

**University Neighbors Neighborhood Association (UNNA)
Minutes of Regular Meeting: March 11, 2021
Minutes prepared by Paul Bloede**

Attendance:

City Councilman Paul Kashmann, Katie Fisher, Steve Fisher, Sean Uyeda, Paul Bloede, Matt Cirulli, Stephanie O'Malley (of DU), Fatima Rezaie (of DU)

Times and Dates: This meeting began at 6:09pm and was adjourned at 7:30pm. The next monthly UNNA meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 8, 2021 from 6:00pm to 7:30pm, via zoom.

February Minutes Approval: Paul's initial version of the February 2021 minutes was unanimously approved, without the suggestion of any corrections.

Treasurer's Report: UNNA bank balance remains at \$864.90.

I. Topics Addressed by City Councilman Paul Kashmann

(1) Yale Corridor Study

The City has released its plan. Public comment ended March 10th. Councilman Kashmann favors the plan. He said, in particular, the extensive planned improvements along Colorado Boulevard are needed and welcome.

Later in the meeting, after the Councilman had left, this topic was further discussed. Two UNNA members mentioned agreeing with the Councilman's comments, but adding, in their submitted feedback, in time, to the City, that they wish bike lanes along Yale would be eliminated, considering the plan's creation of new bike lanes: along Vassar, from Josephine to Jackson, and along Amherst, from Nielsen Lane east all the way well past the Ross-University Hills public library. Both members included in their comments that the emphasis on Yale bike lane would negatively impact the driving experience. One member went further by specifying poor sight angles and curves and lane dimension/lane crossing potentially by vehicle issues, both in general, and in conjunction with the enhanced bike lane, to potentially cause head-on vehicle collisions or other automobile driving problems. Some additional comments on the portion of Yale west of Colorado Boulevard may have been submitted by that UNNA member, as well.

(2) Concept of the City Educating Homeless People about the Need for Better Budgeting and More Realistic Spending Habits

Councilman Kashmann praised city employee Jay Salas, of the Office of Financial Empowerment, as providing excellent education along these lines. Kashmann suggested we invite him to speak to one of our UNNA meetings.

(3) Creation of a Rental Registry

In conjunction with passage of reform in the rules capping numbers of unrelated people living in the same housing situation, there has been an emphasis within CCD and also INC, in terms of

creating a rental registry. This would let CCD know what properties are rented out, by whom, and to whom, including how many renters. Councilman Kashmann informed us that City Council President Gilmore is very actively pursuing creating a rental registry. She's created an initial draft, which she has successfully shared already with City Council and with various stakeholders. Kashmann expects a registry to be created in the near future. Kashmann suggested there is a helpful Q&A sheet on this issue, that Gilmore has issued or approved. He will email that to Paul B, for him to distribute to the rest of UNNA.

(4) Statement by Ohio Representative Jim Jordan (Republican) on Floor of House of Representatives, that, Along with Other Cities, Denver Has Defunded Its Police, in Denver's case, by \$55 million

Councilman Kashmann disputes the accuracy of Rep. Jordan's statement, and wishes more context would have been provided by Jordan. Due to the financial squeeze on CCD due to covid, there is less hiring at police academy and more police leaving the dept than joining, so perhaps naturally, with no aim at reducing force effectiveness, \$20 million less may be allocated to the police department than in the prior year.

Once again, Kashmann emphasized two existing laudable DPD programs: Correspondence Program, where other professionals join police in appropriate situations, and STAR Program, where, in appropriate cases, only other professionals are sent out, with no police officer being sent. A new program is a Homelessness Impact Team (unclear whether within DPD or without) which addresses problem situations involving individual or multiple homeless people outside of the traditional lock them up overnight type of approach; provides a more positive and effective approach to the situation, instead.

(5) UNNA Member's Building She Runs Being Frequently Monetarily Damaged or Otherwise Trespassed by the Same Homeless Man

A UNNA member had said she had had success by now, working with DPD on this issue, but Councilman Kashmann suggested she might be very much helped by contacting Christopher Conner, the city's head of homeless outreach. Kashmann had extremely high praise for Conner, and suggested any further needs the UNNA member had on this issue would likely be well fulfilled if she would attempt to get Conner involved.

