

NBN Sector 6 Meeting Minutes
Monday September 14, 2009
Monroe County Parks Department Office
171 Reservoir Avenue

Present: Joanne Balliet, Sue Bellinger, Bob Boyd, Barb Case, David Chappius, Ruth Danis, Bill Gerling, Officer Brad Goater, Dave Halter, Allen Handelman, Amy Happ, Rev. Judy Hay, Jeff Henley, Scott Hewett, Dan Hurley, Chris Jones, Alicia Lamphron, John Lightfoot, Joan Lindberg, Vern Lindberg, Ed Lindskoog, Matt McCarthy, Aaron McGowan, Jeannine Meilman, Jayne Morgan, Nancy O'Donnell, John O'Neil, Sue O'Neil, T.C. Pellett, Matt Perdue, Victoria Posner, Mark Quinn, Roger Ramsay, Lisa Reagan, Allan Richards, Pete Saxe, Peter Siegrist, John Perry Smith, Eilleen Thomas, Mike Thompson, John Van Kerkhove, Carlene Woodward

Notes: Chris Jones

Community Sharing:

Joan Lindberg, Lilac Neighbors:

The autumn issue of The Lilac Letter is available. The 29th annual Furman Crescent Block Party will take place on Saturday September 26th

Chris Jones, Cypress-Linden:

The annual Block Party was held on Linden Street in August and over 90 people attended. A grant from Rochester Area Community Foundation funded the event.

David Chappius, Swillburg Neighborhood Association:

Swillburg Community Sharing:

Swillburg Rocks the Park every Wednesday in September at 6:30PM. These are free concerts at Otto Henderberg Square Park. Everyone is invited. JAVA plays on Wednesday Sept. 16th.

More details about the Swillburg Spooktacular Halloween event – to be held on Saturday October 31st will be available next month.

Chris Jones, Business Association of the South Wedge Area (BASWA):

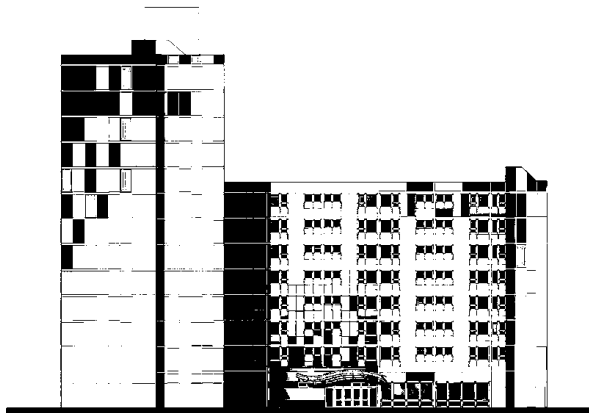
BASWA will hold another Third Thursday concert in Star Alley this Thursday at 8:00, featuring Oliver Brown (ukulele) and the Isotopes. BASWA will also be selling SW Swag at the event to help promote Shopping Local and also as a fundraiser for BASWA.

Bill Gerling, NYS Coalition of Property Owners and Businesses, Inc.

HUD Stimulus money for Landlords and Renters – Free Workshop, September 17, 2009 at 7:00 PM at the Wishing Well Party House 1190 Chili Ave. Call the Housing Council at 546-3700 for more info.

Ruth Danis, Highland Park Neighborhood. Ruth reminded people that the annual Taste of the Neighborhood will take place at the park at Meigs and Linden on Sunday, September 20. At that time, the park will be named The Ellwanger and Barry Park.

Meeting:



The Hamilton

Agenda Item 1: Allen Handelman, Conifer LLC, was guest speaker and presented the designs for the Mt. Hope Avenue development project that is replacing River Park Commons. The name of the hi-rise portion of the project, which is not a new building but a renovation of the old building, is called “The Hamilton”. The low-rise portion of the project, which includes 8 3-storey buildings, is going to be called “Erie Harbor”.

