**Mayor's Council on Neighborhoods (MCN) Meeting Minutes**
**Tuesday, May 12, 2015, 5:30-7 pm ● Rochester Area Foundation Board Room**

**Mission of the Mayor's Council on Neighborhoods**
To strengthen connections between neighborhood leaders and give neighborhoods a collective voice.

**Welcome and Introductions**
- Randy Schubring, Slatterly, Art on the Avenue; Richard Denny, Sunnyside, mowing; Brian Rognholt, Slatterly Park, Art on the Avenue; Jane Townsend, Historic SW, street mural painting; Nancy Slocumb, Historic SW, monthly NA meeting; Mary Jo Majerus, Eastside, community garden; Mary Jo Briggs, Parkway; Barb Hudson, Friends of Indian Heights, neighborhood cleanup and park grant; Christine Schultze, Historic SW; Lyle Plumhoff, Washington, neighborhood-wide garage sales; Lisa Peterson, Washington; Mary Kujanson, NW Neighbors, NA information meeting about Walgreens; Barb Virning, NW Neighbors, Community gardens at church; Barry Skolnick, Historic SW & Downtown; René Lafflam, RNeighbors.

**Background Information**
At the February MCN meeting members determined that a smaller work group be formed to focus on how to address future development and how best neighborhoods can be proactive in the process. This is a topic that has come up repeatedly at MCN meetings as being the top present and future challenge in Rochester neighborhoods.

**"A Citizen's Guide"**
Simplified guideline for neighborhoods who are new to working with the City Council and the Planning & Zoning Commission. Special thanks for help from Bob Nowicki who created a prior version of this document and helped us bring it up to date. Once given the go-ahead from the MCN, Bob and René will meet with representatives from the Planning Department, the City Council and the Planning & Zoning Commission to get their feedback. The final document will be posted on the City's and RNeighbors' websites and available at Council meetings.

The group voted and unanimously approved the "Citizen's Guide" to move forward with revisions and additions from Christine about dates and times for submission of documents for inclusion in meeting packets.

**"Building Effective Citizen Participation for a Changing Rochester"**
The MCN work group did research on different cities who are comparable in size to Rochester and how neighborhoods in those cities positively work with development.

**Initiative Partners**

**"Building Effective Citizen Participation for a Changing Rochester" (continued from page 1)**

Out of these the goal of "creating effective, deliberative and sustainable public participation practices as the City of Rochester undergoes rapid economic development and demographic change" was created by the work group.

Randy shared the concept for District Councils. The document is not a final proposal but a framework crafted to start the conversation. If the MCN gives the approval to go-ahead on this concept then the work group will start the process of developing a transparent process with input from neighborhoods, elected officials and city staff.

**Large Group Discussion**
- Will not add more layers to government but would make things easier for elected officials and government staff in the long run
- Must emphasize that this isn't just a win-win for neighborhoods but a win for all involved in the process, making it smoother and more transparent
- Anticipate push back from the Chamber
- Could learn from NYC community board failures and successes
- Would make sense to try and introduce into city comp plan update (Randy will join René at meeting with Dave Dunn from the Planning Department)
- In St. Paul, District Councils have a crime prevention component
- "It's not what you say, but how you say it"
- Police Department is discussing about creating precincts in Rochester. Could be taken into consideration when proposing District Council boundaries
- Would Helen Rowland be an advocate for the group?
- Vital to have developers as partners in the effort. Something for the strategy group to fold into plan.
- Could there be a "back door" included in effort to hold developers accountable? No policing, city doesn't (and how could they?) follow up. Important to give the concept teeth. Could the District Council be watchdog for developers projects?
- Include possibility of system change and staffing changes that are similar to meeting building codes.
- Who will determine the members of the District Council?

**Small Group Discussion**
- Develop three questions about the framework

**Large Group Discussion**
- Must sell concept to Council, Mayo Clinic and Chamber
- Save $, save voters, save time
- Involve neighborhoods and council members early
- Maintain grassroots feel, not the "appointed by the appointed" model
- Defined scope
- Get developers on board early
- Define "paid staff" FTE
- Work with Chamber
- City Council members on board early
- Get in the process early
- Cover "back door" accountability
- We're the Citizens and we're here to help
- Include in the process that work is recognized. What will measure success or determine met goals?
- Include Rochester Area Builders, precincts
- Need "Power" behind effort
- Need to determine funding options
- Determine "empty" properties
- Chamber of Neighborhoods
- Endorse those entities that work with us

The group voted and unanimously approved the MCN Workgroup to move forward with laying out a strategy and model using the **"Building Effective Citizen Participation for a Changing Rochester".** The workgroup will keep the larger MCN group informed of progress.

**Dismissal**

**Upcoming 2015 MCN Meetings:** June 16, August 18, October 20, December 15 (each meeting is 5:30-7 pm)