

CARAG
Calhoun Area Residents Action Group
Board of Directors Retreat Minutes
13 DECEMBER 2008

9:00 A.M. MPD 5th Precinct Community Room
Approved at the January 2009 CARAG meeting

Board Members Attending: John Darlington, Jeff Forester, Brendan Jordan, Anna Matthes (Treasurer), Maren Nowicki (Secretary), Aaron Rubenstein (President), Pamela Taylor (Vice-President), Scott Schiefelbein and Howard Verson

Also present: Scott Engel (Community Coordinator)

Review of Constitution & Bylaws:

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m. with a review of the CARAG Constitution and Bylaws. Pamela pointed out that Article IV of the Constitution, in which it is stated that annual dues may be established by the Board, is a potential obstacle to neighborhood participation. Scott E said that this statement is boilerplate language in common usage at the time that the CARAG Constitution was created and has been carried over to the present. Aaron confirmed that to date, dues have never been assessed in CARAG. The group also addressed Article V, in which it is stated that the Board shall consist of nine CARAG members, each elected to a one-year term. For reasons of continuity, Pamela suggested that the Board consider 2-year staggered terms of service. Pamela also expressed concern about the statement in the Bylaws regarding the Board's power to call general membership meetings and the power of the Board President to schedule Board meetings as necessary. A discussion ensued about what to do in the event that a President or the Board refused a request from the neighborhood to call a meeting. The Board went on to discuss the process for revision of the Constitution and Bylaws. John moved that the Board create a task force to include the BOD and an equal number of CARAG neighbors in order to address the revision of the Constitution and Bylaws, setting a 2-3 month limit for discussion followed by a vote. Motion Seconded. After discussion the motion was withdrawn in favor of having the Board submit any suggestions for re-wording at the next neighborhood meeting for discussion and vote.

CARAG Organizational Issues:

Pamela pointed out that the configuration of the CARAG Organizational Chart included in the meeting packet implies that the Executive Coordinator occupies a role equal to that of the 9-member Board of Directors. To date, the Board President and Executive Coordinator have met on a monthly basis to establish the agenda for the next CARAG monthly meeting. The Board agreed that in future the Executive Committee will communicate via email to set the agenda for the next monthly meeting and other Board members will be copied. The Board also agreed that Special Board Meetings will be scheduled on an *ad hoc* basis rather than at fixed intervals.

The Board addressed managing its finances with regard to NRP funding. Aaron suggested that the Board consider creating a long-range budget of perhaps 3-5 years' duration. Scott S inquired as to whether the Board has access to sufficient information to devise a long-range budget. Several of those present expressed concern about how the state budget crisis will affect NRP funds. Scott E stated that the issue of finances will become clearer in 2009 and that in the interim CARAG might work on creating a 3-5 year overview or plan, rather than an actual budget. Further discussion followed in which Brendan asked whether CARAG has the option of trying to secure financial grants. Pamela suggested that CARAG consider changing its status as a 501C4 organization to a 501C3 designation, which confers greater latitude in terms of fund-raising. However, 501C3 status is targeted to religious, educational or charitable organizations and CARAG would likely not qualify for change in status. Aaron moved that the Board ask Anna and Scott E to identify financial issues that CARAG should address and report back at the CARAG meeting in February. Motion seconded and approved. The Board went on to discuss the form in which CARAG monthly meeting minutes should be filed as 'final' and, if amended, posted on the CARAG website. Current practice is to make revisions in ink to the hard copy draft at the monthly meeting; the revised copy is then signed by the President and Secretary and filed at the CARAG office. However, a non-amended draft remains posted on the website. It was agreed that the Board will continue the practice of signing an amended hard copy and then post a 'final amended' version on the

website. Pamela stated that printed materials provided at the meeting should be attached to the minutes. Other Board members expressed concern that inclusion of all brochures, literature and documents in their entirety would be unwieldy. Instead, such attachments could be kept on file with meeting minutes in the CARAG office but would not be stapled to the copies distributed at the monthly meeting for review. Pamela also reminded the Board that it is an NRP requirement that written committee reports be submitted and placed on file, rather than simply summarizing oral reports of committee activities in the monthly CARAG meeting minutes. Discussion followed as to whether a committee should submit its meeting minutes or whether a written report summarizing its activities would suffice. Aaron moved that committees be required to submit written reports of their activities, that the Board ask Scott E to create a template for committee reports, and that committee reports and attachments be not formally included in the minutes, but instead kept on file in the CARAG office. Motion Seconded, Approved.

Pamela also stressed that the Executive Coordinator is required to file a report because NRP funds this position. Aaron suggested that the Board refer this to the Personnel Committee. Discussion followed as to the form this report should take so as to be manageable. Howard moved that the Board request an Executive Coordinator's Report and that its specific content be established by the Personnel Committee. Motion Seconded, Approved.

