

South End Revitalization Coalition Meeting Notes

Thursday, January 24, 2008 – 9:00AM
Square One Conference Room

Attendees:

Sara Page, HAP
Stephen Cole, City of Springfield
Michelle McAdaragh, HAP
Dave Panagore, City of Springfield
Peter Pappas, River's Landing
Paul Philbin, Philbin & Associates
Dan Walsh, Springfield Sheraton Hotel
Jim Langone, Langone Photography
Scott Hanson, City of Springfield
Samalid Hogan, City of Springfield
Daniel Keenan, Mercy Medical Center
Jeffrey Oldenburg, Valley Real Estate
Paul Oldenburg, Valley Real Estate
Sandy Orr, Orr Cadillac Inc.
Jesus Arce, City of Springfield

Bob Kaye, Mass Development
Allan Ardito, Boston Seafood
Jim Demas, Balise Motor Sales
Rita Caputo, Red Rose
Brian Connors, City of Springfield
Yasmin Cortes, Appliance Plus Flowers & Gift
Alex Cortes, Appliance Plus Flowers & Gift
Ivette Cruz, City of Springfield
John Doleva, Basketball Hall of Fame
Leo Florian, South End Citizens Council
Joan Kagan, Square One
Jeff Ciuffreda, ACCGS
Kim Lee, Square One
Arthur Jemison, GLC Development Resources
Dina Vargo, GLC Development Resources

I. Welcome and Introductions – Joan Kagan

Background:

- The purpose of this meeting is to engage community stakeholders in the plan and implementation strategy for the South End based on the findings and recommendations articulated in the ULI South End report.
- This is the first of many coffee hour meetings that will serve as a forum for stakeholders and City officials to collaborate and identify short-term and long-term goals for implementation.
- It is understood that prior efforts to revitalize the South End neighborhood have not been successful; however, we believe that the City has reached a “tipping point” and we can now witness positive changes in the form of scheduled physical improvements that will support our efforts and provide the momentum we need to succeed in making the South End neighborhood a place we are all proud of.
- Square One, as a business in the South End, has committed to assist in organizing these neighborhood coffee hour meetings along with staff from the City’s Planning and Economic Development departments.

II. ULI Report – Scott Hanson and David Panagore

All attendees were given a copy of the South End ULI report.

- ULI Team came to Springfield on May 2007 to focus on the South End.
 - Met with more than two dozen city officials, business owners, and property owners.
 - More than 50 people attended the public presentation.
- South End ULI Report – Eight key observations and findings:
 1. Crime and public safety are a key issue
 2. There is social tension in the neighborhood between the new residents and the

- historical residents in terms of both ethnicity and economics.
3. There is a general lack of inclusiveness in the neighborhood council
 4. Absence of a sense of neighborhood:
 - Is it an extension of downtown or its own neighborhood?
 - Block patterns, street grids and open space are disorganized.
 - Retail quality is inconsistent.
 5. There is an excess of subsidized housing and a lack of quality market rate housing. Less than 15% of housing in the South End is owner occupied.
 6. There are numerous vacant buildings.
 7. Emerson Wight Park is dysfunctional.
 8. There are limited neighborhood services such as a supermarket and neighborhood schools.
- The Key findings led to the following recommendations:
 1. Bring together a broad based coalition of stakeholders that include people from both within and outside of the neighborhood that can serve as catalysts for change.
 2. Address crime and public safety.
 3. Support the development of neighborhood retail.
 4. Support the development of neighborhood amenities.
 5. Improve the infrastructure and physical environment.
 6. Expand the residential products.
 7. Address current zoning – particularly on Main Street.
 - With these recommendations, the ULI Team encouraged the city to first address the Hollywood and Gemini areas by doing the following:
 1. Improve the street patterns and develop an open space strategy to reinforce good urban design.
 2. Establish a demo and redevelopment strategy.
 3. Create new development opportunities for both housing and retail.
 - Keeping these goals in mind, the ULI developed three conceptual plans.
 - Maps of concepts 1, 2, and 3 were presented to the group.

III. GLC Development Resources Presentation – Arthur Jemison

GLC is a consulting group that offers a full range of services from feasibility studies and planning to permitting, comprehensive project management, and construction administration. GLC was hired by the City of Springfield to do an in-depth market analysis of the housing and retail in the South End neighborhood. Data and findings from their report will assist the South End Neighborhood Coalition and the City of Springfield make decisions for neighborhood projects based on real market data and not perception.

Summary of the scope of GLC’s research:

- Understanding market for residential (for sale and rental) and retail (street and supermarket format).
- Identifying scale, scope and cost of proposals in the ULI South End Report.
- Identifying economics and funding sources available for infrastructure development and development of new housing, retail suggested by report.
- Providing information required to give the City and the community scoped, priced options to evaluate.

VI. How you can be involved? – Kim Lee and Joan Kagan

- A pledge form was provided to all participants at the meeting. The staff will keep track of everyone's pledges and follow up on those that require further assistance. Additional copies of the pledge forms will be available at every coffee hour meeting for new participants.
- Items you can check on the form:
 - Host a Neighborhood Coffee Hour
 - Actively participate and attend all S.E. Revitalization Coalition meetings
 - Make a financial commitment to projects that benefit the South End
 - Invest in my South End property (i.e. landscaping, repairs, etc.).

V. Next Steps:

- The South End Revitalization Coalition needs to identify short-term and long-term milestones for the South End Neighborhood based on the market data provided by GLC.
- Completed pledge forms for participation and individual investments in the neighborhood will be tracked and posted online.
- The next several coffee hour meetings will be scheduled taking into consideration feedback provided by the attendees and everyone will be notified by email, mail, or phone. Reports and other materials will be made available by email prior to the meeting.
- Square One and Springfield Planning and Economic Development will provide the staff support to organize coffee hours, take notes at the meetings, post updates and all other relevant information online.

Adjourned: 10:00AM