

## Summary

Capitol Neighborhoods, Inc. Meeting with Mayor Dave

April 30, 2008

4:30 pm – 5:50 pm

Attendees from the City: Mayor Dave, Joel Plant, Mary Schauf, Larry Nelson, Christy Bachmann.

Capitol Neighborhoods, Inc. representatives: Ledell Zellers, President; Bob Holloway, Vice President; Jonathan Cooper, Bassett District; Patrick Meehan, Bassett District; Gene Devitt, Mansion Hill District; John Koffel, Bassett District; Jessica Pavlic, State Langdon; Bert Stitt, Past President.

Alders: Mike Verveer; Marsha Rummel.

Topic covered:

1. Expansion of State Street TIF District to include parts of the Mansion Hill area with a goal of providing Small Cap TIF. This has been discussed at a prior meeting with mayor and staff. Goal was to find out progress made on this commitment and timing.

### Update:

This is in process with the blight study underway which will be finished by the September deadline.

### Agreed Upon Action Steps:

- Set up off line meeting to include Joel Plant, Mario Mendoza, Mark Olinger and CNI/MH representatives. Joel will coordinate with Ledell to make this happen.
  - Develop a timeline and task list to improve communications with the neighborhood. This was identified as one intended outcome of the meeting.
2. Undergrounding of utilities in the Bassett district. This effort utilizes TIF dollars. Help is needed to make this happen.

### Update:

This appears to be moving very slowly. If it doesn't happen this year the designated dollars will go back into the general fund and other taxing entities such as the school district. MGE is only willing to commit to underground W. Main St between Proudfit and Bedford this year. The contract/compensation for MGE for this undergrounding is \$180,000. MGE is asking the city to enter into an agreement with other utilities to do undergrounding. ATT wants compensation. Other utilities on the poles in this area are TDS, Charter & RVP Fiber Optic.

Other steps that can be taken this summer given MGE's limitations are to address areas where MGE services are already undergrounded. These include Bedford and W. Wilson St.

Per Larry the TIF money must be spent by year end or it will lapse; there is no flexibility. He indicated the money must be “out the door”, not just encumbered.

Mike V and Bassett reps expressed frustration at the lack movement as well as concern that the monies would be forfeited. These are monies that should be used to upgrade the neighborhood since that is what these TIF dollars are intended for.

Mike V also requested that TIF money that was budgeted for Broom Street resurfacing be redirected to the replacement of sidewalk on the Carroll Street between State Street and Hamilton Street since the resurfacing of Broom Street will not occur until 2009. It was agreed that would be OK.

Agreed Upon Action Steps:

- Larry will get agreements comparable to the one he has with MGE from the other utilities for W. Main St between Proudfit and Bedford.
  - Larry will pursue with ATT removal of W. Wilson St and Bedford St poles
  - There will be regular communications between Larry and Basset reps on the progress and timing
3. Reinstitution of TIF district in the Bassett area. Goal is to determine feasibility and timing.

Update:

Joel indicated Mark Olinger told him this is not currently in the pipeline. There are no active discussions taking place.

Mike V mentioned the multitude of developments that are going on and that are proposed that will support this district. It is important given the current interest being expressed in the small cap TIF program to be sure there are funds to respond to the needs.

Agreed Upon Action Steps:

- Mayor Dave said he would “get it going”. Joel will be sure the neighborhood is updated about timing. It was again noted that the blight study must be done by September.
4. Homelessness initiative. Goal was to update mayor on what the CNI Homelessness Committee has done and get his perspective on the related issues.

Update:

A number of dialogues have been held attended by homeless people, neighborhood residents, social service providers, and the police. It was emphasized that there needs to be an integrated system across political jurisdictions to address the problems.

The mayor noted there is \$200 million in the county social services budget. He also indicated that the city recently put together a plan for Brittingham park that includes

enforcement, standards of behavior but also outreach to help those in need. He said the reasons for homelessness vary from substance abuse to economic needs to alcohol abuse. He also indicated that he wants to have a broader, city-wide approach to addressing the problems.

Marsha asked the mayor to comment on the Truman Olson property on S. Park St. The mayor said that the Community Development Authority is looking at this property. City staffer Matt Mikolajewski is looking at the feasibility of using it for homeless people. The mayor reported that this is decommissioned federal land. As such it is required to be used for the homeless unless a case can be made that services are not needed. The other way this particular property may not be used for the homeless is if a case can be made for not using that particular property. In that case the services must be provided in a like location elsewhere. This will mean that services will be provided somewhere. The difficulty is where. Porchlight wants to see the property used for “single room occupancy” (SRO) for men. The mayor said that Alder Breuer does not want that service provided on the south side. The Truman Olson property is in Alder Kerr’s district. She is withholding judgment until she knows more.

Agreed Upon Action Steps:

- Joel Plant will get additional information on the potential use of the Truman Olson property for the homeless and the process that must be followed to accomplish this. He will be sure the neighborhood is in the communication loop.
5. Density. This is a topic that impacts our city and the downtown...and yet remains largely undefined. It has a role in zoning and the Downtown Plan. CNI sought the mayor’s perspective on what he thinks density is and how to balance density with quality of life elements including green space, goal of families downtown, transportation, etc.

Update:

It was noted that density can help with supporting services that urban dwellers would like to have close by. It was also noted that although it is sometimes characterized as such, density does not prevent/control sprawl...while other land use decisions/legislation can control sprawl. The mayor noted he would like to have a more lengthy discussion about this topic because he really likes to explore these kinds of issues...but he didn’t have the time. He said that the word density has been a dirty word for a long time. Urban has also been used in a negative way. He advised that the city must be “fine-grained” about density in the downtown...almost block by block. He suggested getting together again to explore this more thoroughly.