

Belltown Community Council
General Meeting
Wednesday, September 21, 2011

1. Call to Order

Motion to call to order was made and seconded. President Campbell called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM.

2. Neighborhood Reports

a. Belltown Citizens on Patrol - Gina Alexander:

- i. Had a good walk last night.
- ii. Doing one walk per week.
- iii. Next walk Tuesday at 7 PM.
- iv. Have been doing early morning walks.

b. P-Patch - Elizabeth Campbell:

- i. Lead mitigation at the cottages is complete. They are primed and half-painted.
- ii. Please come help paint this weekend, 9 - 4. Come for an hour or three.

3. Disaster Preparedness

Matt Loar proposed creating a BCC committee to prepare a neighborhood disaster plan. Motion was made and seconded and passed by unanimous consent.

4. NATS - Christa Dumpys, Department of Neighborhoods

- a. The City held a Neighborhood Action Team Seattle meeting last month. It was attended by Deputy Mayor Smith and representatives from City Light, Parks, and the Police Department. The representatives did a night walk of the neighborhood last Monday. They will have internal meeting next week and prepare concrete work plan. This is 3-6 month effort. The LEAD program is part of this effort as well.
- b. Question from floor: what exactly is the problem being addressed? Answer: Open-air drug market, personal assaults, defecation and sleeping in P-Patch.
- c. Belltown has a high concentration of human services agencies. The head of the Human Services Department did night walk with some human services providers.
- d. City Light is also moving forward with LED light conversion, which Steve Krimm will speak about later.
- e. Question from floor about the history of NATS. NATS is a program that began under the Nickels administration.
- f. NATS is engaging SDOT's Urban Forestry division to get trees trimmed.

5. Seattle City Light - Steve Krimm

- a. After the Matt Hale incident, City Light came out and discovered 36 lights out in

vicinity the vicinity, which have now been repaired.

- b. Please report malfunctioning lights by calling 206-684-7056 or using the form on the SCL website. Have the seven-digit number from the pole ready.
- c. City Light does not trim vegetation on arterial streets. SDOT is responsible for those trees. SDOT has committed to trimming trees throughout Belltown in November.
- d. Many trees in Belltown are not ideal species, and grow low, dense canopies that block streetlights.
- e. City Light just got funding for adding more LED lights in Belltown, which should be completed in December. 164 lights in total will be replaced.

6. Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion - Lisa Dogart

- a. Over 3 years of planning have finally culminated in the rollout of this program in October. It grew out of statements made by Captain Brown at a public safety meeting that the police could not simply arrest the way out of the problems in Belltown.
- b. The idea is based on successful programs in other countries.
- c. They are testing the referral protocols this week.
- d. Program scheduled to two years then be evaluated, including cost/benefit analysis.
- e. Putting together a focus group in October. Already did focus group with police officers, made changes and did training to educate officers on the nature of the program.
- f. Passing around clipboard to sign up for focus group, but only 12 people will be selected.
- g. Not all offenders are eligible - those offenders who have violent history, are part of organized crime or are dealing for profit will be excluded.
- h. The program is privately funded by the Ford Foundation and other groups at 1 million per year.
- i. The program should serve 100-120 people per year.
- j. There is an advisory Board including the Belltown Community Council, Belltown Citizens on Patrol, and the Belltown Business Association. It meets bi-weekly.
- k. This is a pilot program. It won't eliminate the problem, but hopefully will demonstrate effectiveness and can be scaled up.
- l. An offender may be offered referral to LEAD as alternative to jail. If they accept, they will be taken directly there and complete an intake assessment.
- m. Offenders arrested for drug activity as well as prostitution are eligible.
- n. The program identifies factors leading to criminal activity, and identify reasonable steps to address them.

- o. The service provider is able to terminate services if participant is not making progress.
- p. The Prosecuting Attorney has discretion to file charges even if the offender has been referred to LEAD.
- q. The Drug Market Initiative which was effective at 23rd & Union is not designed for a large-scale problem like in Belltown, and assumes offenders have ties to the community, which is generally not the case with offenders in Belltown.
- r. Question from floor about the philosophy of "harm reduction" and whether low-cost housing contributes to the problem. Harm reduction is an approach that does not make assistance conditional on completely cessation of harmful behaviors.
- s. LEAD is a pilot program that will be aggressively studied for effectiveness. Everyone is dissatisfied with the status quo.
- t. Question from floor about details and location of services. Depends on individual. Volume of people receiving services in Belltown should not increase as a result of LEAD. Some may already be housed in Belltown. Housing, job placement, and addiction treatment will be the most common services provided.
- u. Question about location in Belltown. The Evergreen Reach sobering center will be where offenders will be taken by police.
- v. Question about re-offenders. The police and prosecuting attorney still have all tools available previously. Charges can still be filed.
- w. Question about self-referral or community referral. Self-referral is not allowed, as there is too much potential for abuse. This is a public- safety program, not a human services program. A small fraction of resources will be available to police for "social contact" referrals, where an arrest is not required.
- x. Question about referral process. Is it based on probability of success? No, it is based on offender's amenability to trying it. Officers generally have prior knowledge of offenders and are generally screening people out instead of screening people in.
- y. Question about intake process. The social service provider will do a rapid, clinical assessment. Service provider can reject candidates and will alert police, who will handle as normal arrest.
- z. Question about police participation. Police have to run protocol for referral. Participation is not optional, but limited to two squads, not all officers in precinct.
- aa. Question about proportion of population eligible. Approximately half of arrests could result in referral.

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made and seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 8:53 PM.