

March 2009

You will note the enthusiasm of our members involving themselves in the Neighborhood Plan update process. There were 20 community leaders present representing the following Filipino organizations:

1. Filipino Community of Seattle, Inc, (FCS)
2. Filipino Chamber of Commerce of the Pacific Northwest
3. Association of Filipino Engineers of Washington (AFEW)
4. Filipino American Educators of Washington (FAEW)
5. TAHANAN Senior and Immigrant Services
6. Filipino Cultural Heritage Society of Washington
7. PAGDIRIWANG
8. IDIC - International Drop-In Center
9. Filipino Domestic Violence Committee
10. UGNAYAN Finance Committee
11. ICHS
12. ANCOP-GAWAD KALINGA
13. Naguillanders of the Pacific Northwest
14. Seattle Bituin Lions Club
15. KAHIRUP of Washington
16. FACES (Filipino American City Employees of Seattle)
17. CENSUS 2010
18. FAPAGOW (Filipino American Political Action Group of Washington)
19. Bataan-Corregidor Survivors Association
20. Filipino American Nurses and Health Care Professionals of Washington

The main input of the group to the update process:

1. The RIZAL (Philippine) VILLAGE project, the properties east of the current Filipino Community Center on MLKING and Juneau, needs a rezone for the erection of a gymnasium, auditorium, Senior Housing and office and store spaces.
DPD staff indicated project is
 - within the urban village and
 - under the neighborhood plan update process - rezoning can be discussed
2. Widening of 37th Street access to the FCS Center
3. The development of the RIZAL PARK which has not been improved.
4. Types of services and goods we want to see in our district, transit stations:
 - Child care
 - Adult care
 - Pet care
 - Baby-sitting
 - Accessible medical services

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- Clinics,
- Family center
- A movie house
- A bowling alley
- Shelters at bus stops,
- Bicycle racks near stations.
- More affordable housing- family, mother-in-law apartments.

Participant question: Why are the new apartments along ML King hardly occupied? Are they too expensive? Are renter qualifications too strict the real needy people won't qualify?

Recreational facilities needed:

- More park spaces for family gatherings are needed
- Indoor facilities for basketball
- facilities for walking and exercise.

To the final question - **will you use the light rail?** MOST SAID YES!

Concerns raised:

- Connectivity to other means of transportation
- fares
- stations far apart
- park and ride accessibility for the handicap
- FINALLY - more meetings with more groups.

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53 Filipino seniors and WWII Veterans, including IDIC Executive Director Sluggo Rigor, Past President of the Filipino Community of Seattle Dolly Castillo, Retired US Army Major Urbano Quijance who is also past FCS President, Commander Amador Montero WWII Filipino Veterans.

Meeting started after the Senior lunch program. Dr. Sebat Tenna, who earlier joined the aerobics session at 11AM, gave an overview of the 2009 Neighborhood Planning update process and the importance of the input from the Filipino community and other under-represented minorities. Mars then conducted the forum using the March Workshop questions.

Highlights:

Question: why did you choose to live and/or start a business or shop in the neighborhood?

- proximity to churches, schools, Asian stores/markets, medical clinics, banks, community center
- easy access to the Sea-Tac Airport and to Downtown Seattle
- affordable housing
- sizeable Filipino population in the neighborhood

Question: What would make this difficult to continue- if the neighborhood becomes crowded with more outsiders coming in?

- The most important housing issue is – why are there so many vacant new apartments built by the government along a whole stretch of ML King?
- Some members have applied and been denied for not having enough income. They ask-if they were built to serve the low-income population, why are they not affordable?

Question: What types of goods, services and employment would you like to see in your neighborhood?

- Covered waiting sheds-protection from frequent rain
- Modern movie house
- A museum
- Fitness gym
- Neighborhood drug store
- Safe walk-ways
- Shopping Mall or Walmart
- "Casino"?
- Available low income housing

The group would like to preserve the many unique Asian restaurants, markets, stores in the neighborhood.

Parks

the group would like to see improvements in the Rizal Park, named after the Philippine National Hero, Dr. Jose Rizal.

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Light Rail

Many would like to use it, especially the direct line to the airport. Some concern expressed regarding how far apart the stations are - where can they ride or exit. Suggestion: orientation free trips for seniors on the trains that are now running test trips on ML King.

Proposed sale of the Van Aselt Elementary school on Beacon Avenue.

Led by ED Sluggo Rigor, the group would like to have access to the half of the property that has a tall building that could serve as housing for the Seniors. IDIC could move its offices and facilities there. Noted that the Latinos "occupied" and were given the school that is now El Centro de la Raza, while the African-Americans did the same with the school on 23rd Avenue-now they have their own Center. Will the government give equal opportunity to the Filipino Seniors under the wing of IDIC?