

Council of Neighborhood Associations (CONA)
Monthly Membership Meeting
John R Hooker Room, City Hall, August 19, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 and introductions were made.

Attendees: Paul Ash, Eliz Cox-Ash, McDoel; Jon Lawrence, Jan Sorby, Bryan Park; Sandi Clothier, NearWest; Cynthia Bretheim, Prospect Hill; Don Granbois, Jo Basey, Blue Ridge; Carrie Winkel, Crescent Bend; John Kennedy, Spicewood; Hannah Schertz, Eastside; Chuck Madelin, Grandview Hills; Bill Milroy, Old Northeast; Tom Shaefer, Park Ridge East; Jenny Southern, Elm Heights; Kathleen Boggess, Darrell Boggess, Park Ridge East; Dave Brodin, Melissa Patee, Smithville Fiber; Jenny Vaughn, Charlotte Zietlow, Elaine Guinn, Hospital Reuse Committee.

July Minutes: The minutes of July's meeting were reviewed and the motion to approve was made by Tom Shaefer, and seconded by Paul Ash, the vote to approve was unanimous.

Treasurers Report: Elizabeth Cox Ash noted that CONA made 29 cents in interest. The move to approve was made by Jo Basey and seconded by Jan Sorby, the vote to approve was unanimous.

Smithville Fiber

Jon Lawrence noted that when Blue Ridge announced that they were to be the first Bloomington neighborhood to have Smithville Fiber bring fiber optic cable to their area, many people were interested in seeing how this could happen in their neighborhood, so CONA asked them to come to tell us how to proceed; Dave Brodin and Melissa Pattee are the representatives of Smithville Fiber.

Melissa began by saying that they have gotten phone calls from many neighborhoods, and so are here to explain how they will go about the process of working with Bloomington neighborhoods. In terms of timing, they are not looking for another neighborhood until next year. The way they work is, because this requires a great deal of capital, they need to have a substantial cash flow, and they prefer to work with the neighborhood to get the commitments prior to beginning in that neighborhood. They would like to have a neighborhood lined up for next year when they are able to lay the cable. For Smithville, this is a partnership with the Neighborhood. The company needs a substantial commitment from the neighborhood in order to give a commitment of service to that neighborhood, "after we cost out a project, (we) determine the take rate in order to make sure the project is viable."

Dave explained that although Blue Ridge is the first in Bloomington, there were two earlier successes; in some cases, they may need 2/3rds of the neighborhood to be involved. They also like to have a point person in the neighborhood, one contact, who can contact everyone in the neighborhood, and can find a place to meet, help with marketing and spreading the word; they're looking for someone willing to take on some of the workload, someone who can collect questions, filter them to Springville, so they can respond.

A question was asked by CONA representative: What percentage of the neighborhood do you need to have signed up in order to go ahead? Dave responded that there was a 25% buy in for Blue Ridge prior to starting the project, so, "once we have enough interest, we will calculate how much it will cost, we need to have somewhere in the 25-50% range." There are many variables, as to where that number will fall; large plots, the number of households, and other factors

may make it more expensive, where utilities are congested, bigger distances in country but not so many obstructions, all this affects cost.

Charlotte: does where you are affect where you're going to be, or who is going to be next? Dave responded that they have been surveying businesses in bloomington for 10 years or so, and most are already on fiber, their mapping system shows where they are. Other issues impacting cost and timing have to do with things like equipment location: where to place the needed equipment, a Homeowner's Association near Oliver Winery was able to offer land for the necessary equipment and that meant it was possible to complete the project.

Tom, if say 25% of the neighborhood signs up for fiber, what happens to the rest who do not sign up right away? Dave said that “ we design for 100% so that we are already right there, we will have fiber available to all the homeowners or renters, but if they come in later there may be a fee charged for that later hookup. Sometimes the fee is waived if a household signs up at the beginning.

CONA question: suppose CONA says 30 neighborhoods want to sign up right now, how would you prioritize? We would ask that they create a handout for the neighborhood of things that they should do now, and get that completed and bring to us to show a commitment to the project within the neighborhood. We would also look at where we have fiber already, and the percentage of homes that wanted to sign up for the service. If a neighborhood had most of the homes, a petition of 90% would make it very likely we would prioritize that neighborhood.

CONA Question: what about renters and landlords, who signs up for the service? Dave, we cannot do anything without an agreement from the landlord, and we usually want a 3 year contract, we had a 2 year contract in Blue Ridge. *Jenny expressed concern that this couldn't happen in most student neighborhoods, where a one year contract is about all that could be expected. Could Smithville go through a neighborhood, missing groups of houses, and back and forth to where homeowners live?* Dave agreed this is a potential problem for Bloomington, with the number of rentals in the town.

Question about comparative cost of services, Comcast, AT&T, Smithville? Dave said it is not useful to compare the cost of Comcast to Smithville, because Smithville doesn't offer all the services that Comcast does, for instance, so those who just want to have TV will not find this to be a good fit. But, Smithville fiber optic is 50 times as fast, and fiber optic is more reliable, but Smithville will not guarantee that their prices are competitive with Comcast. Generally it is \$70.00 a month for fiber into home, and they (Smithville) are not big rate changers; phone line is about \$20.00 / not competitive is tv, we pay twice as much as Comcast for TV, so that is not so great.

