

# Neighbors of Belknap Lookout Board Meeting

Monday February 8, 2020

6:30 pm on Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84768261679?pwd=dURQczVTcFlzMCt5Z3FScFh6MkhpZz09>

**Need to connect by phone? Dial by your location**

**+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)**

Meeting ID: 847 6826 1679

Passcode: 192712

**Mission:** To advocate for and enhance the quality of life in the Belknap community.

**Vision:** To be a vibrant, diverse and desirable place to live in Grand Rapids.

**Public Space Goals:** Improving access down Belknap hill; Hastings Connector & Linear Park; Better Pedestrian Connections.

**Add'l Priorities:** Social Connections; Active in the Neighborhood; Voices Heard in Local Gov't.

## Agenda

1. Call to order, introductions, and additions to agenda
2. Strategic Plan Introduction
  - a. Why – Kara
  - b. Overview – Ellie
  - c. Scheduling - Elianna
3. Strategic Plan Context – Housing Next Presentation, Ryan Kilpatrick
4. Vote to Support Local Declaration of Racism as a Public Health Crisis
5. Administrative Items
  - a. Approve CDBG Application
  - b. Approve January Minutes
  - c. Approve 6 Month Budget
6. Miscellaneous & Public Comment
7. Adjournment

**2021 Board Meeting Schedule, 2nd MONDAY of each month, 6:30 pm, SAME LOG IN ABOVE**

Mar 8, 2021 06:30 PM

Apr 12, 2021 06:30 PM

May 10, 2021 06:30 PM

Jun 14, 2021 06:30 PM

Jul 12, 2021 06:30 PM (may cancel)

Aug 9, 2021 06:30 PM

Sep 13, 2021 06:30 PM

Oct 11, 2021 06:30 PM

Nov 8, 2021 06:30 PM (may not accommodate online if at Coit Elementary)

Dec 13, 2021 06:30 PM

# Meeting Details

## 1. Call to order, introductions, and additions to agenda

## 2. Strategic Plan Introduction

### a. Why – Kara

Strategic planning is a management activity that is used to set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, ensure that employees and other stakeholders are working toward common goals. It is a way to establish agreement around intended outcomes/results and assess and adjust the organization's direction in response to a changing environment. The strategic plan does not seek to describe the day to day operations, but instead sets goals that those operations should work towards.

In essence strategic planning is a change plan. It is an opportunity to evaluate where we are, where we want to be, and make a plan to get there.

Strategic planning should be done every 4 years with annual updates and revisions to the plan. Additionally, strategic planning should be embedded into everyday operations and should guide decision making for the organization.

This year, in addition to the strategic plan we will be developing a policy for strategic plan expectations moving forward to ensure the momentum of the work that we do here on the plan.

### b. Overview – Ellie (See Strategic Plan Agenda for more details)

2 weekends, one each in Feb & Mar, 1-3:30 pm Sat & Sun, all include breaks

#### Day 1:

Introductions

Objective: Why are we strategic planning

Community Standards

Core Questions

Mission, vision, values, and mandates

Questions, follow up, overview of next session

#### Day 2:

Roll call, review of community standards

Assessing Strengths and Weaknesses Overview

Review received SWOT analysis results

Funding Analysis

Identifying Critical issues

Questions, follow up, overview of next session

#### Day 3:

Roll call, review of community standards, overview of last planning session

Setting measurable goals and objectives

Questions, follow up, overview of next session

Day 4:

Roll call, review of community standards, overview SMART goals

Community discussion of each value's suggested goals from breakout sessions

Community discussion of strategies for agreed upon goals

Discussion of next steps/follow up needed/assignment of sub committees if needed

### c. Scheduling – Elianna

Pick Feb weekend

Pick Mar weekend

May our GVSU BSW intern attend?

Keep an eye out for the SWOT survey to be sent after the meeting and fill out between now and first session.

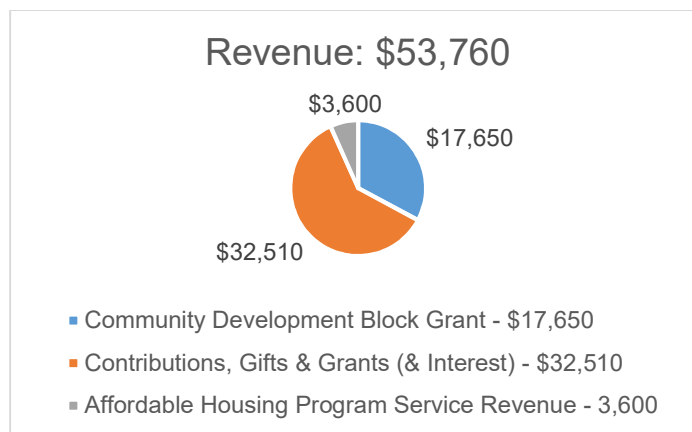
### 3. Strategic Plan Context – Housing Next Presentation, Ryan Kilpatrick

