars, etc. to be led by community organizations, ie. Segway, Historic Seattle, AIA, and Nick at Base Camp Studios. First walk will be May 20th led by Segway who will be opening a pop up store near Tilikum Place Park.
- The committee is looking into a social media presence.
- No new info on the Portal Park Porch from SDOT. Consideration of a community bulletin board at 1st and Battery.

Bell Street Park:

- The UW students working on Belltown studio projects, including the Portal Park, the Bell Street Park and extension, will present their report on March 6th in Gould Hall on the UW campus. Belltown United has been invited to attend.
- General discussion on increased lighting in the park. The MID is looking into year round lighting in the dog park, similar to Denny Park.

Tilikum Place:

- The fountain is operational and some lights have been installed. The adjacent properties installed lights on the buildings. Parks Department is working to replace the tree lighting. New red benches have been installed.

Belltown P-Patch:

- Work funded by Belltown United will start in the Spring
- No new information on the status of the Statement of Legislative Intent (SLI) introduced by Council member Andrew Lewis which could provide the \$500,000 for the transfer of the 3 cottages to Historic Seattle from Seattle Parks Department.

Belltown Art Walk:

- Additional research by Amy Tipton and Valerie is occurring on the purchase of sandwich boards and A-frames approved at the December meeting.
- Next art walk is Friday, March 10th.

Belltown United/BCC Presents:

- Thirty five individuals (via zoom or in person) attended the February 8th presentation by a panel representing the Office of the Waterfront, Seattle Department of Transportation and its design partners on the Bell Street project. This project is to provide accessible east-west connections by connecting the waterfront to Belltown via Bell Street from 1st Avenue to Elliott Avenue. This project has a 3.3 million dollar budget with a completion date by 2025.
- The March Belltown United/BCC Presents will be a continuation of the February meeting with a report back on the results of feedback from community surveys.
- The Mayor's Office is interested in doing a walk/discussion in Belltown. No date has been set.

BBA:

- Meetings will be every other month in person at Hatch.
- There is currently discussion on creating an incentive for individuals to visit Belltown bars/restaurants by the introduction of a card to provide a 20% discount on purchases. About Twenty (20) businesses is the initial scope.
- Next meeting is April 11th at Hatch.

BCC:

- March meeting will be another Belltown United/BCC Presents event. BCC will return to regular meetings in April.
- Belltown United is the fiscal agent for the BCC.

Pilot Program Related to Zoning in Belltown

- The Mayor signed off on the proposed 5 year pilot program by the Burrard Group related to modify the Zoning in DMR/R 95/65 to allow for hotel use in the entirety of the building envelope (except for required retail) on 1st Avenue and 2nd Avenue between Wall Street and Lenora Street.
- A voluntary agreement between Burrard and Belltown United will be completed providing approximately \$400,000 for arts and cultural projects, if this rezoning is approved by the City Council.

Administrative items:

- **Staff:** Anne works on Thursdays doing administrative work. Matt continues on the technical issuance of the newsletter and other web issues. Robert Palmini, CPA, is volunteering time to assist with IRS filings and 501c4 issues.

- **501c4:** Submitted; some administrative issues.
- **Membership:** Tom will reach out to the 30 businesses and the Belltown United Board who contributed in 2022 for a \$200 for 2023. The requests sent out by Ann in November were not particularly successful.
- **Web Page:** Agreement that the web page needs improvement in the next 3 to 6 months. 2022 Belltown United Board meetings have been posted on the webpage. Valerie will work with Matt to display these in the folder identified as “agenda and meeting minutes”.
- **Belltown United Advisory Committee:** No action at this time.
- **Belltown United Board:** No action at this time.
- **Newsletter:** The March newsletter will be issued on February 27th. Valerie is looking for a volunteer to do the May issue as she will be traveling.

Round Table:

- The King County clinic to provide free dental, vision, and medical care for those who have difficulty accessing or affording healthcare is scheduled April 27th to 30th at Seattle Center. Downtown Cornerstone Church will be participating and is reaching out for additional volunteers. Valerie volunteered in the past and encouraged people to participate as it was a great experience and a great service to the community.
- District 7 City Council member Andrew Lewis wants discussion on crises care. Tom, Zander, Jon were asked to join him on February 28th. Volunteers are needed to participate in a planning session prior to the meeting. Ann Marie and Diane Davis may have time.
- The Downtown Cornerstone is starting construction on their “owned” space in the Labor Temple on 1st Avenue, but will remain on Western Avenue until work is completed.
- A blood drive will be scheduled in the next few weeks.

Belltown United Board Adjourned at approximately 1030.