Overview: The design being presented tonight emerged from comments that the original design submitted in the DEIS was “too similar to Corn Hill Landing”, and it didn’t work with the design of the hi-rise building which was to remain. A new award-winning architectural firm was hired out of Philadelphia to redesign the project. There were several underlying design guidelines-

- There is a 30’ sewer easement that could not be built on top of
- The site is a brownfield so there is concern about contamination to the soil and subsoil
- There was an economic decision to use the existing footings
- There was a desire to maintain the view sheds from Gregory St, Hamilton St, and Averill Ave.

There is a large plaza that is the main access point, centered on Averill Avenue and will include a fountain and seating; there is a smaller public access site at Hamilton. There is a rise at the river wall. The bank is on a flood plain, so that the view of the river is obscured.

The project consists of 4 storey and 3 storey buildings with flat roofs. They are all lower than River Park Commons was previously. They are primarily 2 storey townhouses above 1 story flats. This was done in order to meet ADA requirements. There are balconies facing the river and balconies on the street side. The concrete that resulted from the demolition of River Park has been crushed for reuse. This is cheaper than removing it and also eco-friendly. There is an ongoing process to finalize the exterior skin of the project. They are currently looking at hardiplank (Niskia) and composite concrete with a brick or stone veneer at the lower level. They are also working on choosing the windows. The public plaza at Averill will have seating and a fountain, and the City has given them a grant to improve the streetscape and crosswalks. They are taking a modern approach to the design.

The Hamilton at 185 Mt. Hope is the old hi-rise. They are trying to re-brand this building. It was previously considered “housing of a last resort” for people of a certain income level. They are trying to reposition the building and present it as “new & different.” It is not luxurious but

welcoming. The residents are excited about it. There are 202 units in the building, 160 have been redone already.

They are still working on coloring and cladding, They want an internally consistent design palette on all of the buildings. There will be more sky available. They are developing apartment types that will be financially successful and attract market rate rents. The final details of the exterior have not been confirmed.

The financing on the Tower is completed and the project will be done by the end of the year including landscaping and parking. They have submitted a grant with 11 other projects across the state for a stimulus package. The projected date of the awards is December, although there has been some indication it may come sooner due to fewer applicants than anticipated. Once the stimulus funds have been granted they will jump onto the exterior elements.

Questions:

Q: (Bill Gerling) Brownfield from what?

A: Gas stations and other businesses that have been on the site over the years, proximity to river. Past uses that need remediation after extensive testing. Some remediation was done during the demolition process. Many "bureaucratic hoops." Work will start this fall.

Comment: (Victoria Posner) Appalled at the design of this. The colors are awful, horrid, the design is ugly. There is no relationship to other buildings in the neighborhood. There is no conformity, and no attempt to blend it into the neighborhood. It is ugly as sin. It will slow traffic.

Response: (AH) They have been working with SWPC to make Mt. Hope two lanes to slow traffic.

Comment: (Matt Perdue) Why is Corn Hill Landing being portrayed in a negative light? I think it is a much more desirable design for the neighborhood.

Response: (AH) The first design was shot down at the Public Hearing and through various processes.

Question: (Matt Perdue): Who shot it down?

Response: (AH) It is all in the FEIS.

Comment: (Bob Boyd) Over 350 people participated in the process, it is all in the FEIS. There are pages and pages of information about it in the FEIS. The original design was not people-scaled. It did not look residential. There were no porches.

Comment: (Eilleen Thomas) It integrates with the modern buildings downtown and the Hi-Rise and other buildings on Mt. Hope. They could not make the Hi-Rise into a Victorian design.

Response: (AH) The hardscape and fenestration, etc. will soften the exterior.

Question (Alicia Lamphron): Market Rate? How much is that?

Response: (AH) Not certain, not a numbers guy, but around \$800-\$900 for a 1 bedroom, \$1100-\$1200 for a 2 bedroom and up.

