



MidTowne & Sixth Ward Neighborhood Association

Minutes of April 17, 2009

Meetings held the First and Third Thursday of every Month at the UM-Helena, College of Technology; 1115 North Roberts Street, Room 114; from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Present: Jon McCarty, Thom Warsinski, Kari Christensen, Rose Casey, M.C. Beeby, Jim Penner, Lynn Moon, Julie Haehnel, and Robin Hall.

MC brought meeting to order and started with guest speaker Robin Hall with Helena Builder Industry Association (HBIA). The HBIA offers volunteer laborers to help the needs of the community with building projects that residents can't afford to do on their own. Robin talked about drives they have had to build up their membership for the association. They now have over 500 members. Members include all types of laborers of construction, electricians, plumbers, and other handy-people. The laborers want to give back to the community. Local stores such as Power Townsend, UBC and BMC help out with the building materials. The association does special projects for needy people that are in need of labor. They repair roofs, tree trimming, and build habitant homes. If you would like to volunteer your handwork you can apply on-line at their website. For work needed to be done you can put your application in at the God's Love, Friendship Center or Florence Crittenton Home. However, you must be a home owner and not a renter because it can be difficult to deal with landlords. Jim Moore reviews the projects given and decides if it can be done or not. If so, then people are called to come and volunteer they labor to finish a project.

MC brought up the idea of have a monthly newsletter and listing opportunities available and putting possibilities of future projects.

Rose reported on the Board of Housing hearing held April 6. Andy Skinner, Ralph Coslet, MC, and Rose were present and gave testimony. The Board of Housing had reviewed materials prior to the meeting and seemed well informed. Andy spoke as a landowner and mentioned he had 9 vacancies and didn't believe there was a need for that much housing. Rose has a separate report on the hearing. The BOH voted to accept the staff recommendation to deny the RMDC application for tax credits for their Midtown Residents project.

Lynn with RMDC gave some statistics about scoring competition projects and why RMDC was turned down. Re-hab is usually lower and considered first in line. She said RMDC has until January 2010 to find other funding sources for their buy/sell project with Caird property.

- Homeless people in Helena area were 69 last year and are up to 102 for this year.

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- Many of these homeless people are couch-surfers that go from home to home.
- Projects for Mental Health and Youth Home received grants and senior home in Boulder.

MC went to the City Commissioner's Administration meeting and suggested other ideas for the Caird property such as

- Have a Railroad Science Learning Center with a Community Center and Performance Space.

MC was going to meet the following week with the Academic Dean of UM-Helena about what courses would be needed to establish a 'school'.

MC mentioned

- Paul Cartwright with Transportation said 2 applications were received from residents in the MSWN for traffic calming.
- Paul Trombetta attended the zoning commission meeting where they voted to change the B2 zoning definitions to allow the bus station.
- Julie Haehnel had alerted MC that there was a grant available to apply for a VISTA position with the neighborhood. Julie and MC filled out and submitted the application with a focus on neighborhood disaster preparedness. Jim Penner (HCC) added that this is a competitive process and MSWNA will need to have their outline for interviewing ready.

There are still three vacancies with the Helena Citizens Council for District 6. MC has submitted an application. Rose is also considering applying.

Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by Kari Christensen, Secretary

Next meeting May 7, 2009 – Starts 7:00 p.m.

REMINDER: If anyone wants to submit membership dues for 2009, the fee is \$10.00 and may be sent to: MSWNA

1620 Townsend Ave.
Helena, MT 59601