



Fayetteville Council of Neighborhoods

Monthly meeting – July 17, 2008

Minutes

Members Attending

Sarah Lewis	Sang Valley
Cathy Bass	Dickson Street
Bob Caulk	Mt. Sequoyah South
Susan Jenkins	Elm/Erstan/Baker
Michael H. Thomas	Sunset Woods
Tim Kring	University Heights
Phyllis McGirity	Savanna
Karen Reese	Washington Willow
Jo Ann Kvamme	Root School
Zola Moon	Hendricks, Maxwell, and Stephens

Karen Rollett-Crocker made a presentation for the Fayetteville Natural Heritage Association

The discussion was on a “Plan for Green Infrastructure – Linking Arkansas Communities 2008-2009

- They are asking the neighborhoods to contribute their knowledge of what is in our neighborhoods to a city wide (and hopefully someday region wide) GIS (Barbara Boland) that identifies forests, wetlands, wildlife corridors, etc. These will help when trying to piece together what we need to create a healthy green infrastructure and promote “good” growth. This is only the first step in the process but an important one since no one knows our neighborhoods better than we do.
- Eventually, they would like to be a Regional Green Infrastructure so the whole area is integrated. Rogers wants to do something like this.
- Patty Erwin wants green infrastructure that the MSA will buy into.
- In the future FNHA would like to try to preserve specific pieces of property that are identified.

Questions for Ms. Rollett-Crocker:

How can the FCON group help?

We can identify areas of interest and relay this information to the FNHA for inclusion in there GIS.

There will be a Stakeholders meeting August 21st at 7 pm – FCON has decided we will go after our monthly meeting (so neighbors with information that they would like included should contact your neighborhood representative).

Who will manage the Green Infrastructure?

It will depend on the land. Farmers will manage their farms, cities will manage the forests and city parks within their boundaries

The second speaker was **Jeff Hawkins** from the Regional Mobility Authority

- This group was created partially to meet the high cost demands of keeping up with the regional infrastructure needs of Northwest Arkansas. 60% of the budget is specifically to deal with a Transportation plan that must be multimodal to get federal funds. Highways are paid for by taxes on gas but this is not related to price per gallon only number of gallons and as gas use goes down so does the revenue from gas tax. Also, the state(\$0.215) and federal (\$0.184) gas taxes have not been raise 1999 (state) and 1993 (federal). We cannot always count on the availability of Federal funds for road improvements. 14 states have raised gas tax 19 times but not Arkansas. However, construction costs are up and NW Arkansas is taking initiative to make up what is not being collected in bonds and city mills.
- So far, Benton and Washington County have joined the group and they hope to have all thirteen first level cities (and also smaller municipalities) join. Presently, nine first level cities have joined and four are being considered in the near future. Once complete all the decisions made by the group will first have to comply with the 2030 plan (nwarpc.com) and second have to be approved by the Quorum Court and third must be put to a vote of the people before action can be taken.
- The Regional Mobility Authority can get grants, accept private contributions, make tolls (they would first have to voted on by the public), sell bonds, contract construction projects, build, operate, own projects, take land by imminent domain, etc. However, all actions must meet best goals of 2030 plan.
- The RMA is public, formed by courts. The board has at least five members, County judges, cities of 1st class. Any major funding must be brought through the Quorum Court and go to a vote of the people.
- The Transportation Policy Commission already includes many mayors already.
- The RMA is fashioned after the one in Texas (however they are having some problems).
- The transit Authority is similar to the RMA but not totally. Once we hit 200,000 we will lose the subsidy for our bus system which does not run in the black so this will be a bigger issue. There needs to be an average of seven homes per acre to make a bus system with regular stops profitable.

Questions raised to Mr. Hawkins:

Does this Authority only do highways?

They can work with Park & Ride, parking or trains.

Why would we give funds to the RMA?

Probably the funds would be in the form of a study conducted but supported by someone else.

What about light rail?

IT is possible but would need an alternative analysis and study all modes of transportation first.

We have a petition to the state to have an analysis of ALL modes of transportation (light rail, buses, park & Ride) done but it will cost \$500,000 (for 80%) and well over \$600,000 for the entire project.

Does the study take into account other effects like quality of life or just cost?

The analysis is basically a cost analysis and does not take quality of life into account.

What is the FCON role in this?

He will keep us up to date on the projects.

Julie McQuade's presentation was postponed until next month.

Neighborhood Updates:

Sang Valley - We have a new garden at Youth Can. We are having some compliance issue on Lawrence Circle which we are trying to correct.

Jefferson Walker - We are having lots of traffic on 6th at rush hour. Most neighbors are excited about the new High School idea on Morningside. We also appreciate the added bike trails in the south part of town.

Dickson Street

Mt. Sequoyah South - nothing

Elm/Erstan/Baker - All quite. We are requesting a study of traffic for traffic calming devices.

Sunset Woods - all is quite and gardens are growing without watering!

University Heights - We have an active list serve to stop problems as arise and make the neighbors aware of things going on in the neighborhood.

Savanna - This is a new Neighborhood Association. There have been break-ins in the area which we are trying to stop.

Washington Willow - nothing

Root School - We had a change in a PZD that went before City Council and none of the neighbors or the Neighborhood Association were notified of this agenda item. We feel we should be notified when changes that effect us are coming forward (at least as a courtesy).

Hendricks, Maxwell, and Stephens - Concerned about the decision to widen Garland to 5 lanes up to in Melmar and then go back to 2 lanes. The neighborhood has

suggested two lanes with a center turn lane and sidewalks and bike lanes. When they approach the Highway department they were told the city requested the 5 lanes. When they took their idea to the city the city said they never asked for 5 lanes. The neighbors just want a more neighborhood friendly solution to the traffic

Mayoral Debate will be at St. Paul's Church on Dickson St. at 7pm September 11, 2008. The folks running for City Council will also be able to tell a little about themselves. Kyle Kellum will be the moderator. We will be asking Neighborhoods if they can donate to share some of the costs (they probably will not be too much).

Agenda for August:

Julie's presentation on Conservation

We will end promptly so the FCON can attend the Shareholder meeting at 7pm for the FNHA.

In September we can have someone from Budget come and discuss ways to cut the budget