

Minutes
SW Neighborhood Steering Committee
Tuesday, November 14, 2006
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 5701 Raymond Road
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

SW Steering Committee Members: Ann Barker; Kara Boeldt; Sandy Erickson; Tim Johnson; Douglas Kammann; Joel Kupferberg; Marge Liss; Larry Luther; Tom McKenna; Durrell Ramer; Karen Sielaff; DeKendra Stamps; Lisa Subeck; Bryan Summ

Excused: Ernie Horinek

Absent: Christie Howell-Yrios; Susan Clay

Others: John Whitley; David A. Remmele; Nancy Jackson; Thuy Pham-Remmele; Dale Tessmer; Marlys Miller; Tony Smick; Bob Rettammel; Don & Sheri Rembert; Melvin Bollig; Sam Bronchetti; Marge Hannon Pifer; Dorothy Loehrer; Matt Veldran; Jule Stroick; Archie Nicolette; Linda Horvath; Parisa Ford

I. Welcome

II. Introductions

III. Overview of the Planning Process, Roles, and Timeline

The planning process will focus on strengthening neighborhood connections, identifying issues, and prioritizing strategies. Public input, strategy formation, and preparation of the planning document will occur through February 2007. Steering Committee Members have the primary responsibility of forming a community network between residents, business owners, centers of worship, and non-profit organizations to relay information about the planning process, important issues in the study area, and strategies for those issues. City Staff will serve as a resource to provide technical assistance during the planning process. Community Development Block Grant funds will be available to implement plan recommendations over the next several years.

IV. Status of Planning Activities

A *community services directory* has been compiled to identify what resources are currently available to the study area, where services may be duplicated, and where gaps may exist.

The Center for Democracy in Action, a nonprofit organization that received funding from the City, is conducting the *Meadowood on the Move!* as a separate project in coordination with the Southwest Planning Process. De’Kendra Stamps, Steering Committee member, is one of the three individuals conducting door-to-door interviews with residents in the Balsam-Russett Road areas of the Meadowood Neighborhood Association. The effort focuses on building relationships between newcomers (primarily renters) and long-term residents (primarily homeowners) so that all can work together on an action agenda that they develop. Tim Johnson, steering committee member, is working with De’Kendra on the door-to-door interviews.

To be more responsive to neighborhood issues, the City Madison has setup eight citywide teams comprised of city staff, and in some cases non-city staff, that work directly within neighborhoods.

Building inspectors, neighborhood police officers, public health nurses, and other pertinent city staff meet bimonthly to discuss major trends occurring within the southwest neighborhoods, better coordinate municipal services, and identify any issues to improve delivery of city services. In addition to city staff, other important stakeholders such as district alderpersons, community center staff, school officials, and probation and parole officers frequently attend the meetings. The SW Neighborhood Resource Team meets the second Thursday of January, March, May, July, September, November at 1:00 at the Wisconsin Youth & Family Center, 1201 McKenna Blvd.

Planned projects in the study area include the remodel of the Meadowood Shopping Center and the redevelopment of the Timber Lodge restaurant site.

V. Review/Discussion of Neighborhood Issues

Using the responses of residents to questionnaires and interviews, City staff identified the following eight broad issues in the study area:

1. Neighborhood/Personal Safety
2. Housing Preservation, Maintenance, and Stability
3. Circulation/Connection for Pedestrians, Bicyclists, Vehicles, and Busses within the Neighborhood and to Destination Points
4. Strengthening Community Interactions/Networks/Alliances
5. Physical Appearance/Places/Image
6. Parks, Open Space and Recreation
7. Business Attraction, Retention and Employment

These eight issues were presented to the Steering Committee for their review and discussion. The Steering Committee discussed the first three issues at length and the remaining issues will be addressed at the next Steering Committee Meeting.

The Steering Committee highlighted points under each issue that they felt should be a major focus. These major focus items for each of the three issue areas are included below.

1. Issue: Neighborhood/Personal Safety

Summary: The desire of many neighborhood residents is to retain the overall safety of the neighborhood. Over the last several years the neighborhood has seen an increase in crime. Addressing issues of crimes and related personal property matters with a variety of strategies will help preserve the health of the area. One strategy is for residents and businesses to increase their level of dialogue and understanding with community centers, law enforcement, schools, neighborhood associations, and housing advocates/suppliers. This could help to build stronger relationships and stabilize the neighborhood.

Major Focus:

- The SW neighborhoods would like the Mayor to communicate better with them.
- SW neighborhood residents can help address crime by getting to know each other better.
- One way the police can provide support to neighborhoods is by regularly sending flyers that report what is going on with regard to crime and other police matters.
- With regard to reporting crimes, some residents are afraid of retaliation – one way to improve this situation is to encourage residents to report crimes anonymously.

