

MEETING RECORD

New Auburn Neighborhood Meeting Rolly's Diner October 28, 2014

People in Attendance: Beverly Walker, Dee Chapman, Rob Kilgore, Annette Lausier, Ken Blais, Kathy Shaw, Janice Lara Hewey, Maurice Fournier, Cecile Burgoyne, Warren King, Mary King, Mark Peillet, Sheena Peillet, Lorraine Vaillancourt, Tizz Crowley, Eric Brakey, Gilman Lamare, Dan Bilodeau, Larry Tapley, Daniel Poisson, Leroy Walker

CAC Members: Belinda Gerry, Joe Gray, Larry Pelletier, and Lisa Cote.

Consultant: Mark Eyerman

Community Development Staff: Reine Mynahan

Welcome:

The meeting began with Reine explaining the City was working on a new 5-year plan for spending Community Development funds and is interested in hearing what's important to the people in this neighborhood. She also mentioned the work that Bates College students are doing through a survey and left a sign-up sheet for anyone who wants to participate.

Introductions:

Mark opened the meeting with asking everyone what they liked best about their neighborhood. Responses are: nice neighborhood, not too much crime, the bells (St. Louis), access to both rivers, village feeling, people who are connected, business part of family feeling, friendly people, great schools and fire station, Boys & Girls Club and CLT, high school football field, master plan that will make things blossom, 2 best senior housing locations, walking areas, several little parks, good variety of businesses, close to everything, crosswalks are visible, signage, neighborhood watch, exceptional cemetery, a lot of community pride, history in New Auburn, and heritage.

Mark then asked that people talk about the challenges in the neighborhood.

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS/FACILITIES

- Paving on South Main Street should be finished—taking too long
- Streets in need of attention
- Sidewalks are crumbling/clients roll their ankle
- Curbing ruined by snowplow
- Sink holes in the street/animals coming up from the river
- Traffic backup at Main & Mill Street/no right hand turn

- Traffic too fast
- Cars block portions of sidewalk on Main Street/walkers are forced to walk in road and there is a missing section of sidewalk linking New Auburn to Downtown
- Can't see what's coming across the bridge/very dangerous
- Lighting is inadequate for people to cross the street/police officers have to use flash lights
- Need street light near the bridge/people don't feel safe
- Mirrors get taken from street traffic/no lighting
- Parking is a major issue
- Gateway into New Auburn/make it beautiful

NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIVITY

- There is nothing here to draw people to neighborhoods
- Make the area ready for businesses

BUILDING ISSUES

- Need uniform street numbers on houses/can't see them
- Taxes are high, landlords walking away, housing projects put burden on landlords who can't keep up
- Need new housing with adequate lighting and parking plus amenities
- Do something about squatters living in foreclosed properties
- Make absentee landlords accountable for their property and tenants
- Landlords let tenants do anything/fear of fires

OTHER

- Undo generational poverty
- Tenants put stuff on the street/its piling up/cleanup should be more often
- Drug problem
- Attract more people under age 40
- Would like some businesses to come back/pharmacy and bank
- No power to move master plan/need for federal and city money
- New Auburn needs a mailbox in the area

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

- 1) Increase parking, lighting, and general upgrading of streets/sidewalks
- 2) Absentee landlords/need to improve their properties and control tenants
- 3) Address long-drawn out foreclosures
- 4) Attract middle income, middle-age households

Respectfully Submitted,

Reine Mynahan, Community Development Director