



City of Madison

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Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Approved NORTHPORT-WARNER PARK-SHERMAN NEIGHBORHOOD STEERING COMMITTEE

Thursday, January 31, 2008

6:00 PM

Vera Court Neighborhood Center
614 Vera Court

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

Present: 13 -

Lydia S. Maurer; Jodi L. Hanna; Pat Steele; Benjamin C. Cashin; Olga Cardenas; Lorie A. Walker; Pacia J. Harper; Jolena K. Presti; Diane L. Jetzer; Mary Schumacher; Karen M. Thompson; Donald B. Bruns and Thomas C. Blake

Excused: 2 -

Nicole J. Moriarity and Madeline Scherb

City Alderpersons and Staff: Alderperson Michael Schumacher (District 18); Alderperson Satya Rhodes-Conway (District 12); Jule Stroick; Archie Nicolette; and Linda Horvath (Planning & Community & Economic Development).

Others: Cyndi Wood, Julie Savidusky, Betty Thompson (unconfirmed committee members), and Julie Spears (Northside Planning Council).

2. Public Comment

None

3. Welcome to the Northport-Warner Park Sherman Neighborhood Plan Update Process

City staff and the Steering Committee introduced themselves followed by District 18 Alderperson Michael Schumacher and District 12 Alderperson Satya Rhodes-Conway who introduced themselves and welcomed and thanked Committee members.

4. How will the planning process work and who is involved?

City staff briefly discussed the following items; more details will follow at an upcoming meeting:

- Study area boundary
- Project timeline
- Planning area scope
- Role and function of the Steering Committee
- Roles of alderpeople, City planning staff, City agency staff team, planning area stakeholders, and the public
- Public participation plan (To be discussed at an upcoming meeting)
- Plan adoption and implementation process

5. What does the north side look like today? What do north siders like? Want to change?

What do you like about this area? What are the area's assets?

People

- Neighborhood feel and diversity of race, age and income.
- Good people energy to get things done.
- People living on the north side have good access to the right people to get things done.
- Lack of sense of community during previous planning process/now good sense of community.
- Longevity of community leaders.

Community Gathering Places

- Troy Community Gardens.
- Kennedy Heights Community Center, Northport Community Learning Center, Packers Community Learning Center, and Vera Court Neighborhood Center.
- Northside Farmer's Market.
- Lakeview Branch Library.

Services and Community Groups

City Services

- Good City services including transportation, fire, police.
- Landlord meetings with City services, Alders.
- Madison Metro's North Transfer Station is located in the area.
- July 4th fireworks celebration.

Other Services and Community Groups

- Northside Planning Council and the Northside News.
- English as a Second Language programs and food pantry at some churches.
- Wide variety of childcare, after school programs.
- Northeast Senior Coalition located at Warner Park Community Recreation Center.
- Northside Artists Group.

Schools

- Neighborhood grade schools you can walk to.
- Strong schools in area.

Parks, Recreation and Natural Areas

- Lake View Hill Park.
- Warner Park - gem.
- Access to Lake Mendota.
- Natural areas - Governor's Island, Cherokee Marsh, 10 minutes from downtown, yet

- so close to wild areas.
- Recreational opportunities.
- Mallards Stadium.

Housing

- Affordable housing.

Business and employment

- You can live, work, shop and do business in the neighborhood.
- Many different banking options.
- People have a loyalty to north side businesses.
- Active business association - Northside Business Association.
- Kraft - Oscar Mayer is a major employer.

Faith Community

- Viable faith community, diversity of churches.

Other

- Where the neighborhood is located within City (close to natural areas and downtown destinations).

[Note: Add Noble Park to neighborhood association map]

What would you like to change about this area? What are the issues?

Land Use and Redevelopment Issues

Future uses of State Hospital land

- Will Mendota Health and Central Wisconsin Center be removed or preserved?
- Would like access to this area (part of state hospital land along lake). It's beautiful and has a playground, but is posted "Keep Out."

Future development guidelines

- Controlled verticality: Within reason, expand up, as in apartments/condominium homes with multiple stories.
- Concerned about over development/overgrowth in Cherokee Marsh area
- Parking/retail ratio. Smaller lots, structured/ramp parking.
- Zoning and ability (east of) change.

Revitalize North Town Center

- I'd like to see a more prominent sign on "Town Center."
- Revitalize North Town Center - bring businesses in.
- Getting a business in old Kohl's space.
- Vacancies in retail shopping centers.

- Need to fill old Kohl's grocery storefront.
- Empty stores: Hancock Fabric, need new retail use in the former Kohl's store and Brennan's.

Northport redevelopment/gateway

- Redevelop Northport Drive as gateway to the north side.
- Some commercial property is aging - capitalize on timing/opportunity to develop coordinated plan across multiple properties (before new improvements are made).
- Neighborhood businesses/commerce need updating along Northport and Sherman. A little tired looking - access City funds.

North side business attraction and retention

- Recently Brennan's closed. How does this affect meeting nutritional needs on north side and neighborhood identity?
- Lack of major business draw - larger department stores.
- How to promote business to come to north side.
- How to keep residents doing business on north side.
- Revitalize/redevelop commercial property.
- Vacant storefronts. Getting businesses in.
- Vacant retail space.
- Types of retail/service businesses could be better too many cash checking/payday loan places and convenient stores.
- Business/retail areas are outdated - need City investment for redevelopment (uses are good - form is bad).

Other

- Maintain Dane County Human Services building.
- Redevelop Lake View Hills or restore?
- I like the face that all open spaces are not developed.

Other Site Specific Issues - Schools, Housing, Programs, Nutrition

Retention of schools

- Eliminate threats to closing the north side elementary schools.
- What do we need to know to support the schools?

