

Fremont/Verona/McKinley Neighborhood Planning council

May 18, 2011

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Members: David Nielsen, Sherry Sofia, David Salerno, John Walton, Mark Jones, Laurie Sullivan

Guests: Glenn Holmwall, Marcia Holmwall, Marcia Austin, Szenoria Smith, Susan Bedsole, Jim Haadsma

The May 18 meeting was called to order at 7:00 by Chairman David Nielsen. Laurie Sullivan continued as note-taker for this meeting.

Minus a quorum approval of the April minutes was postponed until June.

City Reports:

BCPD: Spring weather picks up activity. There was nothing out the ordinary to report. "Red truck" warning of last month turned out to be a hoax.

Member concerns:

1. Walkers in street on E. Ave. N. continue to defy traffic
2. Noise still an issue – more police presence has resulted in more ticketing of offenders

Program: Lt. Todd Madsen, BCPD

Two-officer units during the winter have been returned to single units with increased spring activity. This has resulted in greater patrolling of the area. Thirteen new officers have been hired in the past year to increase patrols. There has been a reduction in command positions. Many cities have lost officers due to budget cuts. BC is holding its own. Violent crime is down. Copper prices are up so be alert for signs of "urban mining". Prostitution is again on the rise with better weather. Stings are planned for that and copper/metal sales.

Member concerns:

1. Prostitution problem – certain businesses attract them. There is a need to deal with those businesses.
2. How to deal with known drug houses – use the **Silent Observer tip line (964-3888)** whenever activity noticed. Felony drug arrests can result in property seized if owned. Most drug houses are rentals. House on Harvard St. still a problem and is owner-

occupied. If there are two prosecutions within 180 days the padlock law can be used. Parole officers and police work together on this issue.

3. Disparity between south side and north side safety concerns – rentals play a big part in safety concerns and are more prevalent on the north side

City of Battle Creek: Susan Bedsole

1. Weed control officer now on duty through the summer – grass/weeds need to be 9” or taller for action to be taken.
2. NSP has bought more properties so more will be mowed during the summer. There have been over 200 demos with more to come.
3. Dennis McKinley will be taking over as City rep. for this NPC beginning in June
4. New rental property fees have taken effect and cith will work with property owners.

Member concerns:

1. Emmett Street street repair still a problem – dirt is creating bigger and bigger potholes (Note – blacktop repair has begun as of this writing)
2. Property demos – 66 Calhoun-yes, 136 Fremont-no

City Commission: Laurie Sullivan

1. Budget is the biggest upcoming issue
2. Passed zoning ordinance change to allow tattoo parlors in downtown area (Michigan Ave)

Committee Reports:

Neighborhood Association Update:

Freedom Acres – Freedom Acres garden planned for corner of Harvard and Groveland

NPC Events:

Salvation Army store having 99-cent clothing sale May 19

Old Business:

1. Housing Board of Appeals Fees – response from Mayor Baldwin that the city must justify the fees issues and will look at how to incorporate our recommendation into the fee structure
2. North Side Mater Planning Update – Crime is currently the focus, with Neighborhood Watch and Crime Watch being discussed

New Business:

BCHS Parking Lot Request – to build an additional parking lot near the corner of Emmett and North Ave. This will result in the demo of three vacant buildings – one on Emmett and two on North Ave. The company undertaking the project has requested NPC support. Minus a quorum the consensus of the members present was to support the proposal, conditional on the removal of a planned entrance on North Ave. and suitable landscaping to enhance the property.

Member comments:

1. Suggestion to “promote” guest speakers to the NPC to increase community awareness and attendance.

Guest Comments:

Jim Haadsma – County Commissioner

1. County Commission redistricting will change some of our representation, specifically precincts 15, 16 and 17
2. CC budget will be reflect a \$1.6M reduction
3. Burnham Brook will no longer be a center for CA senior “meals on wheels” – that service may be moving to Coldwater

Meeting adjourned at 8:40