

MINUTES

**Minges Brook/Riverside Neighborhood Planning Council (NPC) #11
Riverside Elementary School Library
650 Riverside Drive Battle Creek, MI 49015
Wednesday April 28, 2010**

1. **7:00 PM – Welcome and opening:** Randall Champlin welcomed the members and guests.
2. **Attendance sheet:** Those in attendance were: Randall Champlin, Jim Haadsma, Marge Barda, Marcia Holmwall, Glenn Holmwall, John Godfrey, Wendy Rominger, Lorie Hopkins, Dave Hawks, Frank Eglund, Susan Bedsole, Susan Baldwin, Jim Baldwin, Bev Vallillee, George Vallillee, Ann Wyson, Jan Barry, Rick Baron, John MacFarlane; Guests: Laura Otte, Chris Jones, Monte Kizzier, Kandy Kizzier, Andy Yankama
3. **Additions or deletions to this agenda** There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.
4. **Approval of the March meeting's minutes and February amended minutes** Motion to approve the amended February minutes was made/supported by Godfrey/G. Holmwall and approved. Also a change was made in the March minutes to read "That the NPC did not receive notification of other meetings." under The Big Marsh Drainage Project. Motion to approve the amended minutes was made/supported by Godfrey/G. Holmwall and approved.
5. **Correspondence sent/received** Randall reviewed the following:
 - Invitation to participate in a tour of Battle Creek Central Construction Progress on May 17th 4-5PM and on June 3rd 4-5 PM
 - Zoning Board of Appeals April Agenda
 - Next Planning Commission Meeting Wed, May 26, 2010
 - NPC 10 April Agenda
6. **City staff reports**
 - Police Department Report – Laura Bush is on duty in this area. Biggest issue right now is larceny of vehicles. Also, there are reports of speeding along Riverside Drive and Riverside School. Speeding is an issue the police are trying to address. An area of East Hamilton between Riverside and Capital SW is an area where a lot of speeding is occurring.
 - City representative – Susan Bedsole reviewed the crime report and the NPC report for All Code Officers and All Categories. She reported that Finlay's is adding a patio; companies are locating in Fort Custer; Riverside Bridge construction is on time and there is replacement of deteriorated sewers. Kovans, (to be opened the first part of September) will be having many employees and the hope is to have the new employees reside in Battle Creek.
 - City/County Commissioners' reports - Andy Yankama, City Commissioner, reported he voted for the increase in waste discharge for TODA in Fort Custer as progress must continue and the company agreed to be responsible for any cleanup of waste. Mr. MacFarlane spoke not to have a fee for Willard Park was part of an overall plan approved by the City Commission in prior years and he asked Mr. Yankama if this had been brought up at the commission meeting in the month of March. Yankama assured the NPC that he will vote against any fees for the Willard Park. MacFarlane commented that the beach/park is in much better shape and is generally used well and responsibly by the city residents. Glenn Holmwall supported the present policy of no charge for the Willard Park as the NPC previously had many meetings to have no charges made for entry to the Beach. Yankama indicated that no decision has been made as yet with putting in place any charges. Eglund asked what is the cost of the City to upkeep Willard Beach? Yankama will research this and bring an answer. Susan Baldwin, City Mayor, reported that she is concerned about the large number of police calls and some of the vandalism that has occurred at Willard Beach. Is the solution to charge for entry? This needs to be looked into. She reported Elizabeth Fulton had an accident and unable to attend the meeting tonight. The

budget process is challenging this year. A reduction of \$2 million needs to be made into the budget for the next year. Staff has been asked to come up with efficiencies to narrow the costs in the budget. A suggestion was the Sailing Club which is low on priorities and could be considered. Budget has to be adopted by June by state law. Workshops will be held between now and then. The downtown residential situation is on hold; the city is continuing to try to have some residential development – economy has made it difficult. Nine firefighters have been laid off due to the budget. City employees were asked to take three furlough days; the firefighters did not agree and so layoffs in that department occurred. Regarding the Willard Beach reports of vandalism, MacFarlane rebutted that in reports of crimes during the period of 1998-2008 police reports statistics showed that after the admission fee was discontinued the police calls diminished. Once the City discontinued police rangers, etc., the numbers of calls were still in line with the average for such a park, but did increase. The calls were of minor infraction or keys locked in cars. County Commissioner James Haadsma reported that in April the phosphorus ban was returned because the Health Department did not publish notice of the ban. The County Board will hopefully act on this at the next meeting. The Equalization Department reported that property assessments are lower resulting in fewer taxes. The Central Dispatch is open and operating. The county jail census was reviewed in order to rent beds to other law enforcement organizations when room is available. Additional funds have become available to aid the Substance Abuse Council and similar groups involved with substance abuse.

7. Committee reports

- Beautiful Battle Creek Award – Ann Wyson; Riverside Community Church at 303 Riverside Drive. Annie asks for any suggestions on awarding possible properties.
- Membership – Wendy Rominger No new members at this time.
- CDAC Update – Wendy Rominger No report
- Neighborhoods and Land Use – Frank Eglund Nothing new to report
- Schools – Vacant Chairperson
- NPC 11 Programs – James Haadsma Next month is high-speed rail in Michigan.

8. Old business from previous meetings:

- **Nomination Committee report.** Randall Champlin, Chair; James Haadsma, Vice Chair; Marge Barda Secretary comprise the candidates for next year.

9. New business

- **This month's program** - Laura Otte, Program Coordinator with Calhoun County's Substance Abuse Council, presented the efforts to reduce and prevent underage drinking that are taking place. Jim Haadsma introduced Laura Otte. *Neighborhood Empowerment to Prevent Underage Drinking* is the focus of the received grant and a PowerPoint was presented explaining this. The focus of this grant is the city of Battle Creek with the time span being four years. The staff of five is able to work well within a geographical area the size of the city. The grant uses Neighborhood Planning Councils to help in implementing the grant. Underage drinking is the purpose of the grant as alcohol is the usually first substance used. Laura reviewed the best practice prevention strategies and future activities through the grant.

10. Public comments Michael Jaconnette, prosecuting attorney, spoke to the NPC on his running for Probate Court judge.

11. Members' comments Lori Hopkins reported on the Marsh Drain Board committee.

12. Next meeting: Wednesday, May 27th, 2010 7:00PM, Riverside Elementary Library

- Program Topic: Doug Deaton talking about high-speed rail in Michigan
- Election of NPC Officers for 2010/2011

13. 8:50 PM – Adjournment