(6) Rumor on NextDoor of Large Regional RNO, to include UNNA's Territory, attempting to be formed

Councilman Kashmann is aware of the idea of large regional RNO's being pushed, but isn't clear any benefit would outweigh the costs, including in the form of extra time commitments being placed on the people who currently run the traditionally-sized current RNOs, such as UNNA. Kashmann said Brian Wilson (his title was failed to be noted by the author of these minutes) would be a resource should UNNA wish to pursue this issue further.

(7) Proposed Buchtel Boulevard Study and Improvements

Technically two UNNA members live alongside the portion of Buchtel Boulevard that lies within UNNA's territory. One of them was present at tonight's meeting. He said he has talked recently with a city planner, and there was a public meeting recently. Already being proposed is just re-paving and bike lane improvements. The UNNA member said such work is entirely inadequate and his and other public feedback about the corridor continues to be essentially ignored.

Councilman Kashmann stated he has heard this UNNA member's concerns, and will be in touch with him further. A big issue Kashmann has already been addressing with city officials regarding Buchtel Boulevard, is their lack of incorporating University of Denver into their decision making. Although Kashmann stressed there has been a lack of funds to proceed with his long-advocated extensive study of the corridor, he said he will pay strong attention to the UNNA member's and DU's concern, about getting their voices heard with respect to actual planning for the corridor.

Kashmann suggested ultimately, considerable momentum in the UNNA member's direction, and considerable extra hearing of his concerns, might all be generated if on his own, rather than through Kashmann, the UNNA member contact Mayor Hancock's office, writing a well-written letter either to the mayor or his chief of staff.

(8) City and County of Denver's Financial Situation as Affected by Covid

Although a UNNA member stated it seems like every November for the past several years, on the CCD ballot has been either tax increases or debt increases to increase funding for CCD for various and general purposes, those ballot initiatives always 100% passing, whereas state initiatives on the same ballots, such as for transportation or education, often fail. Therefore, the UNNA member wondered why Councilman Kashmann had mentioned several times throughout tonight's meeting that CCD has major financial issues currently. Kashmann said, despite the ballot measures, the covid pandemic has hit the city hard enough that it can't return to normal spending levels likely for two years.

II. Revision of Bylaws. Tabled until next meeting (for various reasons)

III. Discussion with DU Representatives Stephanie O'Malley and Fatima Rezaie

(1) Background

Stephanie O'Malley is DU's Associate Vice Chancellor for Government Relations and Community Affairs. Fatima Rezaie reports to Stephanie and has the title of Project Manager, within the Office of Government Relations and Community Affairs.

A UNNA member informed Stephanie and Fatima that UNNA is frequently 1st contacted by neighbors/residents/students regarding matters ultimately involving DU but isn't in a position to sufficiently help them. There is also little time in the Quarterly DU Good Neighbors Meetings for solicitation of UNNA's opinions on matters, even little time for general Questions and Answers. Bottom-line is UNNA would like to be more involved in DU decision making and communications.

(2) Response by Stephanie and Fatima

(a) They want us to schedule a time for some of us to meet with them, to further hash out and develop a solution to our concerns.

(b) They would like us to promote to our residents events at DU such as tours of the new buildings, concerts at the Newman Center, and various one-time special events, even though events are limited now, in terms of general public participation, due to rules resulting from the pandemic.

(d) They encourage us to frequently check out their website: <http://www.du.edu/comm-govt>

(e) We found out one of our concerns they are already working on: better wayfaring signage throughout the DU campus.

IV. Additional Discussion on DU Topics, after Stephanie and Fatima Left Meeting

- (1) Events at DU are still limited to 50 people due to CCD covid rules
- (2) Fisher Center playground redone.
- (3) Due to covid, there will likely be no high school graduations hosted by DU at the Ritchie Center this year, eliminating the congestion, disruption, and parking issues those graduations typically cause.

V. Police News

- (1) A few more burglaries in our (or the overall Police District 3) territory have been occurring, versus normal levels of burglary.
- (2) District 3 is part of the overall city-wide police and other agencies major effort being further developed now, all to address the issue of highway or city street racing by vehicles.

VI. INC News (Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation)

- (1) Annual awards ceremony/dinner will just be a zoom meeting.
- (2) We did successfully pay our annual dues.
- (3) The UNNA member who is active in INC says she will have more information on INC at next month's UNNA meeting.

VII. Zoning Issues

- (1) The same owner, of two adjacent properties in the 2400 block of South Lafayette Street, has been denied his request to combine 2 lots into 1. However, he has been granted a compromise semi-variance, which allows him to extend one of his back yard buildings 8 feet towards his other lot.