

Communication to ELi from Raymond D. Vlasin on CoNP, Aug. 6, 2021

Hello Alice:

This note is in response to our recent discussion about the Council of Neighborhood Presidents (CoNP). As you know, the CoNP has been an informal group attached to the Mayor's office for years. Some of the representatives to the CoNP have felt that the Council has not been as helpful to the well-being of East Lansing and its neighborhoods as it could be. The Mayor's office has scheduled its meetings, largely suggested the agenda items to be addressed, shared the agenda a day or two before the meeting, and conducted the Council meetings, always providing the opportunity for those neighborhood and condominium presidents or representatives participating to share information and make suggestions.

At one of the Council meetings, over a year ago when Mayor Beier and Mayor Pro Tem Stephens were in office, the discussion arose about ways to help the Council become more active, more independent and more of a helpful force for the betterment of East Lansing and its neighborhoods. Mayor Beier and Mayor Pro Tem Stephens both encouraged the CoNP members to propose a new framework for the CoNP. Building on that encouragement, CoNP members created an Ad Hoc Work Group to research and develop a possible draft framework for a CoNP centered on neighborhoods and condominiums. Members of the Ad Hoc Work Group were Anne Hill, Hawk Nest Neighborhood Association; Barbara McMillan, Chartwell Condominium Association, Ralph Monsma, Pinecrest Neighborhood Association; Ruth Stump, Red Cedar Neighborhood Association; and Ray Vlasin, Harrison Meadows Neighborhood Association.

The Work Group met on March 13, 2020 and discussed the history and background of the CoNP. Then it addressed possible items that could be a part of a draft framework for a newly centered CoNP with the capabilities sought. Input was taken from each of the Work Group members and a draft framework was started. A first draft of a possible framework was developed and circulated among Work Group members on March 18 for review and modification. Subsequent revised drafts were circulated among Work Group members for further improvement. Key elements of the draft include CoNP Commitment, General Purpose, Functions, Organizational Structure, and Logistical Arrangements with East Lansing City Government.

The resulting draft document (July 2020) was held because of the pandemic. It will be taken by the temporary Work Group to a future CoNP meeting when all 30 plus E.L. Neighborhood and Condominium associations presidents, chairpersons, or representatives can be invited to attend in person. The draft framework will be explained by the Work Group and all attendees will be asked to provide their views and suggestions, including those from representatives who are unable to attend that meeting.

The CoNP structure, and in fact its larger framework, can be enhanced over time based on experiences obtained in its operation as a CoNP centered on neighborhood and condominium associations. Special attention can be given to adjustments that would increase openness, transparency, diversity, inclusiveness, and engagement from which related structural additions, deletions and other improvements could flow.

I have requested other Work Group members who are receiving this E-mail to please review it and share with you any corrections or improvements in my statement above that are needed. Also, I believe I can say that the other Work Group members and I thank you for the interest ELi has shown in the CoNP. Warm regards. Ray

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