

District III Advisory Board Minutes

May 2, 2007

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The District III Advisory Board meeting was held at 7 p.m. at the Wichita Water Center at 101 E Pawnee. Eight District Advisory Board members were in attendance; six City staff and 22 members of the public were present (five which did not sign in).

Members Present

Matt Foley
Charlotte Foster
Jim Gulick
Joann Hartig
Paula Hearn
DeWayne Kitchen
Jesse Sheffield
Council member Jim Skelton
Bill Ward

Staff Present

Officer Steve Jerrell, Patrol East
Janet Johnson, City Manager's Office
Gary Janzen, Public Works
Aaron Henning, Public Works
Chris Carrier, Public Works
Deputy Chief Tom Stolz, WPD

Guests

Listed on the last page

Members Absent

Teresa Cook
John Kemp
Judy Dillard

ORDER OF BUSINESS

At 7 p.m. **Council member Jim Skelton** called the meeting to order. The meeting minutes from April 4, 2007, were approved as submitted.

PUBLIC AGENDA

Scheduled items

No items

Non-Scheduled items

No items

STAFF REPORTS

Community Police Report

Officer Steve Jerrell, Patrol East Beat 33, reported that burglaries and vehicle larcenies have been increasing and he reminded everyone to secure their windows and not leave valuables in their vehicles. He said there have been a number of nighttime break-ins to homes in areas near District 3. Officer Jerrell said the police caught three gang members who were doing graffiti, and he thanked the citizens who called in to report those incidents. Officer Jerrell spent the month of March in Australia as a part of an exchange program. He will give a presentation on his trip at the K-15 Neighborhood Association on the last Monday in June.

Action: Receive and file.

NEW BUSINESS

Mt. Vernon Improvement, between the Arkansas River and Broadway

Gary Janzen and Aaron Henning, Public Works Department, and Jay Anglemyer, MKEC Engineering Consultants, reported on the reconstruction of Mt. Vernon between the Arkansas River and Broadway. Poor drainage conditions along the roadway have resulted in a significant deterioration of the existing pavement. The street is located in a 571-acre drainage basin that does not have an adequate storm water sewer system. The existing two-lane street will be removed and replaced with a new two-lane street with left turn lanes on Mt. Vernon at the east and west approaches to Broadway. New traffic signals will be installed at Broadway. The project includes the construction of a major drainage system to improve drainage along Mt. Vernon and the surrounding area, sidewalks, wheel chair ramps and a street bike path. The project is planned to begin in spring 2008 and take five or six months to complete. Mt. Vernon will be closed during construction.

Janzen said that a cost benefit analysis revealed that it would not be cost-effective to put left turn lanes on Broadway. He also explained that in order to put in the bike path, it would mean eliminating parking on Mt. Vernon Street.

The project is estimated to cost \$3.8 million. **Janzen** said if they eliminated the sidewalks and improvements to the intersection at Broadway and Mt. Vernon, it would only reduce the cost to around \$3.2 million.

Discussion was opened to the public.

Elena Ingle, 3608 Meadow Lane, noted on the aerial photo that at Market Street the houses appear to be very close to Mt. Vernon and wondered if there is enough room for a sidewalk. **Janzen** said the houses sit back further than they appear in the photo and there are already some existing sidewalks in that area.

Don Hansen, 2156 S. Topeka, had questions about what type of stoplight is currently in place at Mt. Vernon and Broadway. He said he felt with the appropriate stoplight, they could eliminate the proposed left turn lanes. **Chris Carrier, Director of Public Works**, explained that the City is looking at an ITS (Intelligent Transportation System) that is used on a wireless network and allows for the stoplights to be controlled remotely. He said the plan would be to install this type of stoplight at this intersection. **Janzen** said there is video detection with this type of signal.

Vicki Churchman, 1357 S. Broadway, applauded City staff for being far-sighted in their planning efforts. She said often the City comes up with good plans and then cheapens them down till they're worthless. She said it only makes sense to put in the drainage, sidewalks and bike path now instead of later, when it will cost more. She said it is a fantastic plan and she hopes the City will keep it intact.

Hoyt Hillman, 3705 E. Mt. Vernon, echoed Vicki's statements and said they are working hard on developing bike paths and he supports the project plans

John Dickson, 6054 S. Minneapolis, said this project needed to be done a long time ago and asked how much more it would cost to put the left turn lanes in on Broadway. **Janzen** said the construction would be between \$50,000 and \$100,000, but the big-ticket item would be acquiring the right of way, which could result in the cost of another quarter million dollars.