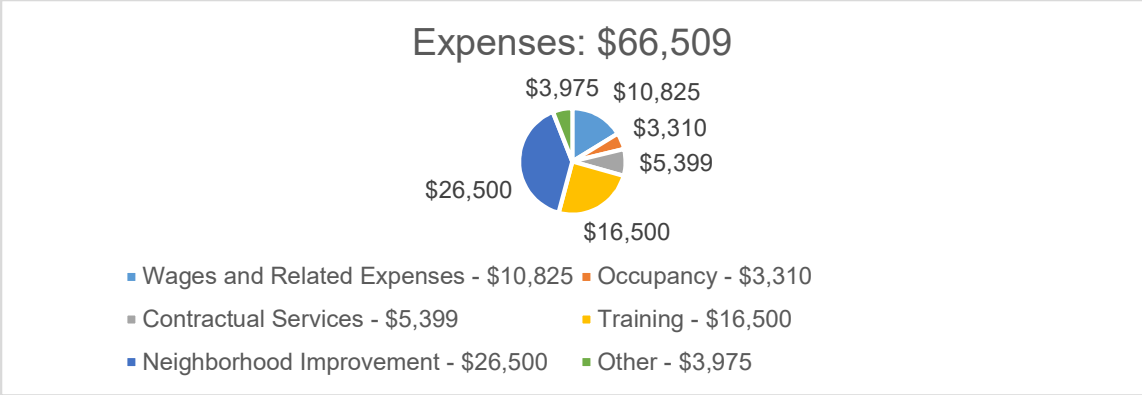
### 4. Vote to Support Local Declaration of Racism as a Public Health Crisis

Governor Whitmer has declared Racism to be a Public Health Crisis in the state. There will be a campaign to introduce local declarations at the City and County. NOBL's Racial Equity Committee is asking the NOBL board to issue support for those declarations because, as we discussed last spring: The population of residents in Grand Rapids' Belknap Lookout neighborhood is quite diverse but you can easily find disparate impact and disproportionality in many facets of their lives based on race. For instance, 31% of the general population here owns their own home, but that rate drops to 24% for Latinos and only 3% for Blacks. Safe, stable housing is just one of many key determinants of health.

### 5. Administrative Items

- a. **Approve CDBG Application** – this is our annual grant application to the City for our main source of funding and they look for the board to approve it.
- b. **Approve January Minutes** – (see below). Financials will be presented quarterly.
- c. **Approve 6 Month Budget** –





## Neighbors of Belknap Lookout Meeting Minutes

### Monday, January 11, 2021, Zoom Meeting

<b>Members Present:</b>	Robin Benton	Amy Gautraud	Loren Sturuss
	Dan Miller	Jon Swets	Kara Harrison Gates
	Ellie Walborn-Henry	Ayanfe Jamison	Missy Brown
<b>Staff Present:</b>	Elianna Bootzin (Executive Director)		
<b>Guests Present:</b>	Alan Otis	Marshall Grate	Chris Swank (GVSU)

1. Loren called the meeting to order at 6:35, there were no additions to agenda.
  
2. The Board discussed a proposed letter to rescind the Boards support of the 614 Fairview project.
  - a. Alan described the rationale for the letter: the proposal submitted to the City Planning Commission was substantially different from the one that the Board previously approved because it incorporated 600 Fairview on which it proposed to build a 6 unit structure. Alan noted that the Development had specifically rejected that plan because it was incompatible with the Area Specific Plan (ASP).
  - b. Marshall: Not only does the revised plan violate the ASP, but by presenting it to the Planning Commission after the Development Committee had denied its approval, the developer “went around” the Board. Moreover this particular developer has a record of not completing projects that he begins. Failure to rescind approval would “shred” the process of getting input from the neighbors and would undermine the credibility of the Board and the Development Committee. Elianna characterized it as submitting after engagement knowing there would be opposition.
  - c. Kara: The developer does have a reputation for failing to complete projects in the Belknap neighborhood and the revised plan fails to conform to the one approved by the Development Committee and the Board, but the original plan was approved by both and so the letter should not rescind the letter of support but just make clear that the Board does not approve of the changes made to that plan.
  - d. After further discussion, the Board approved a motion to have Alan and Kara revise the letter to indicate the Board continues to support the original plan for 614 Fairview but does not support the altered proposal which includes 600 Fairview.

