

Minutes for Kansas City Neighborhood Advisory Council
(KCNAC) on October 12, 2004

KCNAC members in attendance: Lynda Callon, Rodney Sampson, Jay R. Stock, Steve Eklund, and Greg Hugeback

Absent Members: Dennis Carroll, Forestine Beasley, Cynthia Canady, and Bruce Pennington

City staff in attendance: Joan Fenley, Vernessa Rashaw, Tracy Brucks, Les Washington, Renea Nash, David Reynolds, and Bennie Jackson

Guests: Aggie Stackhaus (Land Trust), Robert Stout, Marlon Hammons (Washington-Wheatley), and Margaret May (Ivanhoe Neighborhood Council)

Meeting called to order at 3:50 pm.

Old Business:

(Tape 1 not available)

Subcommittee reports:

Waste Management-Jay:

No Report

Property Maintenance-Rodney:

No Report

Liquor Control-Dennis:

No Report

Community Policing-Steve:

Decisions on community policing will not be made until after a new police chief has been selected.

New Business:

Joan Fenley, Parks & Recreation Department

Presentation Summary

The budget officer and the city manager have given a small increase in funding to Parks & Recreation for mowing properties. Currently, Parks & Recreation is mowing two cycles a year. The department is mowing the Land Trust and Privately-owned properties. The privately-owned properties are violators.

To make Land Trust workable, neighborhoods could be assisted in purchasing the Land Trust properties. The neighborhoods could be paid to mow these properties. After three years, the properties could be given to the neighborhoods. The neighborhoods would have invested money in the properties (mowing the properties) through sweat equity. The sweat equity is an exchange for the purchase of the property. The arrangement applies to neighborhoods and not to individuals.

Average Size Lot In Land Trust	Average Cost per Year to Mow Land Trust – 2 Cycles per year	Average selling Cost (estimate)
3,000 to 7,000 sq. ft.	\$120.00	\$400-\$1,000

The policy is to maintain a property for a certain amount of time and then the property will be available to the maintainer. In the next year budget, the average mowing cost to mow a Land Trust property will increase to \$200 per year. The proposed action is to take the \$200 and give it to the Neighborhood

Improvement so the funds can be used to maintain the property. For example, the properties could be mowed 8 times a year to make them more manageable by tentatively mowing once in the month of May, August, September and October and twice in June and July. The mowing could be at \$25 per mowing (8 x \$25 = \$200).

However, the hurdles are 'sweat equity' and 'liability'. When someone enters another's property, liability becomes an issue. Usually neighborhoods can not afford to purchase the required liability insurance needed to mow these properties. The sweat equity concept would release the properties into the 'hands' of the neighborhoods and out of the 'hands' of Land Trust. Meaning that the neighborhoods would have more control over what happens on those lots.

The neighborhoods acquiring properties will help the neighborhoods in the future when obtaining loans. The properties would become the neighborhoods assets. For instance, it would be collateral for a loan to build a home in the neighborhood. The properties would be included on the neighborhoods budget line item under Neighborhood Improvement. As a result of this, the city could go after more money (instead of taking the money out of the General Fund Account) because the city would be considered as doing Neighborhood Improvement. Such money that may be available is the CBDG, Law Enforcement Grant, and Weed & Seed. Also, the inventory of an approximate 3,000 properties would be reduced to 500 to 1,000 lots that the Land Trust would have to maintain. The advantage is that the neighborhoods would have the lots after 3 years.

However, under the sweat equity purchase the neighborhoods would be paying taxes on acquired properties, which in turn will produce revenues for the city. Currently, the city is paying out of pocket for these properties.

The Bayer Corporation stated that they would assist in (1) establishing land management programs in the neighborhoods and (2) offer to spray some of the lots to get them manageable.

A comprehensive program has already been started in the Prospect Corridor. This is an opportunity to redevelop the Prospect Corridor neighborhoods.

Also, the Full Employment Council will be asked to help in providing a training program to individuals who mows the properties during the summer. As well as help from the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), MARC has a neighborhood improvement grant. The proposition would be to ask MARC to restructure the grant so that the purchase of tools would be included.

Question: "What about neighborhoods that do not have a formal neighborhood associations or a strong one, could it be done through a church?" (Lynda Callon)

Aggie reply was, "It must start out in a strong neighborhood such as Ivanhoe, Washington-Wheatley... Early successes are needed for it to take off."

Joan continues...The idea is to address the Third District (as agreed by Troy Nash). Fifty-percent of the Land Trust is in the Third District. The money received could go bulky items or other areas. The neighborhoods will be responsible for maintaining the lots when they obtain these properties. For easier accessibility of ownership for the neighborhoods, the sweat equity concept was thought of by *Dave [Fenley]*, a managing partner of Blackwell-Sanders who is an attorney and county appointee.

Announcement: Land Trust meets every third Thursday of every month in the Jackson County Courthouse, Second Floor, Conference Room, 9:30 a.m.

"...Jackson County, Parks & Recreation Department offer landscaping..." (Lynda Callon)

Aggie stated that Squire Park received a grant from a source to clean up a property. Joan added by asking for solicitation from the neighborhoods to find these funding sources so that the information can be passed on to others.

“Neighborhoods do not have the resources. This may have to go to the CDCs or the likes.” (Lynda Callon)

“We will cut these lots. We will maintain these lots...We have had to deal with the CDCs...which resulted in poor handling...in the Third District. We will recapture the vacant lots...do something with the image [in the Third District]...creating job opportunities...unemployment rate is 25% in the Third District...this can explode to something big...” (Marlon Hammons)

“It is more than the Third District CDCs to consider.” (Lynda Callon)

“CDCs are suppose to support the Third District...many of those individuals...do not live in the neighborhoods or in Kansas City...their Board decides on what brings revenues in to them...not necessarily what the people in the neighborhood want...neighborhoods to do this and want to on a pilot basis...will show what can be done...other neighborhoods can be getting ready for such program [sweat equity purchasing of properties]...Ivanhoe and Washington-Wheatley can help the other neighborhoods prepare...” (Margaret May)

“...put restrictions on the deeds...” (Jay Stock) This may help to prevent grave dilemmas.

“Out right purchase of properties, has an expensive [legal] cost...photocopying plats...when purchased by someone or an entity.” (Aggie Stackhaus) Aggie stated that there might be access to free legal cost concerning acquiring the properties.

“...Down zone...” (Greg Hugeback)

Les suggested to Joan that she come back to the group when this proposal has been comprised a little more.

Joan suggested that an invitation go out to MARC and the Full Employment Council (FEC) to attend one of KCNAC meetings and have Margaret and Marlon back. Also, plans are to restructure the city jail to make it more functional—community service programs. Individuals who have to complete community services hours are working 6 days a week in assisting in getting the lots to a manageable stage. Environmental issues will be considered in the restructuring efforts.

“See Judge Cagle about community service...” (Jay Stock)

Thursday Solutions is a vision of Center for Community Solutions (CCS). It will begin in January 2005 during the lunch hour [11am-12pm or 12pm-1pm]. It is in partnership with KCNAC. Thursday Solutions will address twelve subject matters for the year that will deal with facts and dismissing myths. (Renea Nash)

Keep out front: An ordinance banning the sell of 40 oz bottled beer [it is the equivalent of a six-pack, malt beer] was passed previously. However, at 71st & Wornall, the establishment or person wants to sell bottled beer. The reason for the banning was to address the loitering and littering problems at areas establishments. A future possibility is to ban the sell of ‘large can’ of beer.

Meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.