

NBN Sector 6 Meeting Minutes
Monday January 14, 2008
NET Office 846 S. Clinton Avenue
5:30 – 7 pm

Present: Ruth Andrews, Joanne Balliet, Cindy Becker, Sue Bellinger, Gary Bogue, Bob Boyd, David Chappius, Lt. Frank Churnetski, Teri D'Agostino, Dave Halter, Amy Happ, Chris Jones, Jacqueline Lindauer, Joan Lindberg, Ed Lindskoog, Gale Lynch, Geri Machado, Joe Machado, Matt McCarthy, Lorna Mittleman, Rose O'Keefe, John O'Neil, Sue O'Neil, Kathy Parrinello, Matt Perdue, Sgt. Mike Perkowski, Victoria Posner, Roger Ramsay, Lisa Reagan, Allan Richards, Officer John Rivers, Peter Saxe, Tony Sciarabba, Mary Stid, Eillean Thomas, Mike Thompson, Paul Urai

Notes: Joan

Introductions and Community Sharing

Joan Lindberg (Lilac Neighbors) requested items for the www.NBNSector6.org website. Please send information to Vern Lindberg, our webmaster, regarding items for the website, calendar additions and photographs. E-mail info to vwlsps@rit.edu ... Joan announced a Volunteer Recognition Reception at City Hall on Sunday February 3, 2008 from 2 to 4 pm. If your neighborhood volunteered in Clean Sweep or in the City's parks, RSVP your attendance by calling 428-6767 or emailing estrichs@cityofrochester.gov by January 30. ... The repairs to the pedestrian ramp at Highland and Mt. Hope are nearing completion. ... The Lilac Neighbors received a flier outlining the BASWA proposal to hold 5 evenings of vintage movies in Highland Bowl. Joan will collect the responses and forward them on to Representative Susan John and to Chris Jones of BASWA.

Victoria Posner (Lilac) was interviewed by R News regarding the FAIR Tax Plan and the City's recent property reassessment.

Rose O'Keefe announced a free viewing of Mike Keene's "Visions, True Stories of Spiritualism, Secret Societies, and Murder." The viewing will take place on Monday February 4, 2008 at the Highland Branch of the Rochester Public Library, 971 South Ave. The South Wedge History Club is free and open to the public.

Sue O'Neil (Azalea and Friends of Mt. Hope) announced that a community pot luck supper will take place in two weeks. The Azalea Neighborhood Association will soon publish a new issue of their newsletter.

Geri Machado (May St. Block Club) announced a planning meeting for the 2008 Spirit Parade on Thursday January 17 at the Baber A.M.E Church on Meigs St. No date has been set for the parade.

Chris Jones (BASWA and Cypress) said that the Swing In the New Year Event was a great success with 300 people in attendance. ... Joan Lindberg asked Chris whether BASWA had made contingency rain plans for the Vintage Movies in the Bowl. No rain plans have been made to date.

Gale Lynch (Hickory NUTS and SWPC Neighbors Council) announced the third round of the **Neighborhood Council Knowledge Co-op**. Contact Allison Clark if you would like to attend any of the following classes. 256-1740 Ext. 104 or aclark@swpc.org.

“Massage Basics and Chocolate Massage” will take place on Jan. 19 from 4 to 6 pm at Calvary St. Andrews Church on Averill Ave. The cost is \$10.

“Roll Your Own Sushi” Fri. Feb 8 from 6 to 8 pm at 42 Hickory St. The cost is \$15.

“Hand Tools 101” Fri. Feb 29 from 6 to 8 pm. \$20.

“Beaujolais Wine Tasting” Sat. Mar. 8th from 7 to 8:30 pm at the SWPC Office. The cost is \$20.

“Power Tools 101” Sat. Mar 29 from 4 to 6 pm. \$20.

“EBay Basics” Fri. Apr 11 from 6 – 8 pm at the SWPC Office.

“Crafty Kids: A Homemade Gift for Mother’s Day” Sat. Apr. 26 from 9 – 10 am.

Gale also announced that a public art event will take place in 2008 to commemorate the first anniversary of the Marie Daley Playground reconstruction. ... PAC TAC walks will resume on Thursday Jan. 17. Please meet at the NET Office at 6 pm. PAC TAC walks sponsored by the SWPC Neighborhood Council take place on the third Thursday of the month.

The Hickory NUTS conducted a tea and caroling event during the Christmas holiday. ... The Hickory NUTS are planning a Meet and Greet event between homeowners and landlords on Hickory St. This will be a friendly get-together to create a partnership for seeking good renters.

RPD Officer John Rivers introduced himself to the NBN6 members. Officer Rivers is a seven year veteran of the RPD and he works from 3:30 to 11 pm in our area. John drives Car E 79. John believes that PAC TAC is an awesome program. John said that drug dealing remains a problem at Alexander and South. Cars assigned to PSA 32 are often busy with calls at Strong Hospital. If you want to meet Officer Rivers one on one, just speed down Mt. Hope Avenue. Thanks for coming and introducing yourself, Officer Rivers!

