

Revitalizing Neighborhoods Committee
Meeting Minutes
20 May 2008

Present: Jill Myer, Mike Williams, Paul Haan, John Gussenbauer, Frank Lynn, Russ Lewis, Mike Cary, Heather Ibrahim, Laura Kauffman, Gail Heffner, Ben Stehouwer, Holly Zoe, and Carol Townsend

The meeting called to order at 9:45 by Paul Haan, chair.

Approval of Minutes:
Minutes from 04-15-08 were approved as presented.

Ideal Neighborhood Draft:

The committee began by looking at whether or not the framework for an “Ideal Neighborhood” is sufficient. The following suggestions were made to improve the framework:

1. We need a section related to schooling/children. It could be a new section or embedded into another but since schools and children affect many decisions, it needs to be incorporated more. [Mike W. will draft some language.]
2. There should be a section on IT infrastructure. This could fit under sections one and four.
3. Develop a greater emphasis on job centers—support for finding them as well as their location.
4. Incorporate recreation to a greater extent within relevant sections.
5. There is interest in moving toward having “green” neighborhoods - pointing to the need for green neighborhood planning.

Discussion began on how to evaluate neighborhoods using the “Ideal Neighborhoods” vision. The following methods were proposed:

1. Utilize existing measures that tie in to our vision
2. Use more qualitative/anecdotal measures (this area has a popular theatre, etc.)
3. Look at attractors/repulsors for a neighborhood
4. We could use a rating system (1-10) and look at how neighborhoods score

The last measure raised the question of who will be doing the scoring of neighborhoods. Is this meant to be a tool for neighborhood groups or something different? Carol made the point that this guide should be a tool for the RNC to use as a way to focus its work over the next few years. We could use it to identify neighborhoods that need specific help that we can then assist them with.

The discussion of an “Ideal Neighborhood” concluded with the decision to have each member think about possible indicators that are the most important and should be focused on. There are many possibilities so we want to focus on the top indicators for each heading of the vision. At the next meeting, we will brainstorm and boil down the indicators to the best and easily evidenced ones. [**Action:** Everyone come to the next RNC meeting with possible indicators for each category within the vision.]

Zoning Brochure Update:

The first draft is nearing completion; we are just waiting for a few final pieces. The draft will be to the RNC by or at the next meeting. Holly (Carol's Intern) has begun a PowerPoint for the community presentations the committee agreed to have.

Video Update:

The "RNC Video Brown Bag Lunch" scheduled for May 9th was canceled and plans to reschedule have not been discussed at this point.

Announcements:

Carol passed around the MSU Practicum Report for the Boston Square area and discussed the Visual Preference Survey the students put together. Carol suggested that the VPS could be an extremely useful tool for other neighborhoods to utilize in their planning processes. Both the Practicum Report and the VPS that was conducted by Oakdale Neighbors are available at <http://oakdaleneighbors.org/ShapingOurSquare.html>

Meeting adjourned around 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Zoe
Acting Secretary