

## **MINUTES**

### **NORTHWEST OLYMPIA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**

**March 5, 2012**

**At the home of Jerry Parker**

**Present:** Jerry Parker, Steve Conway, Erica Guttman, Cathy Visser

**Excused:** Mary Nelson, Susan Tuzzolino

**Treasurer's Report:** Steve gave a check to Jerry for the earlier purchase of materials for repair / revision of the table in the Mad-Tom Park. The work will be done this spring. Credit for the materials was purchased last fall in order to include the costs in the grant for materials from the City.

Steve reported the balance in our single account at WSECU is \$2770.42.

**Work Party:** Jerry reported that Sylvana Niehuser, the City's "Park Ranger" indicated she would not be available on Earth Day, Sunday, April 22 to direct or assist in a proposed neighborhood work party on the Garfield Nature Trail. She suggested alternative dates. Erica volunteered to discuss with Sylvana the possibility of proceeding with a neighborhood work party on April 22 or, if that does not work, to schedule an alternative date. A tentative time of 1 to 4 p.m. was set. Erica suggested it could be a joint project of NWONA with her organization, the WSU Native Plant Salvage Project, which has been active with ivy removal and replanting at the GNT for many years, and that might be an option in the absence of City staff that would ease concerns on their part.

**City Communications re: Pedestrian Enhancements:** Jerry agreed to follow up with the City to determine response to the joint communication from NWONA and SWONA for pedestrian improvements on Harrison and West Bay.

**NWONA Communications:** There was general discussion of Jerry's proposal to open up the blog for advertisements or notices from local businesses. The general response was negative, although the group was open to the idea of a tab or other provision on the blog to announce neighborhood yard sales or similar ventures.

This discussion merged into a discussion of creating a Facebook page, on the general assumption that no single source of communication alone is effective for most internet users, and most businesses and organizations employ a variety of strategies, including regular email communications, web sites, blogs, and social media such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. If the board agrees to set up a NWONA Facebook page, Erica and Cathy agreed to do that and share managing it, but were uncomfortable moving forward in Susan's absence, since she has been managing communications and raised concerns at the previous meeting about Facebook. This issue was tabled for now, with more discussion planned for a future meeting.

**Positions on Issues:** The issue of NWONA taking positions on controversial issues was discussed. Erica explained that her reservations about responding to Jerry's request for

the board to take a position on the Boys & Girls Club site stemmed from her uncertainty about what our role as a board is within the neighborhood. She feels uncomfortable speaking on behalf of all neighbors when there isn't a clear process established (that she knows of) either in the NWONA bylaws or in the City's guidelines for neighborhood associations. She asked Jerry to check with other associations for clarity on this, and Jerry also suggested holding some future discussion within the association membership about the board taking positions on behalf of the entire association. Jerry agreed to follow up to get information as part of his involvement with the network of neighborhood associations.

**City Grants:** Jerry reported that NWONA did not submit a grant request because the main project we explored, a drinking fountain at the Mad-Tom Park, proved too expensive and logistically challenging. Steve and Jerry both did a lot of legwork to investigate options. Erica suggested that we plan something more fiscally conservative and easier to implement in advance of next year's grants announcement. Jerry pointed out that there may not be grants available next year pending the outcome of the City's budget.

**Village Building Convergence:** Erica reported that some volunteers for this summer's Village Building Convergence had asked if NWONA might be interested in being involved with a VBC project. Erica commented that although the City has not been receptive to our ideas of a covered area at Mad-Tom Park, we still have places where we need more proper benches and tables in a few sections, and perhaps those would be good projects to do in conjunction with the VBC. The group suggested that a VBC representative come to the next meeting.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be held on Monday, April 2. Erica noted that it will be spring break for the local schools and she would be absent.

The meeting was adjourned shortly after 8 p.m.