



**MacArthur Boulevard Business Association
Monthly Meeting Minutes
American Red Cross
1045 Outer Park Drive
July 8, 2010 - 7:30 am**

Welcome

President Cory Jobe brought the meeting to order at 7:30am.

Treasurer's Report

Cory reported the MBBA bank account stands at \$13,682.

Secretary's Report

June minutes stood approved as presented.

We have a total of 154 members.

New members include Walgreens' property owner Sally Robinson and the Inn at 835.

Cory mentioned the importance of renewing memberships and for members to ask other businesses to join the Association.

Guest Speaker: T.J. Blakeman, City Planner II from the City of Champaign, IL

Mr. Blakeman offered an interesting and informative overview of the Green Street revitalization project in Champaign, IL.

The goals of the project were to encourage more pedestrian traffic, minimize through traffic, define a look and feel for the area and create a place where people wanted to be. Problems similar to MacArthur included empty buildings, crumbling curbs, suburban buildings with front parking lots, little walking space, fast traffic and large signs.

The project was organized in 1997 as a partnership between the City of Champaign and the University of Illinois. Phase I (streetscape) was completed in 2002, and phase II was completed in 2004. Ongoing efforts include a current flood control project and phase III, which will extend the improvement area, planned for 2016. A zoning overlay district included specifications for minimum height of buildings (2 floors), transparent windows on the 1st floor, parking in back of buildings with a wide walking space in front, basic design guidelines, minimal curb cuts, no minimum requirements for commercial parking areas (shared public parking is encouraged) and a strong sign ordinance (no billboards.)

The \$8.4 million project was funded by a city-wide food and beverage tax and a special service area property tax based on linear street footage plus an additional assessment on business property owners. The first 2 phases of the 3-phase project are complete and have resulted in the remarkable transformation of an area of Champaign that had been neglected, had a bad reputation, and was used mainly as a thoroughfare by the residents of Champaign. Results have been impressive: more than 25 new restaurants have opened in the area, an average of 5 new businesses open in the area every month, 600 new housing units are now available, and \$400 million in new construction has been invested in the area since 2007.

Local Government Update

Sangamon County Board

Jen Dillman, Sangamon County Board member, talked about the Redevelopment Plan and graffiti. See details below.

City of Springfield

There was no report from the City of Springfield.

Project Updates

MacArthur Boulevard Redevelopment Study

Jen Dillman, Chair of the Redevelopment Study, said a meeting will be held for MBBA members to view plans and provide input on the Redevelopment plan. Lakota Group will not be present. A steering committee meeting could be held at the same time. The meeting will be held **Thursday, June 22 from 5-7pm in the Dublin Pub back room**, 2413 South MacArthur Boulevard. The meeting is hosted by the MacArthur Boulevard Business Association and Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission. Pizza and soda will be provided. Members planning to attend should RSVP to info@shoponmacarthur.com.

Jen said the project is on target to finish in 2 months and stressed the importance of having a plan for the next steps. Having an immediate action item will maintain enthusiasm and help generate funding. Suggestions were made to have the final Lakota Group meeting in September instead of August, to publish the date well in advance and to increase marketing for better participation.

The State of the Corridor Report, Conclusion of Planning Study First Phase; is now available on the project website, <http://thelakotagroup.com/macarthur/>.

Thanks to the Illinois Times for featuring the Redevelopment Plans in a recent edition; as a result of the story, a residential developer from Milwaukee called to inquire about development opportunities.

IDOT Enhancement Grant Application

Cory said Norm Sims is leading the initiative to apply for highway transportation grant funds available for improvements from IDOT and DCEO. The grants require a 20% match from local sources.

4th Annual Artists Market

Laurie Farrell reported a very successful **4th Annual Artists Market** with 56 total artists and \$2,800 in total intake. Artist surveys are being collected, and the Artist Market committee will meet to plan next year's event. Anyone seeing Artist Market signs should collect them and return them to the Farrells.

Thanks especially to Laurie & David Farrell, Cory Jobe, Julie Dirksen, Sharon Whalen and Carol Kneedler, to the Market committee and to everyone who helped make this year's market a success!

Neighbors Council

Julie Dirksen reported that we are making progress on organizing clean up days for the Boulevard. Another meeting is scheduled to continue planning.

Members of the Neighbors Council attended the **ICON (Inner City, Older Neighborhoods)** meeting on June 28.

MacArthur Area Business News

Graffiti is now worse on the previous Kmart property and there is new graffiti on the previous Esquire property that now belongs to AMC. A rash of graffiti occurred last week to the north of the MacArthur business district. The need to immediately paint over graffiti to discourage ongoing vandalism was stressed. The City of Champaign's Property Maintenance Code contains a provision allowing the City to paint over graffiti and charge property owners. Several provisions of the City of Champaign graffiti ordinances can be found here:

<http://library.municode.com/showDocument.aspx?clientID=10520&docID=0#hit1>

<http://library.municode.com/showDocument.aspx?clientID=10520&docID=1#hit1>

Additional provisions can be found at <http://library.municode.com/>

Weeds were again mentioned at the previous Coin Shop near Outer Park & MacArthur and also at the previous Esquire property.

Area Events

South Side Christian Church will host their **3rd Annual Big Block Bash** to help promote and celebrate life in the MacArthur neighborhood on Sunday, July 18 from 6-8pm. The event offers free food, games, prizes and live music. The MBBA will have a booth with information and signup forms. Any business owner wishing to participate at the MBBA booth may arrive any time after 5:30pm. The event & flyer are posted on the MBBA website and the event will be mentioned in the MBBA eNews.

The MBBA is planning a **Believe in the Boulevard October event** to celebrate the completion of the Redevelopment Plan. The date is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, October 9. Various fundraising ideas were mentioned by members.

Coffee Sponsorships Available

Please consider providing refreshments for our monthly meeting – sponsors provide coffee and treats for 20-30 people.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 am.

Submitted By:

Carol Kneedler, Board Secretary