Lorna Mittleman (Upper Mt. Hope Neighborhood) was sitting in for Denise Lippa. Lorna said that the next UMHN meeting will address the City’s Reassessments. ... UMHN plans continued improvements for Mark’s Park. ... Landscaping and the installation of memorial bricks are the next projects for the Eastmoreland Playground.

Dave Halter (SWPC) said that he would be teaching two courses on Hand and Power Tools for the Neighborhood Council Knowledge Coop.

Eileen Thomas (SWPC) said that SWPC has an intern working to update a 30 year old neighborhood survey.

Bob Boyd (SWPC) said that 25 volunteers removed graffiti on South and S. Clinton Avenues. BASWA will host a meeting on Wednesday January 16 to talk about how to stop or control graffiti. The meeting will take place at the Keg (Gregory St.) at 5:30 pm. ... Repairs to SWPC’s façade need to be made after the front corbel recently fell down. ... SWPC made an offer to the City of Rochester to rehabilitate 95 Oakland St. and de-convert it into 4 apartments.

Joanne Balliet (SEAC) asked if there is a psychology to graffiti. Would education help? Pete Saxe responded that there are three groups of people who create graffiti: artists, gang members and taggers.

Matt Perdue (Swillburg) is the new chairperson of the ESCAPE committee, which is working on the enhancement of S. Clinton Ave. Matt has had good meetings with City officials and the committee is gearing up for street improvements, art projects and street furniture. 2008 should be a great year.

David Chappius (Swillburg) said that the neighborhood has a new Executive Board of 10 people. Swillburg has moved to quarterly meetings. Swillburg will organize Red Wings and Amerks outings. Members of Swillburg will also be eligible for a RARES discount. Swillfest will take place on March 28 and will be hosted jointly with the Highland Park Neighborhood.

Sgt. Mike Perkowski is the RPD sergeant in our area from 3:30 to 11:00 pm. Mike had been a CPO on the Westside. If you have questions or problems on the third shift which 911 calls cannot address, please call Sgt. Perkowski at 428-8831.

Ed Lindskoog (HPN) said that the Boy Scouts are in need of leaders for a cub scout pack. If you would like to volunteer, please call 244-4210. ... Ed also said that DES is doing leaf pickup now. Call 428-5990 to request leaf pickup.

Discussion: University of Rochester Medical Center's Smoking Policy.

David Chappius introduced **Amy Happ, Kathy Parrinello, Cindy Becker and Teri D'Agostino**. These women work for the University of Rochester Medical Center. The topic for discussion was the Medical Center's Smoking Policy and its unintended consequences in neighborhoods. This dialog is an outcome of our State of the Sector Conference.

In 2005 the Monroe County Department of Health and many other health care providers agreed to take a "smoke free" stand. In November 2006, the URMCM went smoke free on the Medical Center's campus (a smaller area than the entire University of Rochester). The URMCM has made modifications to its policy, urging employees not to smoke in the neighborhoods and to be respectful of neighbors.

Q: Has there been a decrease in employee smoking?

A: Yes. In response to a question in the Health Survey, smoking among employees has decreased from 13% to 10%. The national average of health care workers who smoke is 17%.

URMCM offered nicotine replacement therapy. 100 doses per day were distributed.

URMCM staff no longer will accompany patients outside the building so the patient can smoke.

URMCM cannot enforce a smoking ban in the neighborhoods, outside the campus boundary.

Q: Ed Lindskoog asked if URMCM could have the employees smoke on its own property rather than in the neighborhoods, say at the far reaches of parking lots.

A: Employees smoke along Elmwood Avenue, at the fence of Mt. Hope Cemetery.

URMCM cleans that location with a vacuum.

Q: Sue Bellinger said that the visual look of employees smoking while wearing hospital garb sends the wrong message or image of the hospital. There is a negative message sent to children who enter the hospital when they see staff smoking and enjoying themselves.

A: Smokers are not visible from the Hospital now. Some employees smoke rather than eat lunch. It takes time to get the message out not to smoke.

Q: Why is the gate locked at the rear of the parking lot of the Family Medicine Center (S. Clinton Avenue)?

A: It is locked to discourage staff from parking in the Highland Park Neighborhood. This was done at the request of the Highland Park Neighborhood.

Q: Has URMC used any motivational techniques, such as a reduction in health insurance premiums, to urge people to quit smoking?

A: The URMC has offered free smoking cessation programs and any additional program to help employees quit smoking, but URMC has not offered a reduction in health insurance premiums. There is a confidential prevention screening which recommends programs for smoking prevention. Smokers spend more on medical visits than non-smokers. URMC gives \$100 credit if staff take the prevention screening.

Q: Ruth Andrews asked whether URMC would put garbage receptacles on Elmwood Avenue along the cemetery fence.

A: URMC has begun to put receptacles on Elmwood Ave. However, there have been fires in the trash receptacles because people throw lit cigarettes in them. There is a regular cleaning schedule of areas used by smokers.

