

South End Revitalization Coalition

Meeting Notes

Thursday, March 6, 2008 – 9:00AM

Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame Conference Room

Attendees:

Hector Toledo, Hampden Bank

Peter Pappas, River's Landing

Peter Zorzi, Studio One Inc.

Anne Awad, Caring Health Center

Michele Johnson, Starbucks Coffee

Daniel Keenan, Mercy Medical Center

Michelle McAdaragh, HAP, Inc.

Jeb Balise, Balise Motor Sales

Tony Calabrese, AC Produce

Tony Caputo, Red Rose

Jeff Ciuffreda, ACCGS

Fran Cataldo, C&W Realty Co

Bob Kaye, Mass Development

John Doleva, Basketball Hall of Fame

James A. Langone Photographer

Angie Florian, South End Citizens Council

Joan Kagan, Square One

Mayor Domenic Sarno, City of Springfield

Brian Connors, City of Springfield

Ivette Cruz, City of Springfield

Scott Hanson, City of Springfield

Samalid Hogan, City of Springfield

Dave Panagore, City of Springfield

Stephen Cole, City of Springfield

Arthur Jemison, GLC Development Resources

I. Welcome and Introductions – Joan Kagan

Introduced:

- Mayor Sarno- As part of his commitment to the city of Springfield, the Mayor has made the South End Neighborhood revitalization projects one of his top priorities.
- John Doleva- The BHOF is redeveloping its interior retail/ restaurant space
- Peter Pappas- River's landing has expanded into the old Basketball Hall of Fame and expects its new restaurant ONYX to open at the end of March. Shortly after the new L.A. Fitness center is expected to open

Overview:

- Engage community leaders for the purpose of developing a comprehensive, coordinated strategy for revitalizing the South End.
- The timing is right: the City is focused on the South End as an integral part of the revitalization of the whole city. As the southern gateway to the City, we are part of a larger plan and the city is ready to commit some of the available resources.
 - The City has set out some important first steps in the South End including: improving parks, streets, and sidewalks, developing vacant parcels, increasing code, and public safety levels.
- Using the data and the ULI report to serve as a foundation from which we will drill down plans, strategies and implementation steps.
- In order for a successful process it is important to understand that this is sequential process and must allow certain things to happen before others. If we do not allow ourselves to learn from those who have done this and been successful in other cities, we run the risk of failing or at the very least not achieving the desired results.

II. Presentation of South End Retail and Housing by Arthur Jemison and Drew from GLC

(All attendees were given a copy of the PowerPoint presentation)

- Baseline Market Work - Must focus market study on what is successful
 - Residential
 - The key is finding the right economics to get higher price point in area
 - 50 new units a year in Springfield- absorption is key to the sequencing of the project
 - One of the challenges will be pricing the new units. Need to develop enough to attract critical mass so other people outside of the SE would like to live there. Phasing will be critical to combat this challenge
 - Retail
 - There are two main focus districts: Area bordering downtown (Downtown to State Street), and area south of Saratoga Street (commuter area)
 - Leakage analysis: How much retail demand is leaving the neighborhood? How much unmet demand is in the South End Neighborhood? One of the main leakages GLC found was in the Grocery store industry. GLC found that consumers and residents in the South End did not have an easily accessible full service grocery store within a reasonable distance. Analysis suggests that there may be demand for a store of approximately 20,000 square feet
 - Focus on business improvement districts (i.e. Clark University in Worcester or Trinity in Hartford)
 - The challenge will be finding a supermarket that will not destroy the unique development and setup of the South End neighborhood.

III. Group Review and Discussion of Land Use Concepts- David Panagore and Scott Hanson

- **David Panagore:** The key to success is phasing. The sequencing of events over time needs to begin with the public realm. Once public safety and infrastructure are in place we can focus on residential development and retail marketing, but until the public realm is under control there is little to attract sustainable investment into the South End.
- **Scott Hanson:** Recap of the landuse plans outlined in the ULI report
 - Proposal # 1
 - Street connection and increased mobility circulation
 - Residential structures in place of Emerson Park and create a park in a more central area (i.e. Hollywood)
 - **Comments: Need Oswego Street connected to Main Street, eliminate SRA properties (blue block) and add more private housing units**
 - Proposal #2
 - Street connection
 - Preserve some of the park area

- **Comments: No eyes on the park because it is still in people's backyards**
- **Greg Zorzi, Rico and Peter's Proposal**
 - Expressed that the park is the most valuable asset to the area. All should be done to try and preserve and restore it.
 - Create circular pedestrian and vehicular movement around the park
 - Turn the park into a recreation center with sports fields, courts, and available useable and efficient space for camps
 - Build a multi-purpose community center
 - The park would be split in half with 50 x 100 house lots that include 3 bedroom units
 - Reconstruct and redevelop retail fronts along Main Street with housing on second floor.
 - **Comments: People agreed with the preservation of the park, improving street connections and circulation, and increasing single family housing. Need to find revenue generating uses for the park space (i.e. an amphitheater)**

IV. Conclusions and Next Steps

- GLC will look over the comments and come to the next coalition meeting with recreated proposals that incorporate the above suggestions. Hope to have a finalized plan by June 2008.
- Coffee Hours and Coalition meetings- In order to continue moving the project along towards implementation stages there will be monthly coalition meetings that focus attention on moving forward; however in addition to the coalition meetings, coffee hours will be held for stakeholders to get updated on previous coalition meetings and proposals.
- The Springfield Planning and Economic Development Office will email all stakeholders the new URL for the South End Revitalization website.
- Current revitalization efforts: Special Thanks to Jeff Oldenburg who donated \$1,000 to the project, and HAP Inc. for their \$300,000 improvements on Main Street.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be a two hour discussion from 5pm-7pm. **Location TBA**

Adjourned: 10:20AM