

NBN Sector 6 Meeting
April 13, 2009
171 Reservoir Avenue

In attendance: Joan Lindberg, Joe Machado, Geri Machado, Amy Happ, Victoria Posner, Carlene Woodward, Lisa Reagan, Matt McCarthy, Allan Richards, Ed Lindskoog, Peter Saxe, Brad Goater, Matt Perdue, David Chappius, Chris Jones, Rosemary O'Keefe, Arthur Ientilucci, Denise Cambisi, Jill Morgan, Aaron McGowan, Cynthia Knox, Ruth Danis, Roger Ramsay, Joanne Balliet, Jayne Morgan, Allison Clark, Marcia Zach, Michael Tomb, Bill Gerling, Katrina Hanson, Barb Case, Paul Urai, Ryan Loysen, Harry Bronson, Jeanne deKeyserling, Mike Thompson

Notes: Chris Jones

Community Sharing (please email all community sharing items to Joan Lindberg or Chris Jones for inclusion in the emailed minutes for future NBN meetings)

Joan Lindberg, Lilac Neighbors: The Lilac Neighbors received a NeighborGood Grant from the Rochester Area Community Foundation.

Sue O'Neil, Azalea Neighborhood Association and Friends of Mt. Hope Cemetery: The Azalea Neighbors new newsletters are out (distributed). They are also happy to announce that they received a NeighborGood Grant from the Rochester Area Community Foundation. On behalf of Friends of Mt. Hope Cemetery, the tour season begins on May 2, they are free tours and are held Saturdays at 1 PM, Sundays at 2:00 PM and 2:30 PM. The new Friends of Mt. Hope website will be up very soon, address is www.fomh.org. The complete tour schedule will be listed there, cool theme tours to be held this year. Also- Sue is selling ribbons to support Officer Anthony DiPonzio. Please contact her if interested. Minimum donation is \$1 per ribbon.

Barb Case, Secretary Rockingham East of Goodman Block Club has two events this month:

Spring Clean-Up is scheduled for Saturday, April 25. Neighbors are signed up to help other neighbors haul stuff from garages, attics and back yards to the curb for our regular pick-up on the 30th. In addition raking and bagging yard debris will spruce up the area in time for the Lilac Festival.

Our biennial spring meeting for election of officers will be held on Tuesday, April 21, at Artisan Church. At this meeting we will announce the grant award of \$500 from the Community Foundation for proposed club projects.

Chris Jones, BASWA, SWPC: BASWA has commissioned 10 new artist designed Totem bicycle racks that will be installed throughout the South Wedge (Gregory Street and South Ave from Byron to Averill) in the next couple months. We also have a series of free concerts that will be held in Star Alley on the third Thursday of each month from May through October, and our community garden beds are all adopted in Star Alley

again. Also, we are installing three additional street benches along Mt. Hope Avenue this summer after reconstruction is completed.

Amy Happ, University of Rochester:

Three events to report:

Energy Symposium

The University of Rochester is hosting a one-day symposium entitled “Energy for the 21st Century” which will feature distinguished speakers from the federal, state and local governments, academia and industry and provide opportunities for networking. Scientists and engineers from the University exploring alternative energy will also present their research in talks and posters and be available for discussions. The symposium is free and open to the public. To register and view additional information, visit www.rochester.edu/college/ERI/symposium2009/

Highland Hospital Parking Garage Update

There have been a number of complaints from neighbors regarding the color of the stain chosen for the sides and back of the garage. The hospital organized another meeting of the Design Committee of community members who have been working on this project for the past few years to discuss stain options. The neighbors chose a new tan color for the stain. The garage opened Monday, April 6th and so far about 50 employees have signed up to park in the garage. Registration continues for another week and a half and employees are being encouraged to sign up to help avoid having people parking on the neighboring streets.

Smoking update at University of Rochester Medical Center (URMC)

After careful consideration of the concerns expressed by Strong Hospital and URMC neighbors in regards to the smoking policy which prohibits anyone from smoking on Medical Center property, the University has reviewed its policy and has decided to alter the smoking boundaries slightly in order to ease the impact on the surrounding community. There are now two designated areas on the Medical Center campus for smokers. One area is on the Elmwood Avenue side of the building near the School of Medicine and Dentistry and the other sits between the side of the Strong Hospital Parking Garage and the Eastman Dental Center. Huts will be going up for the smoking areas and concrete pads have already been poured. By providing these two new sites, the hope is that employees will use one of these closer sites instead of heading into the surrounding neighborhoods and impacting them with smoke and debris. Additionally, it will help avoid safety concerns and concerns from Mt. Hope Cemetery about employees crossing Elmwood Avenue. The Medical Center will continue to review the policy and any concerns that are received.