Discussion was returned to the Board.

Charlotte Foster asked if there are other street bike paths in the city. **Janzen** said yes, on 21st Street, Zoo Blvd. and **Council Member Skelton** said there are some around Planeview Park. **Foster** also wanted to know if there is a lot of parking on Mt. Vernon Street. **Janzen** said he had observed some parking on the street, but not a lot.

Jim Gulick had questions on how far the bike path would extend. He also had concerns about the safety of a street bike path and described parts of Mt. Vernon as a raceway – especially between Oliver and George Washington Blvd. **Janzen** said he understood **Gulick's** concerns and said the master bike path plan is no final – it's still in the works. **Janzen** said this may not be the way to go, but they are trying to look ahead in the planning process.

Jesse Sheffield asked if the left turn lanes on Mt. Vernon would take out the car lot that sits on the corner. **Janzen** said the project requires a triangular cutout that would probably eliminate parking for four or five cars. **Janzen** said you never really know how much of an issue ROW is going to become in a project.

Joann Hartig said she became involved in City politics due to this very project. She said the area needs a bike path because a lot of people who live in the area don't drive and use bikes for transportation. She also noted that drainage is a big issue at Broadway and Market Streets.

Matt Foley wanted to know if adding the bike path would help leverage other funding sources. **Janzen** said they are looking at that possibility.

Paula Hearn asked how long the construction would take. **Janzen** said the best estimate is five to six months. He said they would close one side street at a time and then open up Mt. Vernon behind the construction as they moved forward. **Hearn** also wanted to know if press lights would be installed at the lighted intersections. **Janzen** said they would be installed at Broadway and Mt. Vernon.

Bill Ward said he thinks the sidewalks are an important element because of the schools in the neighborhood. He also questioned the planning for bike paths. **Ward** said it seems to him that the City piece-meals the bike paths. **Janzen** agreed with **Ward** and said there is a master plan for bike paths, but it is a dynamic process and they are trying to make it more definitive.

Charlotte Foster said the sidewalks are definitely needed and asked if the bike path would be marked on the street. **Janzen** said yes.

Matt Foley wanted to know where the drainage would run. **Janzen** said down Mt. Vernon to the river.

Jesse Sheffield wanted to know how long it would take to start construction. **Janzen** said it is scheduled for the spring of 2008, but that funding will be the biggest challenge.

Chris Carrier said that he attended a CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) meeting the other day and he saw some hope for funding for the Mt. Vernon project. He said with a little nudge from the Council member, DAB and citizens, he thinks the City Manager would support it. He also mentioned the possibility of using money from the Storm Water Utility Fund to pay for the drainage portion of the project. **Carrier** noted that the Storm Water money is already appropriated to other projects, but that things can always be shifted and re-prioritized.

Janzen said with the new project, there would be no more dips along Mt. Vernon.

Kitchen (Hartig) moved that the Board accept the recommendation with the sidewalks and bike path.

Jim Gulick asked when the rest of Mt. Vernon would be reconstructed. **Janzen** said it's in the CIP for 2012 or 2013 and they wouldn't start any design work on it until around 2010.

Charlotte Foster wanted to know if the Engineers found they were going to have to widen the street to accommodate the bike path, if they would bring the project back to the DAB for approval, because that would impact citizens' property. **Janzen** said he would bring the project back if it experienced any significant changes.

Hartig (Gulick) moved to amend the original motion to allow the engineers flexibility in developing the bike path portion of the project.

The original motion with the amendment passed 8:0.

Action: Approved the project as presented including the sidewalks and bike path; allowing the engineers flexibility in developing the bike path portion of the plan.

BOARD AGENDA

Updates, Issues and Reports

Deputy Chief Tom Stolz, Wichita Police Department, presented the Bronze Wreath of Merit Award to **Janet Johnson, District 3 Neighborhood Assistant**, for her role in the BTK investigation, when she worked for WPD.

