

Belle Meade Neighborhood Association (BMNA)

June 11, 2011 - Meeting Minutes

The meeting was opened with a welcome from George Singleton of Upstate Circle of Friends. May minutes were reviewed and there was a reminder that the Center is still accepting enrollment for the summer youth camp. George shared that some discounts are available based on income.

Handouts included: County of Greenville "Your Guide to Code Enforcement" and "Animal Control Division", UCF Summer Camp, Housing Rehabilitation Information.

George talked about how UCF has been able to help numerous members of the community and how we should try to help people because someone helped us all at some point in our lives. Clyde Mayes, Director of the GED Program, provided an overview of the program. UCF operates the GED Program in partnership with United Ministries and is a pretest site. A success rate of 25+ has been achieved since the program began. To date only one participant has failed the exam. United Ministries pays \$60 of the \$80 cost to test. Participants are responsible for the remaining \$20.

Harriet Cunningham, Belle Meade resident, provided an overview of the Sub-Committee meeting that was held on 6/6/11. Although the list is not etched in stone, it was derived by reviewing the list of concerns expressed in previous meetings and is a starting point. She provided a description on responsibilities for the 5 committees decided on and everyone in attendance was asked to consider giving of their time and talents to serve on at least one on of the committees.

Ms. Pinky Whitner who attended the strategic planning meeting had already taken steps to move forward. She picked up the county brochures for handouts, application for traffic calming process to begin, signs and request for right away to hold community events that may require blocking a street.

1. Neighborhood Watch: Chairman: Cassandra Jackson – Members: Irene Davis, Elizabeth Davis, Steven Byrd, Ray Manigault, Lillie Manigault, Saleem Shabazz
  - a. Focus on criminal concerns
  - b. Work with police to help solve problems
  - c. Define list of issues to address
  - d. Gather facts about crimes in the community
  - e. Share information with fellow residents
  - f. Invite speakers to meetings to discuss specific topics like crime patterns, crime prevention education and crime reporting
  - g. Use map to identify streets and zones of concern
  - h. Secure signage for the community
  
2. Neighborhood Clean Up: Chairman: Janice (Pinky) Whitner – Members: Betty Townes, Anthony Smith, Louise Billups, Janice Smith, Henrietta Griffin, Ray Manigault, Lillie Manigault
  - a. Code enforcement issues
  - b. Community wide clean up day
  - c. Address issues of graffiti, litter, overgrown property and abandoned cars
  - d. Coordinate a community wide trash pickup day
  - e. Follow up with Greater Greenville Sanitation and Residential Yard Waste group
  - f. Coordinate efforts to improve appearance of entrances

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3. Street Captains: Chairman: Betty Brown Members: Juanita Foster, Noel Marion, Leticia McIntyre, Harriet Cunningham, Janice Smith, KC Jones
  - a. Provide communications to a specific area of neighborhood
  - b. Distribute flyers on meetings and events
  - c. Establish phone tree for their areas
  - d. Work with all other committees as needed to provide notification to other residents
  - e. Place signage in areas as needed
  
4. Traffic Calming: Chairman: Charles Edens - Members: Juanita Foster, Sybil Johnson
  - a. Side walks
  - b. Speed humps
  - c. Traffic signs
  - d. Speed limit signs
  
5. Neighborhood Events Chairman: Betty Brown – Members: Vivian Davis, Irene Davis, Janice Neely, Charles Edens, Harriet Cunningham, Margaret Richardson
  - a. Carnival
  - b. Yard Sale
  - c. National Night Out
  - d. Suggest and coordinate fundraisers
  - e. Youth events

Each Sub-Committee will have a chairman who will direct the group. The Monday recap meetings have had low participation and have not been a good use of time in moving the goals of the association forward, so it was moved that the meetings be converted to subcommittee meeting time. Sub-Committees will address concerns shared by the group. Related tasks will be assigned to individuals to move towards solutions. They will provide updates for the group at monthly meetings.

Ms. Cunningham recommended that initially the committees all meet on the Monday following the Association meeting at 6:00 to put structure in place. Meeting the following week will allow about 3-4 weeks for them to do some leg work and have an update for the body. A recommendation from the floor was made and stood that each committee determines their own meeting day. She stressed the importance of having chairmen to take the lead in order to follow this recommendation.

When new residents attend meetings and raise issues that have previously been addressed, they will be directed to the appropriate committee for a status report. They will be asked to take on the committee and be part of the solution. We all have some things we are passionate about and we need to put that passion in action.

Guest Speakers, Mr. Sylvester Pue and Mrs. Joyce Pue, of Capital Home Rehab provided an overview of the SC Housing Trust Fund and Rehabilitation Program. The process is not speedy and takes approximately 30 – 40 days but is good. Mr. Pue is allowed to work on a maximum of 5 projects simultaneously. All contractors are bonded and insured for a minimum of \$1,000,000.

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Upstate Circle of Friends is the partner who will hold the lean on the forgivable loan. There are two major components of the program. Cosmetic rehab is not a part of either program.

The Emergency Rehabilitation Program which provides up to \$6,000 of grant funds addresses emergency situations like a tree falling on a house, the floor falling in or the lack of rails on steps.

The Owner Occupied Rehabilitation Program which provides up to \$20,000 of grant funds. Both programs are income based and many of our seniors and retirees can qualify. You cannot add square footage, but can convert existing space. This program functions on a "top down" philosophy and can take care of things like roof, floors, windows, heat/air, walls, paint, insulation, fascia, and soffits.

A restrictive covenant must be signed for both projects and agree to occupy the property rather than sell or convert to rental property to prevent undue enrichment to gain revenue. Mrs. Pue provided a handout that detailed a list of copies of documents needed to get the application process started. She can provide the qualifying income levels based on number of occupants in the home. The next step would be for Mr. Pue to conduct a site visit and evaluate the needs of the home then prioritize the list

Ms. Sybil Johnson shared the story of working through the grant to have her home rehabbed three years ago with another agency.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:00.