

College/Seminary Focus Area Task Force Meeting Notes for March 13, 2007

Neighborhood Survey

Ginny Gregory reviewed results of the survey that was mailed out to all property owners in the Focus Area. Approximately 200 were mailed out; 33 have been returned for a return rate of about 15 percent. She distributed tables showing survey results and, where applicable, equivalent data for the Focus Area as a whole. This showed that while the return rate was actually pretty good for this type of survey, the results are somewhat skewed by the fact that over 85% of the surveys were from owner-occupants while 80% of households in the neighborhood are rental properties. With this proviso in mind, the primary concerns highlighted in the surveys were safety, the condition of streets and sidewalks, and issues relating to property maintenance and ownership.

Goals

Based on what had been determined at previous meetings as the neighborhood's assets and issues or problems, the group began to develop goals to be achieved over a 5-year period. These were divided into the following categories – public improvements, crime/safety, attracting new businesses, kids, and housing. Specific goals and objectives proposed at this meeting were as follows:

Public Improvements

- ◆ Deal with the blind spot at Baker and Seminary, at least until Seminary is no longer used.
- ◆ Provide adequate sidewalks, curbs and gutters throughout the neighborhood.
- ◆ Resolve the drainage problem at Kishwaukee School.
- ◆ Take care of potholes in College Avenue.
- ◆ Do street cleaning more often.
 - ◆ Ginny to check to see how often this is scheduled in residential neighborhoods;
 - ◆ If they were willing to do it, could Behr do this on a regular basis on College Avenue?
- ◆ Street lights. (Ginny to find out the process for getting new lights installed.)
- ◆ Hanging baskets and other similar improvements to improve curb appeal.
- ◆ Develop Jane Addams Park following the demolition of the Jane Addams development.
- ◆ Signage at the Baker/Seminary/Gregory triangle.

Crime

- ◆ Deal with crime issues at the Mobil Gas Station and at Part It Market.
- ◆ Consider establishment of a temporary Police substation.
- ◆ Piggyback on the demolition of the Jane Addams development to start weeding.
- ◆ Weed & Seed Program
 - ◆ Weeding process can start as soon as hot spots are identified.
 - ◆ Develop strategies for the seed phase.
 - ◆ Make this the area where the Police Department does experimental _____.
- ◆ Street lighting.

- ◆ Clear trees and brush.

Attracting New Businesses

- ◆ Create a tax increment finance district.
- ◆ Need a bookstore/internet café/coffee shop.
- ◆ High speed wireless internet access.

Kids

- ◆ Pedestrian overpass across Kishwaukee Street.
- ◆ Park.
- ◆ Connect Seminary and Kishwaukee Streets with green space.
- ◆ Community Center. ORCHiD is looking at buildings not in great shape to use as a community center/art center/music center. Options: 304 Bremer, next to Kishwaukee School, Jon Agustsson's house. Make this a new Hull House.
- ◆ Green space next to the river.

House Rehab

- ◆ Designate this a historic district.
- ◆ HOPE VI to include the rehab of some houses in 2008, upgrade of Brewington Oaks.
- ◆ Demolish Jon Agustsson's apartment building on Division Court and Wayne Johnson's apartment building.

What's Next

- ◆ Report from the Park District on their plans for the neighborhood.
- ◆ Expand on these goals in developing a plan for College/Seminary.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, April 11th at 5:30 PM
510 Seminary Street