

BNIP NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

6:00 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

A neighborhood, meeting was held on Wednesday, June 18, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. at the All Saints Church, Parish Hall, on the corner of Scott and Beeber Streets.

Kim Wheeler, Planner for Lycoming County, introduced the partners and explained that Lycoming County and the City of Williamsport are continually trying to find resources to invest in the neighborhood and to address critical issues and concerns regarding redevelopment.

This meeting is the sixth neighborhood meeting since last April and that we will continue to hold neighborhood meetings to keep a dialogue open.

Ms. Wheeler mentioned that PA Department of Community and Economic Development visited the Brodart site and the surrounding neighborhood on April 9, 2014 and made a formal announcement regarding DCED grant funding in the amount of \$500K for infrastructure improvements. The media covered the event and the project received an excellent reception from the state agencies. These grant funds coupled with \$200K of County Act 13 funds and \$300K of City CDBG funds totals \$1 million to spend on infrastructure improvement in the neighborhood. The rental property facade grant application that was submitted in January 2014 will be considered during DCED's next funding cycle. Ms. Wheeler mentioned that the representatives from Lycoming Engines and Brian Regan, owner of the former Webster school, attended the last meeting. Ms. Wheeler reviewed the mission statement and reviewed the neighborhood lighting walk around.

Connie Baker, STEP, Inc. provided a status report on the Homes-In-Need program. Nine projects are underway and there are 20 applications pending. Applications for the program are available this evening. She recommended submitting an application for the program within the next six months.

Arion Moser, Greater Lycoming Habitat for Humanity, provided updates on the Brush with Kindness program that focuses on exterior clean up and landscaping and small repairs for properties. Habitat is currently working at 1557 Scott St. and 1523 Memorial Ave. Johnson Painting, a third party contractor, is assisting with some of the painting work. The Crosscutters baseball team is helping out as well as staff and other volunteers. Applications are available this evening.

Mr. Ochs stated that owners across from Memorial Homes should fix up their properties. Ms. Moser responded that homeowners have to contact Habitat in order to receive assistance.

A citizen asked if the boundaries for the Brodart neighborhood were going to expand. Ms. Wheeler stated that the boundaries were not going to expand at this time. Ms. Moser clarified that Habitat's program is not limited to the Brodart neighborhood. Ms. Wheeler stated that STEP Inc.'s Homes-In-Need program can also go outside the Brodart neighborhood, but that the income limits to be eligible for the program are different. Ms. Wheeler stated that if there is an expansion of the boundaries for the Brodart neighborhood, the mailing list would be revised.

Residents expressed concerns about applying for the program if their homes have codes violations. Ms. Baker stated that the program is designed to address codes violations.

Mr. Grado stated that the Memorial Homes project is well underway and will be completed by the end of the year for occupancy. Site grading and topsoil work is being done and the area will be seeded to a grass area.

A lighting plan was distributed at the last meeting that identified work areas. Mr. Grado reviewed the scope of work that will be part of the DCED grant funding. The infrastructure work around Memorial Homes will begin in the fall and the remaining work will be started in 2015. The Beeber St. entrance into Memorial Park will be part of Phase II.

A resident stated that the gravel on the bank of the Scott St. entrance is a hazard. John Grado stated that the City Streets and Parks Dept. will address this. A sidewalk after the guardrail is removed will also be part of Phase I.

Ms. Wheeler stated that there will continue to be lots of activity and inconveniences will come and go so good to bring it to our attention. Parking on Scott St. can happen once the sidewalk goes in.

Mr. Grado stated that the City has engaged Wade Consultants for the design of Memorial Pool. The concept was approved by Planning Commission. There will be a tot area with spray amenities and a tubular slide as well as a competitive swim area. There will be the base bid and 15 Add Alternates. Until the actual numbers are in, it is unknown how much money will be available for the Add Alternates. The concept allows for access and additional parking and new sidewalk. The \$500,000 for access improvements must include ADA parking. Access would come in from the neighborhood and into the pool parking lot. There may or may not be a drop off area. A suggestion was made that the Sun-Gazette should advertise where to send donations. The Friends of Memorial Pool is raising money from various organizations. ADA parking is planned to be completed by next summer as well as decorative fencing. The Recreation Commission must approve increases to fees. It is possible that there may be a small increase for pool admissions. A resident asked if the gas companies were solicited to contribute funds as part of giving back to the community. The Friends of Memorial Pool should revisit that. Habitat has had good results with getting assistance from the gas companies. Mr. Grado stated that the bid for Memorial Pool will be advertised in July 2014. He stated that DCNR projects can be modified.

Mr. Gerardi of the City Codes department stated that there are 6 codes officers in the Codes Department. The Codes Department tries to work with homeowners to correct codes violations. The home located at Andrews Place was discussed, regarding the fence and trash. The owners were fined, but Mr. Gerardi explained that the magistrate has to enforce the regulations. Three new violations within a period of 6 months can shut down a rental unit for 3 months. The same violations committed three separate times equal a shutdown. 1530 Scott St. was mentioned as a blighted property. Codes officers look at the entire property for violations. The graffiti at Webster school is a codes violation and an ongoing problem. The City maintains the alleys in the City, but if an alley is not developed in 21 years, the City no longer maintains the alley. Mr. Gerardi gave out his contact information and told attendees to contact him with their concerns.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.