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**YESLER TERRACE  
CITIZEN'S REVIEW COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

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**MEETING NO.:** 2

**LOCATION:** Yesler Community Center  
917 East Yesler Way

**DATE:** Wednesday, November 22, 2006, 5:00 pm

**ATTENDEES:**

**Committee Members**

Norman Rice, Chair  
 Aregawi Abiraha  
 Kira Thomsen-Cheek  
(alternate for Elise Chayet)  
 Herold Eby (alternate)  
 John Fox  
 James Kelly  
 Timothy Leary  
 John Littel  
 M. Michelle Mattox  
 Mary McCumber

Quang Nguyen  
 Kristin O'Donnell  
 Father Hoang Phuong  
 Rick Hooper (alternate  
for Adrienne Quinn)  
 Michael Ramos  
 Sue Sherbrooke  
 George Staggers  
 Sue Taoka  
 Donya Williamson  
 Norma Zavala

**SHA Staff**

Judi Carter  
 Virginia Felton  
 Linda Hall  
 Judith Kilgore  
 Marty LaMar  
 Ayan Musse  
 Leslie Stewart  
 Tom Tierney  
 Ellen Ziontz

**Facilitator**

Marcia Wagoner & Yvonne Kraus, Pacific Rim Resources

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**I. Call to Order and Welcome**

Chair Rice called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. He said that the December Yesler Terrace Citizen's Review Committee meeting will be cancelled.

Rice introduced meeting facilitator Marcia Wagoner of PRR. Committee members introduced themselves noting their agency or community affiliations.

**II. Discussion of the Concept "Social Equity"**

Wagoner stated that Committee members, staff and members of the public have been asked to complete two cards which pose the questions: (1) *What is the most important treasure about Yesler Terrace today?* and (2) *What is your hope for the new project?* Wagoner said that responses have been broadly categorized by subject and posted on the wall at the front of the room and she briefly reviewed the responses submitted. Using the responses as a basis, she said that Committee members will break into smaller groups for approximately 30 minutes to discuss the important aspects of social equity and to develop a group definition of this concept. Afterward, one member from each group will be asked to report on the main points discussed by their group, highlighting consensus and/or divergent views. Wagoner read the two definitions of social equity provided in the packet material prepared by staff also for use as a starting point for the discussion.

The Committee divided into three groups and discussion took place. Audience discussion was facilitated by Kraus. A representative of each group reported their findings to the Committee. O'Donnell stated that her group found the University of Quebec definition in the packet material to be satisfactory, except the phrase "*access to employment*" should be changed to "*access to economic opportunity*".

Taoka reported that a point raised by her group is the dual meaning of the term "equity"; it is used to indicate wealth and ownership, but it can also mean fairness. In the context of the later meaning, important aspects of social equity are: choice and opportunity in housing and employment; that a community does not have a sense of segregation from adjacent communities and methods are identified to bring communities together;

what is good for the community now must be beneficial to the community for several generations; and ensuring employment and business opportunities for community members and local small businesses in order to create stronger communities.

Fox reported that his group used the first definition of social equity in the packet created by Rice as a starting point. He said each member of his group shared ideas about the meaning of social equity with regard to the redevelopment of Yesler Terrace which include: an underlying commitment to continue to serve those with 0 – 30% annual median income; no net loss of on-site housing units; and preserving diversity. Other questions and issues that were raised by the group that need to be considered in redeveloping Yesler Terrace are: how will adjacent communities be affected and integrated?; what will happen to the network of services and how can these services be preserved?; achieving a mixed income community may presuppose the creation of higher density housing on the site; all development options should be explored, including the rehabilitation of the existing structures; and all amenities within the community should be shared equally, including the integration of social classes within the site.

Kraus summarized the main points that were raised by the audience discussion with regard to social equity.

- All affected parties need to be involved in the decision making.
- Cultural and economic equal opportunities need to be provided for all residents.
- No displacement of current Yesler Terrace residents should occur for those that want to stay.
- Transportation and access to downtown should be easy.
- On-site amenities need to be preserved.
- Hope VI funding opportunities needs to be addressed.
- Tools need to be provided to overcome the historic barriers in the community such as race and income.
- The challenges of living in a mixed income community need to be addressed.
- Allow current home occupation businesses to continue.

Wagoner stated that there appears to be some consistency within the discussions so far between the Committee groups and the audience noting the key themes of choice and opportunity, not dividing the haves and have nots, and overcoming the barriers within the community to achieve social equity. At the request of Wagoner, Committee members shared additional thoughts that may not have been covered above.