School programming and resources

- School children getting fair share of resources for equal education opportunities.
- Need before-school care for elementary at schools.

Youth programs

- Not enough jobs for teens or training programs for teens.
- Not enough programs for youth.
- Schools need more after school activities for children.

Housing Maintenance and programs

- Age of rental properties and (some) lack of upkeep by (some) landlords.
- Housing programs available to public for discussion and input?
- Target areas/owners of aging housing stock that are eligible for no or low cost loans for house improvements.

Transportation Issues

Road and sidewalk maintenance

- Snow removal at bus stops.
- Better sidewalk snow removal by businesses.
- Road repairs and upkeep.
- Northport Drive potholes.
- Rough roads.

Improving bus routes and service

- Proper bus routes.
- Have City buses go into Warner Park - Warner Park Community Recreation Center, through parking lot.
- Buses too far from my house.
- Full utilization of bus and bus routes.
- Metro routes (recent change not good) #21 and #24 used to connect Warner Park directly to State Street, University Avenue, Park Street (St. Mary's, UW Clinic, Meriter, Dean) via #4 without a transfer.

Expanding and improving bike paths and lane

- Biking difficult on north side - need bike lanes or paths (connect to downtown and business areas).
- Bike paths without lessening capacity for cars on the main arteries (Packers, N. Sherman, Northport).
- Need more bike paths.
- Bike lanes - where are they really needed by users for pleasure versus shopping.

Reduce speeding on residential streets

- Speeding on Northport Drive, Northport/Dryden, Northport/School Road.
- Speeding down Toban Drive to avoid School Drive. Intersection of Toban and Blaine, numerous accidents.
- Too many speeders on roads.
- Stricter (enforced) traffic and speed control.

Increasing pedestrian access and safety

- Pedestrian safety at lighted intersections.
- Crossing light for pedestrians at Walgreen's.
- Pedestrian access to business/retail areas is difficult on Northport Drive and N. Sherman Avenue.

- Northside Town Center - no safe sidewalks to Anchor Bank, Pierce's, Rocky Rococo.
- No safe pedestrian routes through parking lot at Northside Town Center.
- Difficult to cross Sherman Avenue at this point - cars very fast, few breaks in traffic (once a car stopped for us and another car zoomed around it) crossing to Northside Town Center entrances.
- More safe walking paths on the north side.
- Northport Drive is a major barrier for walkers, bicyclists (I live south of Northport and would like better access to northern neighborhoods).
- Pedestrians not using crosswalks on Northport by Sherman Plaza and Kennedy Heights.
- Crossing Northport was recently improved at Dryden but still does not allow a safe midpoint for a pedestrian who gets stuck halfway.
- Sherman Avenue flooding and recent electrocution deaths. Crossing North Sherman Avenue is dangerous.
- No good pedestrian route through Warner Park parking areas (e.g. from WPCRC to Sherman Avenue). Walking along Northport Drive is noisy and unpleasant.
- Access to Warner Park for seniors and disabled individuals.

Other

- Use adjacency to Highway 30 and Interstate, airport, rail to attract business development to under-used commercial property.
- Keep rail right-of-way to protect for future transit opportunities.
- Rhythm & Booms - when driving the police will not let people turn certain directions and some people who live here cannot get home.
- North Beltline, where and what will change in area?

Park and Open Space Issues

Warner Park pool planning

- Warner Park needs a pool.
- Adequate preplanning for Warner Park pool: Traffic, parking.
- How will the pool affect greenspace and traffic.
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Park policy and maintenance

- Noise from Mallards expansion?
- Warner Beach not usable much of summer. Yuk.
- Citywide problem - the skating in the neighborhood parks starts too late (no lights, etc.) and without coordination with weather.
- Clean swimming areas - rather than a pool. Yes!
- Add public water facilities to neighborhood and larger parks, at least one drinking fountain.
- Traffic problems from Mallards expansion.
- What are specific park plans for maintenance. Could public be a part of clean up, etc.
- Make Lake Mendota public beach area (Warner Park) more attractive and accessible. Encourage commerce? Ice cream, hot dogs?
- Potential noise from Warner Park stadium concerts.

Park enhancements/improvements

- Area west of Warner Park and south of Northport Drive has only two, very small playgrounds.
- Want more attention to Lerdahl Park, e.g. fresh sand in sandbox, more play equipment.
- No development of parks - Cherokee, Warner, Lake View Hill Park, etc.
- Last spring fish kill in area lakes and Warner Park's ponds. Why? Prevention?
- Warner Park Community Recreation Center (WPCRC) is reaching capacity - time to expand?
- More activities at WPCRC - outdoor and indoor.
- Warner Park open spaces - caution of growth, affecting wildlife/run-off.
- Allow dogs in Lerdahl Park.
- Can we get on-leash dog walking on Cherokee Marsh Road.
- Improvements in Warner Park dog area (fencing all around blocking access to mud and muck).

Other General Issues

- Improve water quality.
- Improve and maintain quality of City water.
- Improve safety.
- Crime and/or perception of unsafe area.
- Property crime, car thefts, burglaries.
- Crime perception - how police and residents and businesses can work together.
- Talk not working. Crime - specifically drug related is growing. How to really involve those affected (persons and businesses).
- Need to continue to welcome and balance needs and wishes of residents of all income levels.
- Poor nutritional value of school lunches. Fried diet, "typical American", not diverse, not healthy, not fulfilling.

6. Next Steps

The dialogue tree was distributed and Steering Committee members were asked over the upcoming week to identify and begin to contact stakeholders in the neighborhood to share information about the planning process, and to ask for input from the stakeholders.

The planning process, public participation plan, and meeting schedule will be discussed in more detail at an upcoming meeting, along with the background profile for the neighborhood.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.