Deputy Chief Stolz also gave a report on crime trends in District 3 for 2007, including the following:

- No homicides or vehicular homicides
- Highway robberies up – 8
- Commercial robberies up – 9
- Forcible rapes down; DV rapes up 18 percent
- Aggravated residential robberies – 4
- Aggravated residential burglaries – 10
- Aggravated batteries – 21
- Aggravated assault dv – 16

- Drive-by shootings – 2
- Burglaries – 120
- Non residential burglaries up 24 percent this year (keep your sheds and outbuildings locked)
- Auto thefts up 13 percent (don't leave your car running and unattended)
- DUIs up 14 percent
- Larcenies up 13 percent
- Police calls down in District 3, average around 25,000 a year, currently on track for around 23,000 in 2007

If anyone has questions for Deputy Chief Stolz, or would like for him to speak at their Neighborhood Association meeting, he can be reached at 268-4270 or e-mail tstolz@wichita.gov

Elena Ingle, 3608 Meadow Lane, asked if the radar trailer could be placed on Mt. Vernon between Oliver and George Washington Blvd. **DC Stolz** said yes.

DC Stolz also reported that the police department recently executed a gang operation using Longfellow school as its staging area. **DC Stolz** said WPD executed numerous search warrants and arrested several gang members. He explained that the Department is working with the Feds and using RICO statues to prosecute gang members. He said this is the first time they have attempted this.

Action: Receive and file.

Council Member Skelton announced the public meeting slated for May 24 at 7 p.m. at the Mt. Vernon Presbyterian church, 3700 E. Mt. Vernon. The meeting will seek public input on the future of the parcels that were purchased by the City in the voluntary flood buyout.

Council Member Skelton reported that the City will fall short on its funding needs this year and that he has been asked by Public Works to provide his top three priorities for the year. He said they are 1) 47th Street Bridge/Exchange 2) Mt. Vernon reconstruction and 3) Railroad corridor 4) Railroad corridor and 5) Railroad corridor. He pointed out that with much of the Federal funding going to Iraq, Katrina and health care, we are going to have to use our resources more wisely.

He also thanked those who attended the Council meeting to express their opinions on the Boeing Landfill issue.

DeWayne Kitchen reported that the City is working toward the removal of the pedestrian bridge near his house. He would still like to see a fence line and some stumps removed, and said he would get with the Council member later on that issue. Kitchen reported that the Planeview Neighborhood Association is working with the City on addressing some trash and bulky waste issues.

Charlotte Foster reported a successful neighborhood clean up for Fabrique. She said they focused on Silverdale, Christine and Pineridge streets.

Joann Hartig reported the South Central Progressive clean-up included one full skid, 247 tires and a bag of meth! She said the whole neighborhood came out and participated.

Paula Hearn reported that the Dry Creek Neighborhood Association is exploring the possibilities of a Community Garden.

Jesse Sheffield said South City also had a successful cleanup. Additionally, he said the neighborhood was successful in running out a drug dealer who lived in the 2500 block of S. Mosley and they are working with City staff on getting the property at 2471 S. Laura torn down.

Jim Gulick said Grandview Heights had a representative from the railroad speak at their last meeting about crossing safety. He said he would highly recommend the presentation to other Neighborhood Associations and found it very worthwhile.

Matt Foley said there has been some positive activity in Hilltop with new playground equipment going in. He also noted that they were experiencing some problems with bulky waste, but the City is working on the problem.

Foley also announced that due to health reasons he was going to step down from the District 3 Advisory Board. **Council Member Skelton** expressed his thanks to Matt for his years of service and presented him with a certificate of appreciation and a plaque.

Council Member Skelton said he appreciates everyone's diligence in serving on the District Advisory Board.

Hoyt Hillman, 3705 E. Mt. Vernon, reminded everyone about the River clean-up activity slated for May 5 at 10 a.m.

Action: Receive and file.

Adjournment

Council Member Skelton adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled meeting for District Advisory Board III will be held at 7 p.m., June 6, 2007, at the Water Center at 101 E. Pawnee.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Johnson,
Neighborhood Assistant – District III

Guests

Elena Ingle	3608 Meadow Lane
Larry Manny	1116 Alturas
Kathy Manny	1116 Alturas

Donna Thorton	2714 Southfork
Claudia Lee	2826 Greenwood
Lynda Novotny	1209 Jump
John Dickson	6054 S. Minneapolis
Carole Campbell	2821 S. Mosley
Don Hansen	2156 S. Topeka
Shirley Hansen	2165 S. Topeka
Bill Barnes	2707 S. Hillside
Goldie Barnes	2707 S. Hillside
Hoyt Hillman	3507 E. Mt. Vernon
Dale Churchman	1357 S. Broadway
Vicki Churchman	1357 S. Broadway
Bernestine Williams	1209 Jump
Jay Anglemyer	MKEC Engineering