

Belle Meade Neighborhood Association (BMNA)  
September 10, 2011 - Meeting Minutes

The meeting was opened with a welcome from George Singleton of Upstate Circle of Friends. This was a busy day at UCF with several activities taking place on the grounds including the Karate competition. As a result the BMNA met in the library. He explained that having multiple activities going on at the same time is what UCF is all about as a community center.

Other points shared by Mr. Singleton:

1. We have a map of the subdivision and hope to have it up by the October meeting so that attendees can identify their locations and we have a better idea of where our NA participation is coming from and where we may need to solicit additional involvement. Residents will also have an opportunity to learn names of streets in their areas
2. A new gate is being installed today as one of the efforts to improve the esthetics of the facility and to provide additional security
3. Sidewalks are coming along. They have been parking the trucks at the UCF site, but it is ok as long as it about improving the community
4. Lunch will be hot dogs and served in the library rather than the cafeteria

Ms. Harriet Cunningham shared a few brief updates:

1. Update on the paving process as provided by Ms. Joan Peters at Greenville County. The streets slated to be paved are Chesterfield,, Marlboro and Pine Creek Court. It is about a 2 week process and they are ahead of schedule. Everything should be complete by mid-October.
2. Asked that all of the committees meet at 6:00 on the following Thursday to review a plan to try and get things moving so that more progress can be made between monthly meetings.
3. Addressed the issue and plan for "Redistricting" based on the 2010 census numbers and how it will impact African Americans in Greenville County and specifically in district 25. Mr. Shabazz who has been working with the NAACP was able to provide more detail in that the entire area south of I-85 (which includes the Belle Meade neighborhood) will be combined with Duncan and Laurens to make up a district. In other works, Greenville County will be split which meas the voice and power of our vote will be weakened. This will likely result in not having African American representation in some cases. The petition was passed so that those who had not already signed would have a chance to do so. The goal is to have 15,000 signatures to share with the Department of Justice as we ask them to look into what is happening here in SC. He also shared that the issue of voter ID has not been reviewed yet. This law has the potential to eliminate votes of seniors and young adults. Good questions were raised by the group.

Guest speaker for the day was Mrs. Pat Tuleibitz who is a master gardener and received her associated training through Clemson University. She shared that the BMNA was the recipient of a Goodwill Grant that will fund the start up of a community garden. She talked about the benefits, shared examples of successful gardens in Greenville County including Bernie Street, Scan Source and others.

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Mrs Betty Brown has agreed to take the lead on establishing the garden. She will head the committee. Several residents in attendance signed up to be a part of the committee. We will have a "raised bed" garden here in Belle Meade because of the many variations in the soil. Mrs. Pat shared resources available to provide soil, mulch and compost at no charge. She also suggested we ask some of the area businesses for help.

The community garden can be both a learning and social experience in addition to a means of getting healthy chemical free produce.

Lunch was served and the meeting was adjourned at 12:30.