

ODWNA Neighborhood Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Place: Winchell Elementary Library

Board Members:

Present:; Peter Kushner, President; Chris Shook, Vice President; Diana Morton-Thompson, Treasurer, Sandy Bolstad, Secretary; Kathy Shook, Tom Keyser, Becky Mutsaers, Barb Ross, Paul Scott

Absent: none



- I. **Call to Order:** Peter Kushner, 7:00 pm
 - o Neighborhood Garage Sale coming up last Saturday of the month
 - o View from the Curb has dates on yard waste pick up
 - o Spring Hydrant flushing the 21st and 22nd
 - o Stadium Lighting Ordinance formation in progress. Soliciting citizen feedback. Pete serving on input board, send in any comments, opinions and thoughts.
 - o Next month is our car show.
- II. **Treasurer's Report**
 - Provided information on balance and upcoming expected expenses. We are about \$100 in the black for the year.
- III. **Secretary's Report**
 - Next meeting: May 20 is car show, we will have a Pizza truck present from Camzie's Pizza so you can buy pizza/drinks for dinner.
- IV. **Old Business:**
 - None
- V. **New Business:**
 - None
- VI. **Public Comments:**
 - **Megan Muzzell, from the group Save the Colony Farm Orchard**, spoke to us about saving the Old Colony Farm Orchard from WMU development. Their opinion is that WMU has an ethical responsibility to save the land. Channel 3 and the Kalamazoo Gazette have been covering their efforts. They have a website and she left some handouts. You can also sign a petition at www.change.org to support their efforts.
 - o One opinion voiced that this is good for the economy
 - o Another opinion voiced that there is a lot of other city land that could be used that wouldn't interrupt the watershed.
 - o Another opinion voiced that many animals were displaced during Costco development and this will displace many more, and those animals could likely end up in your backyard as there is little else in the way of places for them to go nearby.
 - **Mike Nelson, Rental Inspector from City of Kalamazoo** came to speak to us for a few moments:
 - o New weed inspector being interviewed.
 - o Oakland Drive condo project by KCC golf course: Developer was not supposed to remove trees and did, so the city is now going after the Developer for this. Also they have no easement for the project, and so the project is stalled.
 - o Encouraged citizens to go to www.ImagineKalamazoo.com and provide input to how the city should budget funds, as well as check out other city information.
 - o Working on a pedestrian plan.
- VII. **Notes from our Speaker:**

Guest Speaker: Jim Ferner, Complete Streets Coalition of Kalamazoo <http://completestreetscoalition.weebly.com/>

Topic: "Complete Streets" for Kalamazoo

Goal is to make streets friendly for ALL traffic, bicyclists, pedestrians, etc. Currently, too many of our streets are designed only for speeding cars or, worse, creeping traffic jams. Complete Streets wants to make streets safe, comfortable and convenient for all traffic, not just cars.

Streets can benefit a community if planned and implemented correctly by improving safety, providing for better health, stronger economies, reducing costs, providing choices and smarter growth. Connecting transit to work, to shops, to schools and to homes is one of the goals.

- Residents are 65% more likely to walk in a neighborhood with sidewalks.
- Transportation is the second largest expense for families, making up 18-55% of their budget.
- Walkable communities are happier and healthier communities.
- 57% of Americans would like to spend less time in the car.
- 50% of the trips people take are less than 3 miles and 28% are less than 1 mile. Currently 60% of these trips are driven.
- 47% of older Americans say it is unsafe to cross a major street near their home.
- Slower speeds lead to increased safety. The probability of a pedestrian fatality at 20 mph is 5%, at 30 mph is 40% and at 40 mph is 80%.

The policies of Complete Streets are to ensure that the entire right-of-way is planned, designed, constructed, operated and maintained to provide safe access for all users. National information about Complete Streets can be found here: <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/complete-streets/who-we-are>

MDOT has something they call Context Sensitive Design. When you stand downtown at W. Michigan Ave./Oakland Dr./Lovell St .you can see it.

Ways to slow traffic:

- Speed humps
- Speed bumps
- Speed tables
- Curves in the road
- Bump outs at intersections to protect non-motorized traffic

They always say we can't do these here because of the snow plows, but they have put them in in other cities where they also get a lot of snow and the snow plows deal with them just fine (such as Minneapolis?). There is no loss of service.

They are in favor of trees, planters, boulevards, benches, racks on buses, bike lanes. Anything that slows down traffic and makes communities more of a community and less of a throughway.

Oliver and Stadium all the way to downtown is being looked at for pedestrians and bikes because of the college traffic that is more likely to consist of pedestrians and bikes, the intersection at Academy is one of the worst for them.

When we look at the downtown area, there is a need to look at it comprehensively.

This approach has been shown to create jobs, increase property values, and just make for better communities. Brought business cards, on their website is a link to Dan Burdens? Site which has before and after pictures of another community and does a great job at telling the story.

Communities need to let the citizens come up with the solutions, rather than just give lip service to taking input.

Maintenance of bike lanes is also important. They are tough to use when they are full of debris.

VIII. **Adjournment:** 8:12 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Sandy Bolstad, ODWNA Secretary