Charlotte asked if Smithville is working with the City of Bloomington, or IU? Dave said there is nothing happening at the moment, a few conversations, idea based, and added that “we would be happy to be part of something, it would be easier to simply build the entire city, as they did when we partnered with the city of Jasper”.

Tom said there has been a discussion between several neighborhood associations in his area, to try to get several on board because they thought they may be too small for Smithville to be interested in us. Dave agreed that getting a larger area together and ready does make it more attractive to Smithville.

Don noted that all the work done in Blue Ridge has been done well.

A question was asked about using a preexisting major trunk line that runs through the McDoel neighborhood, would you be able to use that for your lines? Smithville: It's a discussion, the utilities are not forced to allow it, in the county they work with us very well.

Jon asked what needed to happen for CONA to sponsor a public meeting, what do we need to do, how do we go about this? Melissa said that they are looking for a large venue, they don't have the timing set for this, since they cannot go into new neighborhoods right now. The presentation would take about an hour or an hour and a half to go through.

A question was asked about what made it work in Jasper, and is this possible in Bloomington? It involves partnering with the city, and a commitment of money, the permitting process has to work a certain way. Some cities make it easy, some make it less attractive.

Jenny asked about right of ways through alleys etc, since our ground has limestone underground, if poles available, will you use them? It just depends on the conditions, it can be more expensive to be on the pole because the owner has to be paid. In Jasper, all the poles were owned by the city, that's not true in Bloomington.

The discussion ended with a promise to continue working on this and to look into a venue for a meeting to be held so the town would have the opportunity to hear from Smithville.

Bloomington Hospital Reutilization Committee- Community Outreach

Jenny Vaughn, Ivy Tech, Elaine Guinn, New Hope Family Shelter, Charlotte Zietlow, City Public Works Commission.

The Reutilization group met with CONA representatives to discuss their plan to host two public meetings, the first being on September 15th, from 5-7 at the Monroe County Public Library, and the second on September 23rd, from 5-7 (**Note: since this CONA meeting, these dates have changed. Visit <http://bloomington.in.gov/hospital> for actual dates/times**); they want the members present to give them feedback on their plans and offer any ideas. There will also be meetings between the adjoining neighborhoods, Prospect Hill and McDoel Gardens Neighborhood associations, to get their input.

One of their concerns is creating a cost analysis of maintaining the current structure, or a part of it, versus building a new structure. The preliminary findings are that maintaining the structure involves pretty big numbers, for instance there is a wing that cannot be used because there are pipes burst. The committee explained that they are looking at the entire property, rather than just the hospital, and that includes the houses between Kroger and the Hospital, and also includes the former school and other ancillary buildings. These, they are hopeful, will be able to stay, and reused.

A discussion followed concerning the timing and place of the proposed public meetings, with many questions and comments about both.

If people cannot attend the meetings, they are encouraged to leave feedback, subscribe to updates, and learn more, at hospital@bloomington.in.gov

New CONA Committees- Jon noted the need for a nomination committee to have a slate for the next meeting for officers whose terms are coming up this year. As the organization reorganized, we staggered our terms, Vice Chair and two executive officers and the treasurer are up for election. No more than 1/3 of this committee can be Executive members. Volunteers for the committee: Jan Sorby, Cynthia Bretheim and Kathleen Boggess.

Awards committee- What awards should we have; Neighborhood Hero. Several suggestions were made, and Elizabeth Cox Ash, John Kennedy, Jo Basey volunteered to be on the awards committee.

Current Planning Issues-no new information

Growth Policies Plan- the committee has not met

Certified Tech Park- Dave not present for update

Neighborhood Issues

In Spicewood - do it yourself restaurant, now actually a poker house, 9pm-3 am, some large number of international students, run by some guy who calls himself a super predator, he has threatened people who have questioned him. The owner lives in Hungary, but we haven't been able to get HAND to go after this issue. The address was 2525 Roundhill Lane, now the Poker Tables Restaurant has moved to somewhere on 7th St. and is being advertised in Yelp.

Red and White roofs- on 8th between Dunn and Indiana, an owner of a student apt house has put a new metal roof, with alternating red and white sections, on the structure. He has also done this at the corner of 11th and Lincoln, Bill Milroy wrote to the guy who owns the buildings and asked him to come to the neighborhood association meeting, but he has not responded. Nancy from HAND tried to see what could be done, but was unable to stop it. Many feel it is a branding of the owner's properties, and feel this should be stopped. Chris Sturbaum has been brought in to the discussion and thinks there may be a way to stop this with code.

Elizabeth brought up the AirBnB's that are becoming popular around the country; there are 25 or 30 listed in Bloomington. A discussion followed about the pros and cons of these units, and how we as an organization, might want to address them, do we support with caveats, and if so, what causes them to be a good or bad thing for a neighborhood.

The Meeting was adjourned at 7:50pm.