Mary Stid said that about a dozen people still smoke at the wall separating the campus from the neighborhood. The urn caught on fire. Even construction workmen complain about the smoke and debris. Smoke enters Mary's house and the bedroom reeks of cigarettes.

URMC is looking at a parcel of land on the Elmwood Avenue side of the campus, adjacent to the cemetery that is owned by the City. Sue O'Neil said that the cemetery owns the parcel in question.

Sue is concerned about employee safety. They frequently cross the street against the light. They sit on the curb where cars pull up. URMC Security is vigilant. Garbage bins have been moved back, away from the road in an effort to get smokers to move away from traffic also.

Q: Why don't smokers go to the roof?

A: That would not be allowed on a hospital campus where behavioral medicine is practiced.

Q. Ruth Andrews asked if the URMC would consider creating an outdoor "brown building" for smokers, similar to the one at St. John's Home on South Avenue.

A: URMC cannot do that on a hospital campus because of the programs for behavioral health.

Q: Do you have ex-smokers to help smokers quit?

A: Yes.

Q: Dave Halter said that the problem is twofold: (1) smoking and (2) litter. Smokers act as though the world is their ashtray.

A: URMC has provided both receptacles and cleaning crews.

The Upper Mt. Hope Neighborhood has signs posted that urge smokers to keep walking: "No loitering and No littering."

Mike Thompson said that Highland Park has become a smoker's haven.

Q: What is the cost of cleaning up the litter? What is the cost in lost productivity?

A: The Maintenance Department is upset with the extra work of cleaning up after smokers. \$100K has been spent in extra security and groundskeeping.

David Chappius thanked Cindy, Amy, Kathy, and Teri for attending the meeting and for entering into dialog with the group.

NET Update

Lt. Frank Churnetski said that the crime statistics were distributed via e mail after last week's PCIC meeting. ... There was a street robbery on January 13 on Gregory St. around 9 pm. A semi automatic handgun was used in the robbery. The suspects fled in a green / gray 4 door vehicle. ... Another robbery occurred on January 13 at 539 South Ave. at 1:05 pm. ... On January 9th, three male blacks punched a student to the ground on the U of R campus. They asked the student to give up cash. ... Joan Lindberg asked what would be an appropriate reason to call the RPD sergeant on duty. Frank responded that it is appropriate to call the sergeant for an explanation of a crime or police procedures.

Pete Saxe announced that Clean Sweep will take place on May 10, 2008 in the southeast. The gathering place is Lake Riley in Cobbs Hill Park at 8:30 am. Cleaning up graffiti will be a priority. ...Pete said that a volunteer group from Sector 6 plus some businesses did a great job at graffiti removal. It is important to remove graffiti quickly. ... Neighborhoods groups can get graffiti removal packs. ... NET needs to improve tracking of graffiti. ... DES cannot remove graffiti from the second story of buildings. ... Someone asked why surveillance cameras are not used, like the ones used by hunters that are triggered by motion sensors. Pete responded that the camera resolution is not good and that taggers can finish their graffiti in 15 seconds. ... Bob Boyd said that we need to identify who is doing the graffiti and to find a long-term solution to the problem. ... The Defacer Eraser has a budget on \$80K / year. There is a backlog of 30 days to clean up graffiti. ... DES is putting Southeast Rochester on a higher priority for graffiti removal. ... The Village Gate has provided a space for graffiti artists to use. ... The "Don't Snitch" message relates to graffiti as well as more serious crimes. ... Lt. Churnetski said that the penalty for graffiti or even just having the paint can is a misdemeanor. Someone suggested having a bounty for turning in taggers. The City Law Department backed off a reward system for catching taggers. ... The taggers of Marie Daley Playground were reported to the police by their mothers. ... Pete explained that the City will remove graffiti from private property with the permission of the property owner. Graffiti removal will only be done once per year at a given address, unless the graffiti is racist. Other government agencies need to become involved in solving this problem.

NBN6 Sector Business

County Legislator Harry Bronson forwarded a letter to David Chappius regarding use of Highland Bowl in 2008. Harry knew that neighbors had concerns about concerts that were held in the past. Jeff Springut has requested permission to do up to 8 paid events. Eight separate dates could mean that the Bowl could be fenced for 8 separate weekends. No specific dates were given. Jeff has a bad track record of pulling off 8 concerts. Last

year he did two concerts. In 2006, he did two concerts that were subsidized by the NYS payola grant. SEAC was the not-for-profit that applied for the NYS grant on Jeff's behalf. The 2006 concerts were poorly attended. The proposal comes up for a vote in two committees prior to the meeting of the entire legislature. The Parks Department Meeting takes place on January 22. Ways and Means takes place on January 24. There is a public forum before each committee meeting. Citizens can sign up to speak before these meetings. ... Chris Jones said that her Vintage Film Festival has not been scheduled in the Bowl because 8 dates need to be set for Jeff Springut first.

David Chappius said that NBN6 has plans for informational signs at various locations in the sector. These signs would be paid for with money remaining from the NIP grant. That money must be spent by June 30, 2008. The signs conform to this year's NBN6 "green" theme. They will reduce the need for newsletters and fliers.