

University Neighborhood Partnership
Meeting Minutes
January 19, 2009

Members Present:

- Institutional Representatives: Scott Blair (ESF), Barbara Karper (LeMoyne), Beth Rougeux (SU), Win Thurlow (Upstate), Sharon Sherman (Syracuse City – for Fernando Ortiz)
- Neighborhood/ Resident Representatives: Barbara Humphrey (WENA –Westcott/ East), Joe Russo (SEUNA – Westcott/ West), Mark Strodel (Sherman Park)
- Investor/ Owners: Hugh Gregg (Westcott/ East), Pat Pfohl (Outer Comstock), Norm Roth (Berry Park), Paul Walsh (Westcott/ West), Brenda (Outer Comstock)
- Others: Christina Merchant, 2 SU students from Chris' class

Members Absent:

- Students: ESF, Upstate Medical University, SU, LeMoyne

Agenda

Reviewed at the start and agreed upon by all members

- Introductions
- Presentation of Paul Walsh's suggestions
- Discussion of UNP's internet domain name
- UNSAAC report (Barbara Humphrey)
- Discussion of status in strategic plan

Items added:

- Addressing Student Representatives
- Whether Sharon Sherman is permanently taking the place of Fernando Ortiz
- Meeting place for the rest of meetings

Correction for minutes from meeting held December 12, 2008: Joe Russo was not present at the meeting but was listed as such under "Members Present". Request for the correction was approved.

UNP Internet Domain Name

The cost of the domain name is \$20 per year and the time to renew is approaching. The group discussed whether it is worth retaining ownership. The group has never paid for the site itself, it was always covered by another party. UNP is currently utilizing space on the Government and Community Relations (GCR) at SU. Some feel the UNP website domain name is long and cumbersome and prefer the site at GCR. In addition, the site was paid for, but never developed. Members suggested money paid for the site could instead go towards a volunteer for site development and maintenance. Members also suggested to continue to use the GCR site for now and forego renewal.

Decision: The group agreed to forego renewal of UNP domain name and continue to use location on GCR website at SU. Barbara Humphrey will inform necessary party that UNP declines keeping the site.

UNSAAC Report

Barbara Humphrey reported to the group. Two safety programs are currently well funded and almost to the amount requested. Code enforcement proposal was not recommended for funding. It was stated that it is too difficult to add additional officers and the choice was made not to do it. The group discussed the possibility of looking for funding elsewhere as well as the ability to reconsider their request and re-apply by the next deadline.

Decision: The group agreed to reconsider the proposal and resubmit the application to UNSAAC for next time the proposal in time to re-apply to UNSAAC.

Meeting Location

The group discussed the Westcott Day habilitation Center as a possible permanent location for meetings. Members voiced desire for consistency and argued that the Westcott Day habilitation Center offers convenient parking and restrooms. Norm Roth offered to continue to retrieve the key to the center for UNP.

Decision: The group agreed to make the Westcott Day habilitation Center the permanent meeting location for UNP and that Norm Roth will be responsible for getting the key before the meeting.

Student Representatives

Institutional Representatives reported on their situation regarding student representation. The SU student was supposed to attend and she is unsure why the student did not. The LeMoyne student has a class conflict and is seeking a scheduling change in order to attend next time. The ESF student was unable to attend tonight, but will return in February. Upstate is currently looking for a student that lives in the neighborhood and has not yet located one. The group discussed the importance of the student voice and explored other processes if stable student representation proves too challenging. Members suggested gathering students at specific times rather than requesting attendance to the monthly meetings. The group also suggested exploring internet resources to get feedback/ input from students such as the UNP website.

Syracuse City Representation

The group talked about Sharon Sherman permanently replacing Fernando Ortiz as the City representative. Sharon explained that Fernando asked she attend in his place this meeting. Group expressed need for consistency for the role.

Decision: The group decided to keep Fernando as the official representative and keep him on the UNP e-mail listserv. Sharon will attend meetings and report to Fernando.

