

## **REVITALIZING NEIGHBORHOODS COMMITTEE**

### **Meeting Minutes 12-18-07**

The meeting was called to order at 9:35 by Chair, Paul Haan.

#### Committee Members Present:

Lori Stanton, Christine Helms-Maletic, James Warden, Carol Townsend, Mike Cary, Paul Haan, John Gussenbauer, Frank Lynn, Kevin Wisselink

#### Zoning Update

The Zoning Subcommittee identified five topics for highlighting in the zoning brochure: residential zone districts, mixed-use commercial districts, citizen advocacy, signs and definitions and terms. The brochure could be supplemented by single sheets of information on specific topics of interest, such as demolition, conversion, non-conforming uses, transitional/city center areas, landscaping, fences, trees/green spaces, etc. These would be made available to those who want in-depth information on certain subjects.

Paul, Carol and Christine are meeting with Lee Weber of the Dyer Ives Foundation to request funding for the zoning brochures and staff time to match the City's investment in the project. The proposal will also include training for volunteers to go out to business and neighborhood associations to talk about the new code and to bring feedback to the committee about demand for further workshops and training.

#### Oakdale Neighbors Update

United Growth gave Oakdale Neighbors \$500 from our Kellogg grant to develop a neighborhood plan for the area surrounding Kalamazoo St between Hall and Boston with an MSU Urban Planning Practicum Group. Working in conjunction with South East End Neighborhood Association (SEENA), Fuller Area Neighbors (FAN) and Boston Square Business Association, Oakdale Neighbors plans to create an Area Specific Plan that capitalizes on the Master Plan's designation of a Transit Oriented Development and on winter design concepts. The \$2,000 balance of the cost of the MSU student group will be paid by the Dyer Ives Foundation.

#### Energy Project

Carol presented a summary of a project for which she received a grant from the State of Michigan for energy conservation in local businesses in Easttown and SWAN neighborhoods. She has hired Kevin Cook to meet with businesses owners and survey their buildings. Kevin then provides each owner with a written report specific to his/her business about strategies to conserve energy with an estimate of the cost savings associated with each strategy. Each business will be revisited at the end of one year to determine the effectiveness of the recommendations. This project has great potential for expansion into other business districts and residential areas.

#### RNC 2008 Goals

Our next meeting is January 15th at the ICCF building. At that time the committee will review its progress and engage in planning for 2008. Potential topics include zoning, neighborhood revitalization, economic development indicators, luncheon forums, networking events and local business gift registry. Committee members should bring suggestions. Election of officers will also occur at that time.

#### Announcements

Carol will forward an email she was sent about "Green Drinks at the Green Well." All are invited to attend.

The Green GR Committee met on December 17 to outline its work plan for updating the Grand Rapids Master Plan and Parks Plan. Issues that arose included connectivity, transit, public (not necessarily publicly-owned) spaces, riverfront and other natural features.

Respectfully submitted,  
Christine Helms-Maletic