

District III Advisory Board Minutes
Dec. 1, 2010
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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; 10 District Advisory Board members were in attendance; six City staff and 10 members of the public were present.

Members Present

Teresa Cook
Judy Dillard
Charlotte Foster
Jim Gulick
Joann Hartig
John Kemp
DeWayne Kitchen
Brian Nelson
Roger Smith
Billie Tucker

Bill Ward
Council Member Jim Skelton

Staff Present

Officer Stephanie Neal, Patrol East
Officer Maurice Floyd, Patrol South
Harlan Bascombe, OCI
Scott Knebel, MAPC
Battalion Chief Robert Wolfe, WFD
Janet Johnson, Neighborhood Services

Members Absent

Guests

Listed on the last page

ORDER OF BUSINESS

At 7 p.m. **Pro Tem Jim Gulick** called the meeting to order. Minutes from the Nov. 3, 2010, meeting were approved.

PUBLIC AGENDA

Scheduled items

No scheduled items

Non-Scheduled items

No items

Action: Receive and file

STAFF REPORTS

Community Police Report

Officer Stephanie Neal, Beat 32 Patrol East, reported an increase in robberies and residential burglaries. She said police have also been passing out brochures on counterfeiting and working with businesses on how to recognize counterfeit bills. She passed out the brochures to those at the DAB meeting.

Roger Smith asked if she had any counterfeit bills she could show them; she said no, that all the bills are turned over to the Secret Service. **Janet Johnson** will work on getting a presentation set up on counterfeiting for the January DAB meeting.

Officer Maurice Floyd, Beat 27 Patrol South, reported the 25 Beat saw an increase in burglaries, but they arrested a parolee at a ½ way house and believe he may have been responsible for the increase. The 26 Beat also saw several burglaries in the 2700 block of South Pattie, but police have some good leads on those burglaries as well. He said burglaries were down on the 27 Beat, but they are being hit hard with counterfeiting cases. He said criminals pass bills at fast food restaurants and are using high quality paper on the fake bills, making them difficult to detect.

Wichita Fire Department Report

Battalion Chief Bobby Wolf reported the Fire Department had a good month in October with lots of fire prevention activities. Last month District III had 15 fires, with five of them being structure fires. He said the Department is now working on educating people about the importance of furnace checks and of course being safe during the holidays, especially with Christmas trees and extension cords. He suggested keeping trees away from heating vents and keeping them watered. He also said citizens shouldn't hook up more than three strands of lights because any more than that can become a fire hazard.

Roger Smith asked if chimney/furnace vents that don't burn fires still need to be cleaned out. **Chief Wolf** said there's not a danger of fire residue buildup, but birds can build nests in them, which can then cause a CO2 backup, and can be life threatening.

Action: Receive and file.

NEW BUSINESS

VNR, Tall Grass and Weeds, Abatement Year to Date Summary

Harlan Bascombe, OCI Supervisor, presented a summary of OCI statistics from Jan. – Oct. 2010. Statistics included numbers about VNR cases, tall, grass and weeds, nuisance cases and inoperable vehicles. He reported there were 5,697 nuisance cases started; 4,288 nuisance cases closed; and 127 nuisance cases contractor abated.

Joann Hartig wanted to know which Council District the numbers were for; **Bascombe** said all of them, because OCI has no way of breaking them down by Council District.

Jim Gulick expressed concerns about the property at 3506 E. Mt. Vernon that has boarded windows; **Bascombe** said he would check on the status of the case.

Craig Gabel asked if there is a place on the website that you can see the list of boarded houses and VNRs; **Bascombe** said the information is available through e-permits, but it's not in the form of a list, you have to check the status by address. **Gabel** said there should be a list because interested parties, such as himself, might be in a position to help.

Betty Strickland wanted to know if the City gets reimbursed for cutting the grass; **Bascombe** said if the property owner doesn't pay the bill, the charge is tacked on to their property tax.

Hoyt Hillman said some of the mowing contractors let the grass clippings go in the street; **Bascombe** said if it occurred at a private residence then it was an OCI contractor and citizens can call Julie Irvin at OCI to make a complaint. However, if it is on public property, they will need to contact the Park Department.

Action: Receive and file.

