

**Central Butte Neighborhood
Steering Committee #3
August 9, 2010
5:30 PM – 7:00 PM**

MEETING NOTES

Steering Committee Attendees:

Doug Conway	Barbara Miller	Revonda Stordahl
Jim Hope	Jim Shive	Julie Tranmer

Members not in attendance:

Dave Fawcett	Sandy Johnson
John Metz	Ed Killgore
Gary Jones	Dan Steele
Linda Foster	
Chris duToit	

Staff/Consultant Attendees:

Steve Hess (staff)	Kim Olsen
Anne Cossitt	Jolene Rieck

Guests:

None

Anne Cossitt began the steering committee meeting by reviewing the agenda and discussing the procedures for guest participation.

Anne Cossitt presented the inventory report on public services which includes:

- Law Enforcement
- Fire and Emergency
- Medical and Health Care – many people use the Community Health Center
- Education
- Transportation
- Solid Waste
- Senior and Other Social Services
- Community Events

The next report was on land use which included

- Mining History
- Development History
- Existing Land Use

Kim Olsen presented her report on housing, which included a series of Sanborn maps, building conditions and historic neighborhoods. She indicated that the Central Business District primarily consists of hotels, and worker districts. The East Side is 1940's public housing, currently in

revitalization and has significant affordable housing. The West Side is upscale homes, 47 percent single-family, the remainder is multi-family. This side tends to have smaller yards, but the structures are in good to very good condition. The Southwest side has larger homes and lots, and is mostly a single-family neighborhood. This side has vacant lots. This area is 64 percent residential and 81 percent is in good to excellent condition.

The Central Butte area is influenced by mining. Sixty-five percent is residential with mixed conditions. There is a high vacancy rate in land and buildings and is an area of revitalization. The South Butte neighborhood is historically a self-sufficient neighborhood with Pre 1900 and 1900 to 1920 period housing. The architecture is diverse in terms of types of styles.

The full reports are posted on the project website.

Steve Hess commented that the mixed houses and conditions surprises the tourists. There is no uniformity throughout this planning area. Kim Olsen discussed the challenges of renovating and redeveloping the housing. Barb Miller discussed the challenges of financing. Barb also indicated that people have lost their identity with the historic neighborhoods.

Julie Tranmer asked how to convert housing from rentals to ownership? How do renters protect their rights to safe housing? Jim discussed how some plumbing has not been updated for years inside some housing units. Barb discussed a need for an occupancy permit for rentals, to help ensure they are in adequate condition.

Jim Shive pointed out that some historic structures are demolished by neglect. Steve Hess indicated that private property rights become an issue, and asked if it is fair for the Government to tell someone to paint their house?

Barb Miller discussed community enrichment. She suggested targeting the visual violations and focusing on the Hill versus the Flats. She indicated that landlords are having difficulty getting loans to meet modern standards. She pointed out that BSB is setting up a Historic Rehab Fund with is a \$2 Million fund which could be a revolving loan fund with low interest.

Revonda Stordahl indicated that there is a need for a subsidized rental program to keep housing and rentals affordable.

The group also discussed that the garbage containers are not provided by BSB. This leads to garbage scattered throughout the neighborhood. They discussed a brief movement to provide community garbage racks, but citizens refused them. The group also discussed street cleaning and snow removal. In the end, they felt that the neighborhood should capitalize on the momentum created with the new sidewalk projects.

Doug Conway expressed the need to develop a long-range plan (20-25 year) to rehabilitate Uptown Butte. Within this plan, identify a goal to bring the housing stock up to code within the next 20 years.

The group was asked to indicate their reactions individually on a written comment sheet. Only three comment sheets were collected. The following are the responses:

1. Are there any specific changes or items that need to be addressed to make the reports more accurate? Is there anything you would add or delete?

- How are the URA funds utilized? Where are these properties within this area?
- Information about in-fill housing is inadequate. Lack of history of development work for this neighborhood. “Central Butte property types” map is old, outdated (older than 15 years) and inaccurate.
- Good reports, good dates

2. What do you believe are the most significant key findings or observations from the data presented?

- Crime rates are the highest in this area. Homes are not up to code & because of the low incomes in this area – how will these homes – mostly historic be improved? Contaminated soils, attic dust, lead. Subsidence issues.
- Idea that “vacant” land is available for housing construction is not what we have experienced in reality. Vacant land has limited
- Good transportation system – more than I thought. Housing and infrastructure issues seem to override everything.

3. What topics should the Steering Committee focus on first in moving forward?

- Prioritize needs
- How to make progress for safe, fair, affordable housing.
- Loan programs for owners and rehab programs. Sub-standard rental units – what can be done to fix these? Historic preservation issues. Infrastructure – parks with equipment.

Jolene Rieck presented the outline or framework for the vision, issues and goals. The group brainstormed some initial goals.

- Sidewalks, curb and gutter
- Develop a 20-25 year plan for infrastructure
- Playground equipment
- Renter’s rights
- One block at a time
- Develop a block by block plan, use case studies
- Enforce or change the community decay ordinance
- Should new look old?
- Safe housing (both owner and rentals), decrease the number of sub-standard properties
- The pros of historic properties is that it invites tourism, creates and identity and is also an economic influence
- The cons of historic properties is that there are a lack of funds to maintain these properties

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.