

South End Revitalization Coalition

Meeting Notes

Thursday, May 15, 2008 – 9:00AM

Worthington Commons Community Center

Attendees:

David Appleman

Jesus Arce, City of Springfield

Leo, Ballou, S.E Property Owner

Tania Barber, Caring Health Center

Tony Calabrese, AC Produce

Tony Caputo, Red Rose

Russ Denver, Chamber of Commerce

Leo Florian, S.E. Citizens Council

Angie Florian, S.E. Citizens Council

Jennifer Hopp, First Resource Companies

Bob Kaye, Mass Development

Lt. John, Lynch, Police Department

Edward Maddaloni

Michelle McAdaragh, HAP, Inc.

Sarah Page, HAP, Inc.

Joe Pasternak, Tazzini Funeral Home

Paul Philbin, Philbin Associates

Amellia Pulisfer, First Resource Companies

Gordon Pulisfer, First Resource Companies

Peter Serafino

Missy Sheehan

Siobhan, Spruill, Caring Health Center

Christine Tazzini, Tazzini Funeral Home

Lisa Walker, First Resource Companies

Greg Zorzi, Studio One Inc.

Joan Kagan, Square One

Brian Connors, City of Springfield

Scott Hanson, City of Springfield

Samalid Hogan, City of Springfield

Alvin Allen, City of Springfield

Arthur Jemison, GLC Development Resources

I. Welcome and Introductions by Joan Kagan and Gordon Pulsifer

Thank you to Starbucks for their support and involvement in the community

- In addition to providing refreshments for the South End Coalition Meetings, Starbucks has been a great partner of “Keep Springfield Beautiful Initiative” and all of the Starbucks stores in the district participate in the Springfield Clean up Day on April 28th.

Introduced: Gordon Pulsifer

- Welcome to Worthington Commons- A few years ago Worthington Commons faced many of the same issues regarding public safety as the South End Neighborhood. First Resource Companies acquired properties in the neighborhood and invested \$22 million, from different funding sources, to rehabilitate 12 buildings in the neighborhood. This redevelopment project is a great example of what can happen in the South End Neighborhood.
 - Resident Selection/Screening Process to ensure neighborhood safety
 - Typical background check
 - Extensive landlord references
 - Income and asset research/credit checks
 - All residents were also checked by HAP Inc. or Springfield Housing Authority

(Note: already existing residents were not screened)

- The Hollywood area is in better condition and safer than Worthington Commons prior to redevelopment project. This shows

that positive progress can happen in the South End.

- Must positively look forward and not backward in order to progress

Joan Kagan:

- The South End has been identified as once of the major gateways into the city.
 - The City is ready to commit to the South End with its resources, time, and financially.
- To take advantage of this opportunity we must be solution focused!
- Five points of consensus thus far:
 - There is a need for additional stakeholders and residents at the Coalition Meetings
 - Emerson Park needs more public attention to become a safe environment with positive public usage. “More eyes on the park”
 - We must balance our expectations and our vision with reality due to limited resources and the amount of time it takes to complete projects of this scale.
 - Affordable housing and retail will be phased in once public realm and infrastructure improvements have been made.
 - The infrastructure development is the first step (streets, lights, public safety)

II. Public Safety in the South End Retail by Lt. John Lynch

- This area has extensive problems with prostitution, gangs, guns, and assaults.
- The current challenges the neighborhood faces with trying to prevent these problems are:
 - Traffic circulation is poor, which restricts cruiser mobility
 - Dead end streets prevent eyes on the park
 - The park provides a haven for people to escape.
 - Poor lighting, street connection, and sidewalks
 - The highway provides an easy getaway
- Currently a substation in the South End is not an option because there is not enough resources or police power
- By making improvements and financial commitments to the neighborhood, the police will be more likely to watch it and go come down to the South End more often.

III. Project Milestones and Action Steps by Arthur Jemison

(All attendees were given a copy of the Power Point presentation)

- **Project Status:**
 - Market Analysis- complete
 - Recommended Redevelopment Plan (Public Realm Improvements and Private Development)- complete
- **Progress Since April 17th Meeting:**
 - Updated cost estimates

- Filed grant applications
 - State Transit Oriented Development Design Grant (\$50,000)
 - State Community Development Action Grant Pre-Application (\$1 million)
- **Next Milestones:**
 - Large Community meeting process (June)
 - Start Housing Planning/Funding process (July)
 - Start Design/ permitting Public Realm (Aug-Sept)
 - Construction Start (2009-2010)
- **Sequence of Recommended Actions**
 - Public Realm Improvements (Street circulation, sidewalks, Main Street Improvements)
 - Estimated Costs: \$10.8 Million
 - Projected Sources: State TOD, State CDAG, State PWED, City CDBG, City of Springfield
 - Residential (Affordable rental, market for sale)
 - Phases:
 - Phase 1: Revitalize affordable housing and improve management
 - Phase 2: Start For-Sale development on City-owned sites
 - Phase 3, 4: Completion of For-Sale development
 - Issues:
 - Gap between construction costs and Average Springfield housing is about \$15,000
 - Equity growth cap on subsidized new single family housing
 - Absorption rate of single family homes is lower than most areas at 50-70 per year.
 - Retail (Retail mix, retail support, and retail tenancy)
 - Recommended retail program
 - Extend Main Street Improvements from State Street to Acushnet Street in South End
 - Create and bid retail site “package” to incent new or existing retailers to expand on Main Street

IV. Conclusions and Moving Forward by Joan Kagan and Leo Florian

- Community Meeting: A meeting with community involvement from residents and additional stakeholders
 - Date: Mid-June
 - Time: In the evening for about 2 ½ hours
 - Location: The venue is still undecided, but must accommodate 100 plus people.
 - Options: Mount Carmel Auditorium

Adjourned: 10:10AM