

WESTLAKE/PRAIRIEVIEW
Neighborhood Planning Council #10
Meeting Minutes
February 25, 2008

Call to Order & Welcome:

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vice Chairman David Wood. The Invocation was lead by Cecil Salinas.

Attendance:

Members Present: Vice Chairman David Wood, Immediate Past Chairman Jeff Koteles, Jim Walbeck, John Behrendt, Mary Lou Ramon, Len Spano, Linda Patenaude, Cecil Salinas, Joyce Garrett, Pete Francisco, Nancy Slocum, Steve Barker, Julie Davis, Gary Blagg, Diana Cole, Bill Morris, Cal Canfield, Dave Weaver, Opal Bell, Joseph Ratti, and Karol Henegar. (21 Total present)

Excused: Luann Walbeck, Mary Lyn Smith, Gary Dodd, Dwight Grandgenett, Jerry Gilbert, Joann Novelli, Marie Ozzello, Sandy Burrus and Joanne Heinrich.

Special Guests Present: Mayor Mark Behnke, Commissioner Andrew Yankama, Commissioner Susan Baldwin, Scott Ganton (Heritage Assisted Living), Mark Brown (Developer), Chris Brown, Martin Brenner, Bill Hanner, Sherrill Cotton, Brian Cotton, Rosetta Sanders (Chair NPC 2), and Robert Slocum. (12 Total Present)

City Staff Present: Cherise Brandell (Director BC Neighborhood Services Department), Vicki Ellis (new city representative from Neighborhood Services), and Officer Doug Bagwell (BCPD) (3 Total Present)

Grand Total Present: 36 In Attendance

Additions or Deletions to Agenda:

It was moved by Jeff Koteles, supported and carried to add under Old Business the discussion which should have carried over from January's meeting regarding Officers of the Council acting on matters relating to Council business without the knowledge and consent of the Council as prescribed in the By-laws.

Approval of Previous Minutes:

It was moved by Mary Lou Ramon, supported, and carried to approve the Minutes of the November 26, 2007 meeting of this Council with the following corrections: Jack Ludlow was incorrectly reported as being present when he has not been a member for two years; Debbie Standish who is, also, no longer a member was incorrectly listed as absent; and it was omitted that it was voted on by the Council and approved to accept the Membership Committee report read at this Council's November meeting by Membership Committee Chair Mary Lou Ramon which stated that the Membership Committee had met and voted to adhere to this Council's By-laws and the Open Meetings Act as required by law when appointing members to the Council, and that the Membership Chair would continue to

make an announcement at each meeting asking members present if they knew of any person who would like to be considered for membership on the Council.

Correspondence, Announcements & Public Service

Announcements from Commissioners:

Commissioner Yankama relayed that he had numerous calls regarding potholes this past month. He had met with the city manager and the mayor regarding the condition of Battle Creek's roads and what could be done to improve them. He mentioned that S. 24th Street between Columbia Avenue and Helmer Road would be redone this year. Members had many concerns about the conditions of the roads within this council's boundaries and sidewalks not being shoveled along Columbia Avenue as well and Commissioner Yankama promised to bring answers back next month.

Commissioner Simmons stated he was the city Commission's representative to Access Vision and that the City Commission at its meeting the previous week had authorized the city manager to negotiate with AT&T to provide cable service to Battle Creek. This was hoped to bring some competition with better rates to the local market. Under new state law this could be selectively applied. So it was going to be a wait and see kind of thing as to where it would be offered. Access Vision would be available from AT&T, too.

Police Reports:

Officer Bagwell had no report this month but took concerns from members. Members may contact Commander Jackie Hampton by voice mail at 966-3306 ext. 1006 with any police concerns occurring outside of the meeting time.

Committee Chair Reports:

Membership:

Mary Lou Ramon noted that several members had called to be excused.

Beautiful Battle Creek Award:

Joann Novelli nominated 23 S. 31st Street after the meeting.

CDAC:

Linda Patenaude relayed that the CDAC committee had completed their work. They would make their formal recommendation to the Commission on March 4, 2008.

Neighborhood Planning:

Steve Barker, noted that the Planning Commission would be considering the petition request of Mary Lou Ramon for Lakeview Co-op Apartments for a rezoning classification at their February 27, 2008 meeting.

City Staff Report:

Neighborhood Services:

Cherise Brandell handed out a report for the month of December 2007 regarding the rental inspections. Members commented that they would like to see a complete code report concerning all areas and issues within our boundaries. She also introduced Vickie Ellis who would be the new city representative replacing Cherise at this Council's meetings. A member raised the issue of which department was responsible for foreclosed properties sitting vacant with code violations. A member relayed that members could call these types of complaints in to code compliance at 966-3387 and they would be responded to. Another member wanted the format of the reports to remain in color and to contain the complete code activity, not just the rental issues.