Peter Saxe, Neighborhood Service Center: The city staff will be coming to future NBN meetings in the upcoming months to discuss and explain the city hall reorganization. Many clean sweep projects are planned with our neighborhood groups this year. Clean Sweep is May 2.

Brad Goater, RPD: There were 3 burglaries in the area last month, and several larcenies involving people leaving items in cars, such as GPS systems. Do not leave anything of value in your car, including indicators that you may have stowed a GPS or cell phone in the glove compartment, because thieves are smart, they see the outline of a suction cup on the dash they know there is a GPS in there somewhere. Also, there was a robbery on Averill in which a knife was displayed. A traffic stop in the neighborhood resulted in officers pulling a warrant on the driver of the car and led to the discovery of drugs at a house on Caroline Street. There is a scam that has escalated recently in which individuals knock on doors asking for money for gas- this is a scam, do not open your doors to them. Also remember, if people won't take checks only cash it is probably a scam.

David Chappius, NBN Chair and Swillburg Neighborhood Association chair: The Health Fair mentioned last month- due to time constraints Joanne Balliet is working with Highland Family Medicine to get this underway. Also-MULCH- NBN has funding to purchase mulch in bulk for different Sector 6 neighborhoods. If your neighborhood wishes to take advantage of this, please have one person from your organization email David by next Monday to let him know how much you want and where you want it delivered. Questions should be directed to David as well. Email him at dchappius@crosbybrownlie.com

Matt McCarthy (Community Development) distributed the bound copies of the Sector 6 Action Plan! It looks great.

Cindy Knox (Upper Mt. Hope Neighborhood) The latest issue of The Neighborhood View was distributed.

Michael Tomb, Highland Park Neighborhood: The Highland Park Neighborhood Association is celebrating Rochester's 175th anniversary with an exhibit at the Lower Reservoir Gatehouse in Highland Park during the Lilac Festival that is a followup to last year's which was titled "The Arboretum that became a Neighborhood". Our follow-up is called "Blossom, Business and The City of Flowers" and centers on Rochester's rich and colorful history as a center for chromolithographic botanical printing. In addition, in cooperation with the City Historian, we will be participating in a city wide project to collect oral histories about our neighborhoods. A training session will take place on April 18th at 10 am-12 am in the same County Park location as the NBN6 meeting itself. All residents who have an interest in collecting oral history are invited but need to register first. Contact us at highlandparkrochester@gmail.com for details

In addition, we are trying to organize a simple entry into the Lilac Festival called "A Neighborhood Salute to The City of Flowers" . Details were in an e-mail sent out to NBN6 participants prior to the meeting. At the meeting we asked for NBN6 sponsorship, but this was not discussed further to our request. A gallery of prototypes of potential banners for this parade are here: <http://picasaweb.google.com/HighlandParkRochester/ParadePrototypes?feat=directlink> , we have since received interest from the Lilac Festival organizers

themselves on widening this project across the city.

Ruth Danis:(Co chair Highland Park Neighborhood Association): Ruth expressed Thanks for NBN6's help in promoting our recent meeting focused on School Choice. The meeting was successful and very well attended. And these efforts to engage the community in discussions about education will continue.

Paul Urai:(Security Coordinator Highland Park Neighborhood Association) A Pac-tac walk starting at the NSC office will take place April 29th at 6:30 pm As always, a break with free pizza is included on the agenda.

Roger Ramsay: :(Co chair Highland Park Neighborhood Association) Roger noted that our next meeting of the neighborhood association will focus on business relationships and outreach. He also mentioned The Great Scooter Raffle is ending during the Lilac Festival. In addition our newest Garden sponsored by "Monroe County in Bloom" is full swing, we had recent safety training attende by various neighbors - the first planting session will take place in May.

Joanne Balliet, Operations Manager, SEAC:

SEAC has partnered with the City and hired a Street Manager. His focus will be on South Clinton Ave and Monroe Ave to aid in community and economic development.

REMINDER: There is a community sign at the corner of S. Clinton Avenue and Highland Parkway. Any neighborhood group is welcome to use the sign. Contact SEAC for info.

Health Fair – Joanne met with Councilman Lightfoot; has a meeting later this week with Jim Farr, Dept. of Parks and Rec. Should have more to report next month.

SAVE THE DATE: SEAC's Annual Meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 1st. It will be held at Lake Riley Lodge at Cobbs Hill. All are welcome.