Comment: (Carlene Woodward) The old Fight Square project, Anthony Square, is very handsome. This project, with no patios, balconies, it is not handsome. This location is very desirable, and begs for something extremely handsome. This looks like a Rite-Aid. It has an

institutional or temporary look. Will it be super-modern? It may turn out to look rather shabby after a 10 year period. What is your goal in this project? Has your company used this design elsewhere?

Response: (AH) To build market rate units --- (missed complete response due to talking). The final drawings are not available, there is no one working on them.

Question: (Peter Saxe) What if you don't get the state stimulus money?

Response: (AH) We don't start next spring then. It is in HUD's hands. They only received 350 applications and expected 700, so we are optimistic.

Question: (Alicia Lamphron) How many residents are there from the old projects and what are they paying? Why will people want to pay market rate next to subsidized housing?

Response: (AH) Not sure, but about \$500-\$600 for a 1 bedroom and \$700-\$800 for a 2 bedroom. Trying to rebrand the tower.

Question: (Unknown) So the exterior details are not worked out, then when do the neighborhoods have input?

Response: (AH) It's an administrative process. There are no more public hearings, but the community always finds ways to provide input.

Question: (Unknown): Where is the parking?

Response: (AH) There is less parking needed. We went from 200 units down to 130 units. Parking is in front and there is also on street parking, but less is needed.

Comment: (Dan Hurley, Upper Mt Hope) So it is solely the city's call on the design elements. That is counterproductive. Why not include city resident's input? It would really be beneficial to include the neighbors.

Response: (AH) We have been working with SWPC and there have been public hearings.

Comment: (Unknown) It would have helped to have had neighborhood input.

Question: (David Chappius) So the group that has been working on this (I am not familiar with this) I guess it is SWPC – were they in favor of it? Of the design?

Response: (Bob Boyd): Read the FEIS. There were specific issues cited as being concerns: parking, windows, scale, access to the river. All of these issues were resolved when the plan came back.

Question: (David Chappius) Let me rephrase my question. The group that has been working closely on this project, are they in favor of what we are seeing today?

Response: (Bob Boyd): The specific elements that were questioned are addressed with this design.

Question: (Unknown): Is there any room for comment regarding the exterior elements by the public?

Response: (AH) I don't know.

Comment: (Chris Jones) The original design submitted for our comments was completely different from this design, although there was resolution to many of the site issues. But the design is markedly different. I have trouble reconciling that.

Response: (AH) Nods.

Agenda Item 2: Rochester Police Department, Officer Brad Goater:

Not a lot to report. PSA 32 car break-ins continue to be a problem with 18 cars broken into last month. ... There were 6-8 people arrested in a car theft ring county wide. The criminals were selling the stuff on Ebay, mostly GPS, those were the big thing. They have been arrested. ... There was a robbery at Wendy's that might have been an inside job as the thief knew the location of the cameras and safe. ... There was a car jacking at the Al Sigl Center. The suspect approached an employee in the parking lot. However, the employee blew him off and did not call 911 to report him. A second employee came out of the building 20 minutes later and was victimized. Not a lot of details on that yet. ... No date for the new camera to be installed at South and Gregory yet but the commander mentioned it today and has authorized it.

Peter Saxe, Neighborhood Service Center Administrator:

New Customer Service standards will be rolled out soon. ... The external team meetings have resulted in the decision to call smaller meetings as issues arise instead of having big meetings with all the sectors in our quadrant.

Peter Siegrist, City Planner and Preservation Board:

The core quadrant teams of planning, zoning, RPD, NSC, and street design are trying to figure out how to handle getting issues worked out. One task they have is to figure out how this will work. It does take into consideration all the different sector plans involved as we all have identified many of the same issues. They need to cook it down to one plan. Common themes transcend sectors, business developments get businesses into quadrants to talk about available space. They are working through it bureaucratically.

David Chappius, NBN Chair:

Information about the Urban GreenScape Conference was shared with group. Attendance goal is 200. Neighborhoods, businesses and others are doing a great job and getting the information out – keep up the good work.

www.NBNSector6.org has all the information on the conference!