- There should be neighborhood officers assigned to specific troubled areas and the police should improve their response time to calls.
- Neighborhood watch and calling trees would help address crime.
- The Orchard Ridge neighborhood operates a blog to help report crime.
- The Prairie Hills neighborhood website offers a way to report criminal concerns.
- Another way to report safety concerns is for residents to email neighborhood police officers.
- A major concern in the SW neighborhoods is unsupervised teens trouble-making, i.e. trespassing.
- It would help to increase the numbers of neighborhood officers assigned at night.
- The Russett Rd. area has a neighborhood watch email tree. Neighborhood associations could take this information and standardize the data.
- The SW neighborhoods could hold social events like block parties and ice cream socials to build community relations.
- Crime watch prevention officers could be brought in to provide training for residents.
- Elver Park and Meadowood Park can be unsafe. Some residents (particularly kids) feel territorial ownership to Meadowood Park. This can lead to harassment and other petty criminal activities.

2. Housing Preservation, Maintenance, and Stability

Summary: The neighborhood is predominantly single-family homes with small areas of multifamily housing primarily along major transportation corridors. The single-family housing stock is between 40 to 50 years old. Overall, the single-family housing stock is relatively well maintained but because of its age, maintenance and energy conservation will become more of an issue. Single-family homes are quite affordable in comparison to the City on the whole.

Multifamily buildings were built in the 1970s. A variety of bedroom sizes are available. Within the planning area, three multifamily districts have been identified: the McKenna Road area; the Raymond-Whitney area; and the Hammersley-Prairie Road area.

Major Focus:

- The City Building Inspection Department has recently inspected almost every multi-family building.
- It would be helpful to collect and analyze demographic data for the older housing stock. Lower income residents might need financial assistance with maintenance and education about energy conservation.
- Project Home could provide assistance.
- Some landlords in the area have chosen to install high efficiency furnaces in their apartment buildings. In certain cases, they have increased rents to cover the cost of the new furnaces. Should renters be responsible for helping with this cost? Are there any guidelines to follow?
- The condition of rental properties has been declining. Landlords should take responsibility for this. Who will enforce this?
- In addition to turning to the Building Inspection Department, the Health Department Building Inspection section can help enforce standards of condition by inspecting properties and issuing tickets to violators.
- The City should assist landlords in their efforts to retrofit properties for handicap accessibility.
- There are an increasing number of homes on the market. Homes are staying on the market longer than usual. What can we do to stop the trend of people wanting to leave the area. What

can we do to help people sell their homes if they have made the decision to do this? In this way, we might stop the trend of homes becoming rental buildings.

- Many landlords are having difficulty renting out their homes.
- There is a surplus of \$242,000 homes on the market. One reason is that people seeking to buy homes are able to purchase a new home from a builder for this price.
- It is very important the SW neighborhoods learn how to promote themselves.
- The Meadowood Mall in an anchor in the community. The library is also an anchor. Redevelopment of the mall might have a positive impact on the condition of property in the Russett Rd. area.
- There is a disconnect between available rental properties and the ability of renters to pay.
- Area residents could donate landscape plants the SW neighborhoods could hold planting Saturdays to improve property condition.
- The schools are a very important part of the neighborhood.

3. Circulation/Connection for Pedestrians, Bicyclists, vehicles, and buses within the Neighborhood and to Destination Points.

Summary: An important function of any neighborhood is the movement of people to places that serve the population: purchase of goods and services, employment, and to recreational areas. The major arterial/collector streets that bisect the neighborhood are: Mineral Point, Hammersley, Schroeder, Raymond Roads (east-west), Whitney Way and McKenna/Gammon (north-south). Neighborhood residents desire safe crossings for pedestrians on the major thoroughfares and residential streets.

Improve the ease and frequency of bus service to service centers, shopping areas, and employment areas.

Major Focus:

- It is difficult to travel north-south through the SW neighborhood planning area.
- Park Ridge Drive is narrow and traffic safety is an issue. People drive too fast and this threatens kids on bikes and pedestrians.
- Some people cut onto Dorsett Dr. from Raymond Rd. and speed up to Whitney Way. One solution would be to put speed bumps on Dorsett Dr.
- Reetz Rd. has also become a short-cut.
- People drive too fast on Hammersley Rd. from Prairie to McKenna.
- S. Whitney Way has become a raceway.
- North of Raymond Rd. its confusing as to whether Whitney Way is a two or four lane road.
- Signage could be installed to remind people that this area is largely residential and therefore drivers should slow down.

VI. Other Business

Neighborhood involvement and participation is welcomed throughout the planning process. Residents and other neighborhood stakeholders may refer to the planning website for more information on the planning process, background information on the study area, and neighborhood contacts: <http://www.cityofmadison.com/swnp/>.

VII. Next Meetings

Dates and locations for future Steering Committee Meetings have been scheduled as follows (all meetings will run from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm):

November 28: Wisconsin Youth & Family Center, 1201 McKenna Blvd.

December 12: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 5701 Raymond Rd.

December 19: Wisconsin Youth & Family Center

January 9: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

January 23: Wisconsin Youth & Family Center

February 13: Westside Police District, 1701 McKenna Blvd.

February 27: Westside Police District

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.