3. The Board approved the Minutes of the December 14 meeting and the Financial Reports. Elianna noted that she has only been working 20 hours per week rather than 30 so some of the CDBG funds went to other NOBL projects.
4. Jon announced he was leaving the Board. The Board asked Loren to have Loretta contact Jon about his reason for leaving and perhaps to persuade him to remain on the Board.
5. The Board elected officers for 2021.
  - a. Kara is Chair.
  - b. Ellie is Vice Chair.
  - c. Dan is Secretary.
  - d. Amy is Treasurer.
  - e. The Board thanked Loren for his service as Board President in 2020.
6. The Board adopted the Revised Conflict of Interest Policy.
  - a. We are not subject to the Federal Open Meetings Act.
  - b. The budget includes purchasing liability insurance for Board members. It is not legally required but it is good policy.
7. The Board discussed developing a Strategic Plan for 2021.
  - a. It is important include the Racial Equity Committee (REC) in our plan.
  - b. Robin noted the REC has a grant to provide anti-racism training for 24 individuals including other neighborhoods in Grand Rapids. The REC will meet on Wednesday (1/13). He is also involved in a campaign to have Kent County and Grand Rapids reiterate the Governor's declaration that Racism is a Public Health Crisis especially given the racially disparate impacts of the current pandemic.
  - c. Robin feels NOBL seems most concerned with approving development projects. The Strategic Plan should focus on transforming the Belknap Lookout neighborhood and NOBL as an organization. As the neighborhood gentrifies, we will lose CDBG funds which are allocated to low income neighborhoods. If we emphasize racial equity, we will qualify for funds that are newly available from the Kellogg Foundation and other organizations promoting racial equity.
  - d. The Executive Committee and Robin will meet 1/17 to set the agenda for Strategic Planning. We can also explore a better decision-making process.
  - e. Robin: Ayanfe should also participate because she is a Sociocracy training for the Circle Forward organization. Ayanfe explained consent-based governance – giving everyone a turn to speak, and making sure no one wants to block the proposed action – it is easier than consensus since someone can disagree while accepting the course of action rather than everyone having to support.
  - f. Kara: The Strategic Plan meeting should be open to anyone on the Board. It will be a three hour meeting with a break in the middle. Elianna will send a Doodle.
  - g. Elianna: We can discuss the Mission in more depth in the Strategic Planning session rather than spending time on it tonight.
8. The Board discussed the 2021 Budget.

- a. The Board will postpone full approval of the 2021 budget until after the Strategic Plan meeting.
- b. The Board approved the purchase of Liability Insurance for Board members.
- c. Elianna will provide a more detailed proposal of what is included under “Contractual Services” at the next Board meeting.

9. The Board voted to adjourn at 8:10.

Respectfully submitted, Daniel R. Miller, Board Secretary

## Regular Report Contents

### Public Safety - [www.crimemapping.com](http://www.crimemapping.com) last 4 weeks:

Distributed 2000 masks from Kent County Health Dept. at Creston Plaza.

**Development:** The Development Committee saw the Lafayette and Fairbanks Apartments for the 2<sup>nd</sup> time at their February Meeting. It is coming along well and seeking another Land Bank extension.



BuildingEye showed an application to demolish 725 Bond Ave NW. The City Commission approved Union Suites (600 block Coit).

Our submitted letter for 600, 606 and 614 Fairview is below (omitted letterhead as well as the previously sent letter/image that were included in the Jan packet). The hearing at Planning Commission is Th Feb 11 during their 1 pm meeting.

January 27, 2021

TO: Grand Rapids Planning Commission

FROM: NOBL Board

RE: Proposed SLU for 600/606/614 Fairview

We affirm the support for the originally planned 2 building condo project @ 614 Fairview & the rehabilitation of 606 Fairview as seen in the letter (attached) of January 20, 2020 (inadvertently dated January 20, 2019).

We do NOT, however, support the 6 unit single building portion of the SLU project proposed at the Southern end, a/k/a 600 Fairview.

This developer, on three occasions, came before the NOBL Development Committee with a variety of concepts and was rejected each time. This entire SLU is in the TR (Traditional Family Housing) context district of the Belknap ASP, which dictates a maximum of 3 units/building.

The rejections were principally based on that fact.

Thank you for considering the neighborhood’s input.

Relayed by Elianna Bootzin, Executive Director ; photo/letter below were sent to the GR Planning Commission 1/20/20.