Members are encouraged to call the following City Department's directly to have their concerns entered into the Golden Services system ahead of the meeting so that the Council may track progress on the issue:

Susan Bedsole (All Code issues) (Director of Licensing & Compliance) 966-3343

Mike Buckley (Development site issues) (Planning and Community Development) 966-3320.

For General Code Compliance and Building Permit related issues you may call:

Dennis Mckinley (General Code) 966-3387

Kim Tuck (Permits) 966-3387

Vicki Ellis (Rental issues) 966-3379

Special Reports:

a. Joyce Garrett relayed that the Park Foundation had held their first 2008 meeting and they were working with the Parks and Recreation department and would have Boy Scout troupe 377 putting in trail markers.

b. Bill Morris stated that his committee had held a meeting this past month and that they were putting together a report to present to the city. He was asked if they were officially a business improvement district. He responded that they hoped to have this in front of the commission soon.

Old Business:

a. Election of Officers: Ballots were distributed for the election of officers for terms to run from March 2008 through February 2009. Vice Chairman David Wood declined his nomination for the position of Chair and the following persons were elected to serve for one year with terms beginning March 2008 and running through February 2009: **Chair:** Gary Blagg, **Vice Chair:** Joe Ratti and **Secretary:** Dwight Grandgenett.

b. Officers Acting Without the Knowledge or Consent of Council: Jeff Koteles stated that in light of the election results it would be moot to carry on this discussion at this time. He did however, caution newly elected officers that it was imperative that they conduct themselves according to the By-laws and bring all Council business to the table for discussion and a vote of the membership as a whole. He further stated that it undermined the integrity of the Council for Council business to be conducted outside of

the meetings without the majority of the Council members even being aware of what was going on.

New Business:

a. Scott Ganton from Heritage Assisted Living Facility presented the Council with plans for a 30 unit "Memory Care" facility for Alzheimer's patients which he wanted to develop just south of the current building as a separate building. This was well received by the Council.

b. Mark Brown present the Council with plans to convert the Professional Park West office complex at the corner of Columbia Avenue and S. 24th Street into a funeral home with living quarters. He responded to questions from members; namely, concerns were raised regarding the excess traffic flow this might create on Columbia Avenue which already had a vehicle congestion problem.

c. Mary Lou Ramon relayed that her owners association had presented a petition to the Planning department for the purpose of updating the zoning for her neighborhood which would allow for the rebuilding of the four unit buildings as four units. As it stands now this area is zoned R-2 which only allows a two unit to be rebuilt in the place of a four unit if a four unit was more than 50% destroyed by fire. She noted that this was causing a financing problems, as well as, an insurance issues as most lenders were hesitant to loan the full value of a four unit with the R-2 zoning classification and it was difficult to get insured for full rebuilding costs. She also stated that Mike Buckley had come up with an alternate plan called an overlay zoning district which allow the four units to be conforming and would preserve the integrity of the neighborhood without creating more density. She noted that Mike would be explaining this in more detail at the Planning Commission meeting on February 27, 2008.

Special Presentation:

Mayor Mark Behnke gave a brief overview of the history and structure of NPC's. He noted that a new charter was developed between NPC's and the city in 2005 and adopted by the City Commission. A question was raised as to whether the new aligned By-laws which had taken four years of committee work to craft would ever come before the City Commission. Mayor Behnke promised to look into the matter. He was reminded that several Councils, including this one, had opted with consent of the Commission to include the city givens: the Open Meeting's Act provision, a minimum quorum of members present to conduct Council business, instead of going with the Template By-laws, but that no one had seen this go before the City Commission for final approval.

Comments for the Good of the Order:

Public Comments:

Commissioner Yankama remarked that the outgoing officers deserved recognition for their service.

Member Comments:

Joyce Garrett and Steve Barker congratulated the new officers and gave appreciation to outgoing officers as well.

Next Meeting: Monday, March 24, 2008 at 7:00 p.m..

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. by Vice Chair David Wood.

Respectfully Submitted:

Mary Lou Ramon, Acting Secretary

Reminder: Please call Chairman Blagg at 965-3221, Vice Chairman Joe Ratti at 969-0636, or Membership Chair Mary Lou Ramon at 963-5101 for an excused absence if you are unable to attend a meeting.

Memo: If you know of a prospective new member, be sure to give their name to Membership Chair Mary Lou Ramon at a meeting or call her at 963-5101. The only requirement for membership on this Council, or any Council, is that a person must actually live within, operate a legal business within, be employed within, or own property within the NPC boundaries to be considered. Per the Open Meeting's Act all persons desiring membership will be considered on a first come first served basis.

Special Reminder: *If your child or grandchild has an event scheduled on the same night and time as this Council's Regular meeting, do not hesitate to call to be excused. Our children come first.*