Scott S moved that the Board appoint members to the Personnel Committee. Discussion followed concerning whether Rick Bojko or any other non-Board member should sit on this committee or any other committee. Howard moved that the Board appoint John, Maren, Pamela and Rick to the Personnel Committee. Motion Seconded. There was further discussion about areas of committee work that should be limited to Board members only. Motion amended to appoint John, Maren and Pamela to the Personnel Committee, with Howard, possessing previous experience on this committee, as consultant.

Planning for Year, Goals:

Aaron opened the floor to suggestions for setting goals for the coming year.

Farmer's Market (Brendan): Establishment of a Farmer's Market serving the neighborhood within 2 years

Lyndale Avenue reconstruction (Scott E): Proactively address impacts of the upcoming Lyndale Avenue reconstruction project

31st Street improvements (Brendan): Develop a strategy for bicycle and pedestrian improvements on 31st Street so as to be consistent with planning done in the past

NRP Phase 2 (Aaron): Promote development of NRP Phase 2 plan with extensive community engagement

Livability issues (Jeff): Livability issues regarding CARAG neighborhood *vis a vis* the Uptown entertainment district

Neighborhood participation (Pamela): Increased community involvement toward a goal of 500 active neighborhood participants over the next few years

Working relationships (John): Foster closer working relationships between the CARAG neighborhood and the Uptown Association

Carbon footprint (Brendan): Explore strategies to reduce CARAG's carbon footprint

Rail Transit in Greenway (Brendan): Increased neighborhood engagement in achieving effective rail transit in the Greenway corridor

Faith Community involvement (John): Invite the faith community to be more involved in CARAG

CARAG meeting attendance (Aaron): Increase community participation at monthly CARAG neighborhood meetings

Growth and density (Brendan): Arrive at a consensus regarding growth and density in the CARAG neighborhood

Social support (Scott S): Explore the possibility of CARAG moving from 501C4 to 501C3 status and how CARAG's goals might support organizations and initiatives that provide social support; identify tax status and scope of CARAG

Affordable housing (John): Explore issues regarding affordable housing in the CARAG neighborhood

Brendan proposed utilization of a web survey to gather neighborhood preferences and help prioritize these suggestions. After discussion, the suggestions above were consolidated when possible and the following suggestions were made for committee assignment:

Farmer's Market – Livability Committee

Lyndale Avenue reconstruction – Transportation Committee

31st Street improvements – Transportation Committee

NRP Phase 2 – NRP Committee

Working relationships / Livability issues (combined) – Livability Committee

Carbon footprint – Transportation & Energy Committee (combining these two committees)

Rail transit / Growth and density / Carbon footprint (combined) - Transportation & Energy or Zoning Committee

Faith community involvement and **CARAG meeting attendance** - Community Engagement Committee

Growth and density / Carbon footprint (combined) - Zoning Committee

Social support - Executive Committee or Community Engagement Committee

Committee appointments were made as follows and include neighborhood residents who have expressed interest in continuing their committee involvement:

Livability Committee: Scott S (with Brendan as adjunct)

Transportation & Energy Committee: Brendan, Howard, Jeff (with Anna as adjunct)

Zoning Committee: Aaron, Anna, Howard, (with Jeff as adjunct), Kay Nygaard-Graham, Jill Bode, Ellan Meyer, Jamie Ronnei, Rick Bojko

NRP Committee: Howard, Aaron, (with Pamela as liaison for others who have expressed interest), Kay Nygaard-Graham

Community Engagement Committee: Pamela, Scott S, (with John as adjunct)

Executive Committee: Aaron, Pamela, Anna, Maren

Personnel Committee: John, Maren, Pamela, (with Howard as adjunct)

Uptown Neighborhood News Managing Board: Anna, Jill Bode, Elizabeth Walke

Crime & Safety Committee: current members are Philip AuClaire, Todd Munson, Mike Flowers; Tommy Thompson and Lt. John Kelly also attend Crime & Safety Committee meetings

Discussion ensued concerning the possible discontinuation or dormancy of the Crime & Safety (C&S) Committee, which has not met since this past summer. Unlike other neighborhoods, CARAG has experienced a measurable decrease in crime in recent times. Scott S suggested that the C&S Committee might go dormant, yet retain the Stroll Patrol. The Board considered disruptive behavior reported on the part of an individual that attends C&S Committee meetings. Brendan made a Motion, Seconded and Approved that the Board, with neighborhood approval at the next monthly meeting, discontinue the Crime & Safety Committee and funnel the remaining issues to other committees. Pamela stressed that a code of conduct or expectations should be established that would apply to those who attend committee meetings. Howard said that the Board can consider amending Committee Policy to address this issue. The issue was referred to the Executive Committee.

A district map proposal that Pamela brought forward at the Special Board Meeting (9/08) was referred to the Community Engagement Committee for consideration.

Meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.