

Revitalizing Neighborhoods Committee
Meeting Minutes
17 June 2008

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

Committee Members Present: Paul Haan, Jessica Zahn, Heather Ibrahim, Laurie Kauffman, Cynthia Price, Russ Lewis, John Gussenbauer, Mike Williams, Linda Frey, Holly Zoe, and Carol Townsend.

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes from 05-20-08 were approved as presented.

Updates:

Green Citizen:

Green Citizen is a certification project that United Growth is working on as a way to increase UGKC's membership. The certification will be offered to citizens who take a "quiz" about their own actions & behavior and whether or not they are environmentally-friendly and sustainable. The quiz will also help respondents make the connection between their individual actions and smart land use and encourage them to get involved in United Growth.

Grant-funding has been applied for to cover the costs of developing the website and Holly (Carol's intern) is currently looking for volunteers to commit about 10 hours between now and December to help prepare the material covered on the quiz. If you are interested, email Holly at zoholly@msu.edu or Carol at townse36@msu.edu.

Zoning Brochure Project:

The draft for the traditional neighborhood-low and medium density residential zoning categories is almost finished! The draft has been sent to Grand Rapids' graphic artists and we are just waiting for the design work to be completed. It will probably take another month or so, however, because one of the two graphic artists is retiring and so work is backed up a bit.

Work for the next brochure (TN-TBA) will begin soon. Holly and Carol are going to draft some text that will be reviewed at a July meeting of the Zoning Brochure Committee.

New Business:

Acronym List:

Carol mentioned that someone recently contacted her and mentioned that there are *so* many acronyms out there in the community development world and that it might be useful if someone compiled a list of them all. The RNC was able to generate many excellent acronyms that Holly and Carol will compile into a list.

Old Business:

Ideal Neighborhood in 2030

Holly added the changes that were suggested at the last meeting and after reviewing that, members suggested that perhaps self-sufficiency (including shopping locally, locally available job opportunities, schooling etc) should be broken out as its own category.

The discussion then moved on to indicators and how to determine what those should be. The question of why we are creating indicators was raised as it is central to determining how the indicators are framed. Two purposes were mentioned: (1) finding out if our (RNC) work is effective and (2) introduce to other groups how they can evaluate a neighborhood and assess its trends and patterns. A consensus on what the indicators need to be was established:

1. Enable us to measure progress but also to focus on our work specifically
2. Need to be complex enough to capture many streams of information while simple enough to facilitate data collection and implementation

Four criteria were decided on for assessing the quality of an indicator:

1. understandable
2. usable
3. applicable
4. measurable

[Action: For next month's meeting, everyone will take a point from the ideal neighborhood vision and come up with the many indicators that could be used for evaluation. Carol has the assignments if anyone has forgotten or does not yet have a point.]

Announcements:

Green Grand Rapids: The first community forum is happening on June 25th at the DeVos Place. Parking is free for those who car pool, bus passes will be given to the first 100 arrivals, and bike racks will be in great supply.

Next Meeting: There will be no coalition meeting in July, but the RNC is still meeting. The RNC will continue to work on indicators for the Ideal Neighborhood Vision and is meeting from 9am to 1030am on July 15th.

Meeting adjourned around 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Zoe
Acting Secretary