DER2009-08: Downtown Master Plan

Scott Knebel, Metropolitan Area Planning Department, presented the Downtown Master Plan which identifies market demand for as much as \$500 million in private-sector capital investment over the next 15-20 years that would result in an estimated 1,500-1,600 new housing units, 125,000-175,000 square feet of retail space, 400,000-480,000 square feet of office space, and 350-475 hotel rooms. The plan also outlines 43 action steps for accomplishing this revitalization potential through efforts focused on creating unique downtown places, expanding transportation choices and enabling development. An estimated \$100 million in parking, streets, and parks/open space improvements are recommended to be made in conjunction with the private-sector revitalization projects.

In addition to being adopted by the MAPC by a 14-0 vote, the Plan has received unanimous endorsements from the Wichita Downtown Development Corporation, Visioneering Wichita, Wichita Metro Chamber of Commerce, Young Professionals of Wichita, Transit Advisory Board, Go Wichita, and Wichita Area Association of Realtors. Support of the Plan also was indicated at presentations to the Historic Preservation Board, Park Board, Library Board, Sedgwick County Association of Cities, Wichita Independent Neighborhoods, and Old Town Association. Only the Park Board had any members that expressed opposition to the Plan, and their opposition was based on the expense of the Plan and subsidies to developers rather than concerns with the park-related elements of the plan.

Charlotte Foster wanted to know why they are proposing turning the old Coleman site into parking; **Knebel** said to allow for future development in that area. **Foster** said it seems like wherever Goody Clancy sees a vacant lot, they just want to fill it up with a parking lot or garage. She also said she doesn't believe that SRS clients should have to pay for parking when they are going to the State Office Building.

Teresa Cook wanted to know about the status of Union Station; **Knebel** said he didn't know, but that Cox has been showing the building to a number of interested parties.

Craig Gabel said the City is claiming that more than 3500 citizens attended the meetings on the Downtown Plan, but by the time you eliminate all the politicians, staff and special interest groups, less than 1% of the city's population attended a meeting. **Gabel** said he doesn't believe this plan is best for the community; it's parasitic and doesn't attract new community members, instead it just draws people from other parts of the city. He said a huge portion of the people going downtown are bypassing businesses in their own neighborhoods and Wichita will end up being just like San Antonio where the downtown is great, but for a four-mile radius around downtown it's nothing but a ghetto. **Gabel** said this plan stymies growth in other parts of the city such as office space and condos – investors are afraid to compete with the government subsidized projects downtown. He said we need to bring new money to Wichita, not just move what's here around.

Tom Strickland said he has been reading in the paper there is still talk about bringing rail passenger service to Wichita. He wanted to know how that would be accomplished if Union Station is sold. **Knebel** said he doesn't know a lot about that, it could be an obstacle, but there's more than enough room at Union Station for offices and rail services.

Teresa Cook asked about Electric Light Rail; **Knebel** said it is very expensive.

Charlotte Foster wanted to know why the new Central Library isn't being built by the arena; **Knebel** said the library decision has already been made.

Judy Dillard said she wasn't totally opposed to the plan, but that now is the wrong time to be making a recommendation like this – when the State and the City are in an economic crisis. She said too often in projects like this the City ends up subsidizing everything and then the rest of the neighborhoods suffer.

Recommended action: It is recommended that the District Advisory Board recommend that the City Council adopt of *Project Downtown: The Master Plan for Wichita, November 2010* as an amendment to *The Wichita-Sedgwick County Comprehensive Plan*.

Teresa Cook (Dillard) made a motion to defer the item for further discussion.

Action: Motion failed 2:5

DeWayne Kitchen (Smith) made a motion not to recommend adoption of the plan.

Action: Motion passed 6-2

Updates, Issues and Reports

DeWayne Kitchen reported the Safe Streets project is being launched in Planeview and they have a “block watch” meeting next Thursday.

Charlotte Foster wanted to know if there was a report that shows how much tax money is generated in each Council district and how much is spent in each district. **Janet Johnson** said the Council members may have that information.

Connie Klassen announced that in her neighborhood the graffiti has been painted over and the ditch has been mowed.

Craig Gabel said if anyone is hiring temporary help from the Drop In Center to be very careful because there have recently been some issues.

Paul Davis said there has been an increase in the number of illegal signs being placed in the City right of way. **Johnson** said to call her with the locations when this occurs.

Meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting for District Advisory Board III will be held at 7 p.m., Jan. 5, 2011, at the Water Center at 101 E. Pawnee.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Johnson, Neighborhood Assistant – District III

Guests

Paul Davis
Connie Klassen
Sandra Rogers
Don Rogers
Hazel Drummond
Hoyt Hillman
Betty Strickland
Tom Strickland
Craig Gabel
James Clendenin