Guest Speaker: Arthur Ientilucci, Director of Zoning for the City of Rochester:

There is currently a city-wide re-evaluation of the City of Rochester's 2003 Zoning Code. In 2003 there was the first comprehensive zoning code changes in 25 years. Changes to the previous code included the use of urban design standards and also changes to grandfathering; these were both addressed in the 2003 code for the first time. The down-zoning of high density properties down to R-1 (the most restrictive) resulted in many non-conforming properties, this was widely done after the 2003 code was initiated. Many of these things were previously untried, they had no track record, so the department of zoning was mandated to evaluate how the code was working 24 months after it was initiated, in 2005.

However, the code was not in use long enough to effectively evaluate in 2005. The Zoning Department committed themselves to re-evaluate the code regularly by talking to applicants and stakeholders to build toward the process of another report or evaluation. They want to hear from people who are using the code about how they feel it is working

for them. It should be emphasized that they are NOT proposing to change the code, instead they are collecting suggestions & recommendations, and they will publish a report on their findings by the end of June 2009. Then, they will begin discussions about the re-evaluation early next year, hold public meetings, hearings with city council, and then make recommendations to the mayor on changing the code. They invite comments to be sent to the director of zoning at ientiluc@cityofrochester.gov

An example of an item that they invite feedback on- parking requirements. The 1975 code inflated parking requirements for everyone, in 2003 this was changed to eliminate half of all parking requirements, they instead went to required parking demand studies because the previous method was very arbitrary, using data taken from suburban studies at peak periods. These requirements were forcing developers and business owners to purchase neighboring properties to demolish for parking. So, they shifted to applicant oriented demand. This has been successful. The next step is to eliminate parking requirements altogether due to the negative impacts brought on by parking requirements. This is likely what Zoning will recommend to City Council but they would first like more community discussion about this.

Center City designation, which is non-traditional zoning, is all about urban design standards, and is very non-restrictive. This has been used in the downtown area and has worked very well because of the flexibility and resulted in their being able to process applications very quickly. For instance, the College Town plan for Mt. Hope used the Center City formula very successfully. Public participation was successful with this formula, and can form a blueprint for land use regulations throughout the city in other c-2 zones, this also needs community discussion.

Grandfathering or non-conforming uses; the purpose of these regulations- down-zoning to remove prior non-conformities back to their original uses. In 2003 they tried to treat non-conforming uses on an individual basis because some are detrimental and some are needed in investment zones. They wanted a way to get rid of the detrimental non-conforming uses but preserve the positive ones, such as mixed-use and historic properties. These can be reinstated by city council. They have received feedback indicating they should be more lenient towards non-conforming uses, as per the time aspect, to allow some properties that sit vacant to retain their non-conforming uses for a longer period.

Other issues they need feedback on- wireless regulations, wind energy, digital billboards, how should they regulate these?

Questions-

Biggest zoning issue in Sector 6?

Parking said many in attendance.

Can you explain the Neighborhood Design Standards or Guidelines?

Zoning Department had 21 separate neighborhoods send in basic design proposals so they developed center city design guidelines. But, if a particular neighborhood wants to submit their own design guidelines to zoning they can do so with 50% approval from the rest of their neighborhood. These special standards would be reviewed and can then be accepted by the Planning Commission and then appended to the city code as special guidelines to be considered for that particular neighborhood. To date not one neighborhood has submitted these guidelines, this topic is being discussed at RD Design Center.

Have you considered relieving some of the restrictions on home based businesses?

They have expanded their policies on live/work in higher density districts.

Parking issue at Colgate caused difficulties to the surrounding neighborhood, how do you submit the guidelines?

You need to first set your geographic area codify the group, and then get 50% of your neighbors to sign off on it.

If your house burns down in the city you need 27 different variances to rebuild it.

They are flexible on this, and did Bill quit smoking yet?

Are there many other commercial areas in the city that have preservation districts in them?

Yes, Park Ave and Susan B. Anthony.

This may be why we have a successful commercial district, the presence of the restrictions of the preservation district. The rezoning should be carefully considered as in our neighborhood rezoning has successfully increased property values. Also- signs- the inability to enforce sign restrictions is a problem, you should not loosen sign restrictions, you should find a way to enforce them further.

Sign enforcement does need improvement, but they have received feedback that their restrictions are too tight.

David Chappius- meeting next month is May 11, during the Lilac Festival- should we find another place to meet? There will be no street parking but the back lot will be available. YES, we will meet at the same place; park behind the building.