Paul Walsh

Paul distributed packets containing an analysis of current dispute resolution systems (DRS) between local city/ county governments, academic institutions, and individuals/ interest groups in the special neighborhood district. The packet also included a proposed dispute resolution system, a communication flow chart, an analysis of current cash flow based on the current dispute resolution system and a modified cash flow because of the proposed dispute resolution system. Paul walked the group through the packet. In the current DRS (page 1), disputes are addressed by two main entities – local government and universities/ colleges. The proposed DRS (page 2) would create representatives from each group on the Special Neighborhood District Association (SNDA) committee to go between interest groups and authority groups. These new representatives would cultivate collaboration between groups and consider limited resources and needs of each group.

The communication flow chart (page 3) illustrated how the SNDA committee representatives would increase opportunity and access for individuals, committee members, etc. to provide input. It utilizes social network technology (e.g. "Facebook") to open communication lines in real time in addition to providing a remote meeting tool. The analysis of current cash flow (page 4) demonstrated how current power- and rights-based dispute resolution methods expend cost, time, and other resources. The proposed DRS (page 2) would create revenue as depicted in page 5 of the packet. Group members' response to the packet included nervousness about the arrows in the diagrams and that Facebook gather information and seems possible.

Paul distributed a second packet regarding the health and safety issue, snow removal on public-easement sidewalks. The packet explains the problem, causes of the problem, and provides a recommendation complete with financial analysis. A third handout outlined a suggestion for the

parking/ transportation issue – a localized integrated transportation service, specifically, a fleet of electric car taxis for students without cars.

Group members discussed the idea of a consolidated snow removal service and if the idea or model already exists anywhere else. Members also questioned if the city would delegate the responsibility to a local group. Sharon provided information about the downtown special assessment district and that the authority could be given to a community group as long as it received a certain percentage approval from the community. Beth explained 51% of the community would need to vote, requiring the city to send legal notices and a ballot to residents. Group members could design the special assessment district and create a formula people feel comfortable with for a vote from every property owner in the area. The group suggested more information could be gathered on current special districts, such as garbage removal in Dewitt and special lighting districts. Group members discussed the benefits for businesses and residents as well as ways to encourage approval rather than opposition. Questions were posed regarding business improvement districts and the potential for some systems already in place. Members suggested looking at home owner demographics and income levels to create a formula for who pays what amounts. The group also stated it would need to define demographic categories such as “seniors” for clarification.

Consideration about threatening existing community groups was requested. The group should anticipate resistance from the community for having to go through another committee to address/ solve issues. There is a model in Rochester that serve as the basis for a pilot project, although a pilot project is not possible; once a special district exists, it exists. The UNP would have to do groundwork in order to have full community support before going to the Common Council. *Beth Rougeux has information from the Business Improvement District at SU that may be helpful in determining a fee formula – she will bring it next meeting.* Sharon suggested Dan Mackowitz might help as he set up a downtown BID – *group decision to hold off on bringing a guest.* The group posed questions about establishing the district as a co-op with sponsors or a non-for-profit corporation instead as well as how these are formed. Group members also suggested a look to see if a special district already exists and if so, is it possible to expand it rather than re-create it.

Decision: Next meeting (2/16) will be an information-sharing meeting. If members have a question, they are to research the answer and e-mail Chris Merchant for space on the agenda.

Take Aways

Barbara Humphrey – will bring information on Rochester model

Beth Rougeux – information on snow removal and BID in SU area

Joe Russo – other models that will work to address his concerns

Joe Russo & Barbara Humphrey – information on how co-ops work

Norm Roth – will find out if Westcott Day Hab is available for 2/16 meeting and will get the key

Meeting Review

Positive

- Appreciate Paul bringing ideas – served as basis for conversation
- Interesting for a newcomer
- Ideas were well thought out
- Ideas were well organized

Opportunities for Growth

- Need for student feedback