

**NPC#4 Verona/Fremont/ McKinley
Neighborhood Planning Council
May, 21, 2008 Meeting**

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Vice-chairman David Nielsen. An attendance sheet was circulated and members were requested to provide any address, phone and e-mail information not already included.

May 21 meeting attendance:

Members: Jeremy Andrews, Jackie Braman, Gentry Hammons, John Hennink, Ed Lawrence, David Nielsen, Sherry Sofia, Laurie Sullivan, George Wilson
Guests: Jim Baldwin, Susan Baldwin, Eric Campbell, David Smolinski

The minutes of the April 16 meeting were approved as printed.

Community Outreach report was given first by committee chairman Jeremy Andrews. The grant for the Capital Avenue Cleanup was approved by the BCC Foundation. The cleanup is to take place on Saturday, June 7, from 10:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m. The Maple Methodist Church parking lot will be the gathering place and a hot dog lunch will be provided in Piper Park following the cleanup. Flyers were passed around and members were urged to give the flyers to friends and neighbors.

Police Report:

Third Shift Lt. John Crenyenko gave the report. He first provided some personal/professional information about himself. Most of his report centered on the bear incident that had occurred the week before the meeting. He noted all of the actions taken by police officers and their attempts to contact other agencies for assistance. He also discussed the unavailability of a tranquilizer gun and the difficulties in utilizing one if available.

He noted fewer prostitutes in the area recently, but also stated that there were several new faces among those still present. Question asked regarding the ongoing "relocating" of prostitutes to other areas and how does this really help solve the problem. City is working with S.T.O.P. to help provide long term lifestyle changes among prostitutes.. Comment made regarding to increased number of B&E's and thefts noted in the report. There has been an increase in "home invasions", where homes are broken into while residents are present and then assaulted.

Comment made concerning bicycle drug running in Orchard/Calhoun area. Minors on bicycles are subject to curfew ordinance. Bikes MUST obey same traffic signs as other vehicles and ticketing might help lessen this problem. Members reminded that journaling activities in a neighborhood will help police in making arrests.

Question asked concerning who is responsible for replacing burned out street lights. Field Services should be contacted when lights are observed to be out.

We were reminded that the police department continues to appreciate the public support of their efforts.

Program:

Mary Butler from the Historical Society spoke about the history of the Capital Avenue business area and provided a spread sheet of all of the addresses from Merrit Street to McKinley, documenting their use from 1916 till the present. She provided valuable insights into the changes in property use over the years, stressing the history of local neighborhood business and their eventual decline. Such information will be helpful as we plan for the future of this area.

City Reports:

City of Battle Creek:

Discussion centered on Mix Hardware rebuilding and surrounding buildings. The variance requested by Tim Mix was granted and he thanked us for our support of that effort. Some question raised over the new Mix building design. Suggestion made to ask Tim to our June meeting to discuss his plans and design.

Eric Campbell spoke about the other buildings formerly attached to Mix Hardware. They have been condemned and will be torn down as there is too much long term damage to repair them. The question remains as to who will pay for the demolition of those buildings. It was noted that there should be funds available from insurance to demolish the buildings and the city should not have to pay for that demolition.

Eric spoke about a property survey that involves exterior inspections that is currently being done. He also noted that there is not any significant difference between housing inspection levels.

City Commission:

Sherry Sofia spoke about the Columbia Avenue Business district project and asked if this might be something that might be done for the Capital Avenue corridor. She will bring us more information next month.

Susan Baldwin stated that the Commission does not foresee Neighborhood Services being cut or changed in the city budget plan.

Committee Reports:

Beautiful Battle Creek Award:

The home of Stanley and Deborah Fountain, 171 N. Union Street, was nominated by David Nielsen

Crime Watch:

Dave Smolinski spoke about the May 30 Stealth Rally in the Calhoun Street area and the current membership drive. Monthly education classes are being planned to help neighbors learn more about emergency personnel and procedures.

Old Business:

The surveillance camera initiative is continuing to gather data and area businesses have agreed to cooperate and “pool” their various camera capabilities. Dave offered to answer any questions regarding the city-wide camera proposal – just give him a call.

Additional Comments:

- Capital Avenue/Union Street traffic light replacement is taking too long for completion.
- Question asked about status of “up-zoning” project in the Capital corridor area, south of Capital Avenue. This was begun several years ago and has not been dealt with since. Suggestion that Mike Buckley be asked to come to speak to this issue.

June agenda input:

- Tim Mix – Mix Hardware update
- Mike Buckley – up-zoning
- Sarah Walters – Felon reentry program
- Summit Pointe rep to discuss home placements

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.