Rice: With regard to the University of Quebec definition, the notion of choice and opportunity is missing. Economic opportunity is tied to the concept of social equity and is as important as choice in housing.

Mattox: Home occupations should be encouraged in order to provide economic opportunities to residents who cannot afford to lease commercial spaces.

Nguyen: Create mechanisms for residents to take advantage of economic opportunities as many do not have the means to do so. Given the means, many residents will be able to increase their income levels.

O'Donnell: Through the redevelopment process, do not lose or forget what is currently working at Yesler Terrace, which is primarily providing a bridge for people in need.

Sherbrooke: Don't lose sight of the generational aspect of social equity.

Taoka: Provide mechanisms for residents to lift themselves out of poverty. Residents need to be involved throughout the process in order to establish a broad base of needs.

Hooper: It is important to dream big when dealing with critical issues such as the provision of affordable housing. Yesler Terrace is an ideal opportunity to incorporate all of the desired elements of a master planned community that have been difficult to achieve with other projects. Explore on-site one-for-one replacement housing and the provision of family housing.

Leary: Establish a better sense of what is, and what is not, working. It will be difficult to incorporate aspects of social equity that have been discussed into the redevelopment process, such as shared decision-making and shared amenities, unless social, cultural and economic barriers are addressed.

Fox: Echoes O'Donnell's comment regarding the retention of what is working at Yesler Terrace, such as the public amenities and services, which should be the foundation for building on. Mixed income and density are highly charged words that can carry different meanings. For example, mixed-income housing can be positive if people of different income levels are living in a community and sharing the amenities; it can be negative if it used as an excuse to redevelop an area which results in the segregation of people within a community. Will the objective of creating a mixed-income community be achieved if it results in on-site segregation? A comparison of costs of modernization vs. renovation should be examined.

Eby: When people of different classes come together to achieve common goals, everyone benefits.

Thomsen-Cheek: No matter what opportunities and services are available, some people will not be able to cross the bridge due to extenuating circumstances.

Father Phoung: People take advantage of opportunities that are available, such as public housing, which can enable them to lift themselves out of poverty and make greater contributions to their communities.

Wagoner posed the question, "What does success look like five to ten years into the future?" She said that from the discussion above, some success indicators may include: continuing a diverse community both culturally and economically; a community that thinks big and pushes the boundaries of what has been accomplished in the past; and no demarcation of housing so that housing in Yesler Terrace is not defined by income. Committee members offered the following responses with regard to measures of success:

Williamson: Turnover should occur in the rental portion of the community because residents are able to take advantage of the public assistance offered, such as housing and other amenities, and services and eventually increase their incomes.

O'Donnell: A range of support is provided to accommodate a variety of needs of the residents.

McCumber: Children thrive in school and have bright futures.

Mattox: A variety of small businesses exist within the community.

Rice: If home occupation businesses are not allowed, commercial areas are provided that would serve as an incubator for small business enterprise, perhaps in partnership with community colleges.

Based on tonight's discussion, Wagoner stated that as a next step her firm will develop a definition of social equity for the Committee, as well as a set of performance measures to be available at the next meeting.

Rice summarized the main points the discussion tonight: (1) This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, so get it right; (2) Identify what aspects of Yesler Terrace are working well and don't lose site of them; (3) Maintain the bridge to opportunity that Yesler Terrace helps to provide; (4) Identify common community goals; and (5) identify and maintain a list of questions that arise from these meetings that the Committee needs to analyze and/or answer.

Members of the audience were given the opportunity to comment on the discussion tonight.

James McDowell stated that he would like to participate on the Committee. He said that with his background and experience he feels he could provide a valuable contribution to the Committee.

John McClaren stated that he feels success needs to be viewed not just in terms of Yesler Terrace, but in terms of the larger community.

Steve Schlenker stated that the only constant is change and this important to build in mechanisms for the community to grow and change into the future.

Peggy Wolf stated that she is concerned about gentrification occurring in Seattle and the impact on the overall availability of low-income units when public housing communities are redeveloped into mixed income communities. She said that she does not understand why SHA has not committed to no net loss of on-site low-income housing units. She said that she does not agree with the notion that a mixed-income community is a utopian community. Wolf said that she feels more Yesler Terrace residents should be on this Committee.

**III. Other Discussion Topics**

In response to a question from Fox, Kilgore said that tours of the Yesler Terrace community will be scheduled in the future. Rice noted that additional tours may be necessary to review the layout of the community in the context of the Committee's discussion.

**IV. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:47 p.m.