

Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan Advisory Group
Summary Meeting minutes
August 22, 2002

Members present: Wilma Bell, Ruth Brown, Rev. Rodney Davis, Edithe Gordon, Merion Green, Lucinda Hall, Berneice Howard, Linda Martin, Tolulope Odunlami, Hazel Offutt, Anita Neal Powell, Elizabeth Scott, Maude Smith Kilgo, Anita Summerour, Geraldine Evans Wilson

Others: Krista Middlebrooks (Mid-City Urban), Reginald Yirenkyi, George Young (Rockville Housing Enterprises),

Staff: Chris Bartlett, Mayra Bayonet, Art Chambers, Randy Clay, Jim Wasilak

Opening Remarks/Administrative Items

Jim Wasilak welcomed the Advisory Group members and thanked them for their participation in the neighborhood planning process. Each member then introduced themselves to the others. Jim passed out the roster and asked everyone to sign in and verify the correct name, address and phone number.

Discussion of the Advisory Group Role and Process

Jim distributed the proposed schedule for the neighborhood plan process, as well as the Advisory Group's proposed meeting schedule and topics to be discussed. It was suggested that the group begin with a visioning session, and then consider topic areas such as land use, transportation, housing, revitalization, the environment and public facilities. Anita Neal Powell questioned whether written comments could be provided to the group if a member could not attend a meeting, to which Jim responded yes. He also noted that the meetings would be taped in case anyone who was not at the meeting would like to listen. Jim explained that, for each topic area, City staff would like to get direction from the Advisory Group so that suggested policies and recommendations that follow the direction could be brought back to the Group for review. Jim noted that the East Rockville Advisory Group has established subcommittees that are working very diligently on various issues, which is slightly different than the typical process. Jim suggested that at the end of the Advisory Group's discussions, the Group should host a meeting for the community at large to share the concepts that have been developed. Jim also recommended a "summit" with the East Rockville Advisory Group to discuss common issues.

Anita Neal Powell asked whether the meetings would be opened to the public, to which Jim answered yes. Jim also suggested that any number of ways could be used to advertise the Advisory Group meetings, including postcards, flyers, a listserv, Rockville Reports and The Rockville Channel. Wilma Bell reminded the Group that a level of commitment is required to allow the process to work, and that issues should not be revisited continually.

The group discussed how they would like to be organized. Jim emphasized that someone from the Group should chair the Advisory Group. This person's role is to keep the meeting on topic and on time, and to coordinate the agenda. He also noted that subcommittees could be

permanently formed or formed on an as-needed basis. Jim recommended that the Group make decisions by consensus, with the possibility for voting on contentious issues. Wilma nominated Tolulope Odunlami as the Chair of the Group, and Elizabeth nominated Rev. Davis as Co-chair. Merion Green also agreed to be a Co-chair, but later withdrew from the role. The Group agreed to meet every other week, and to meet as per the schedule outlined (every other Thursday beginning September 5). The Group agreed that subcommittees could be formed on an as-needed basis, and to make decisions by consensus. Anita Neal Powell requested that the roles and responsibilities of the Chair be drafted for the Group. The Group clarified that the leadership is focused on keeping the meeting moving and on schedule, and coordinating the agenda. The Chair does not need to reinterpret information for the Advisory Group. The Group agreed to meet beginning at 7 p.m., with meetings ending no later than 9 p.m. at the Lincoln Park Community Center.

Discussion of the Public Input Report

Jim briefly reviewed the May 9 Community Kickoff meeting summary, and emphasized that this document can form the basis for many of the Plan's principles. Geraldine Wilson noted that many of the concerns stated are similar to those that came up in the 1984 Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan process. Merion Green and Berneice Howard noted that removing the undesirables from the community will go a long way to solving the problems. Some members were surprised to see that the appearance of the neighborhood was rated poorly by some of those who participated in the Community meeting, and that some had noted diversity of the neighborhood as a weakness. Jim noted that those issues did not get any votes, and may not be a real issue for the Plan.

Anita Summerour suggested that the Group may want to meet at the site of an area to be discussed prior to a meeting, if necessary, and the Group agreed to these "field trips". Jim suggested that the Group may want to validate or invalidate the issues that came up at the Community Kickoff meeting at a future discussion. Wilma noted that only some streets were named as concern for cut-through traffic, but that most have the problem and it should be analyzed comprehensively. Wilma also noted that the borders should be clarified, especially since the former Lincoln High School should be included in the Lincoln Park boundary. Jim noted that with both East Rockville and Lincoln Park updating their plans, there is an opportunity to adjust the boundaries. Berneice Howard questioned what the trucks next to Lincoln High School were used for, to which the response was storage for the public schools. Jim noted that there may be other stakeholders such as adjacent property owners, the School Board staff or Peerless Rockville, that would attend the Group's meetings.

Wilma Bell noted that the Plan should discuss the industrial zoning that surrounds the neighborhood. Hazel Offutt noted that this issue was brought up at the small group that she participated in at the Community Kickoff meeting, and that not continuing past land use patterns and poor decisions affecting the community was a major concern. Wilma stated that this issue, along with the impact of institutional uses, are the top issues to be addressed by the Plan. Berneice said that drugs are a major source of social problems in the community. The Group

agreed to discuss the issues raised at the Community Kickoff meeting at the next Advisory Group meeting.

Other Issues

Edithe Gordon questioned whether Ashley Avenue could be a cul-de-sac in the future. The Committee will discuss this when transportation issues are discussed. Elizabeth Scott questioned whether Lenmore Avenue could be a one-way street. Wilma Bell noted that a total approach to these issues should be employed due to implications on other streets.

Merion Green asked whether the stormwater management upgrade would still take place on Lincoln Avenue. Jim responded that this information would be brought back to the Group.

A concern was raised about the former WINX property, and the potential use of the property as a car storage lot. Jim noted that many of the trees on the site will be preserved, according to plans submitted to the County.

Berneice Howard stated that new homes that are constructed should be compatible with existing residences. Jim responded that there are several ways to accomplish this, including designating historic districts or implementing design guidelines for the neighborhood in the Plan.

Anita Summerour pointed out that home-based businesses are a potential issue, along with institutional uses that develop over time and nonconforming uses. She also noted that the Maryvale shopping center impacts the community even though it is not in the Planning Area, and is a joint issue with East Rockville.

It was also noted that additional traffic counts were needed for Frederick Avenue and Dover Road, in addition to those that have already been obtained.

Next Steps

The Group agreed that the next meeting, to be held on September 5 at 7:00 p.m. in the Lincoln Park Community Center. Items to discuss will be the Background Information, Community Kickoff Meeting Issues, and a visioning exercise.

/rjw