

Neighborhood Association Organizer Workshop Minutes

February 12, 2011

Attendees:

Castle Heights: Marty Davis (also volunteer coordinator), Anne Hoyt, Art Lewis, Paul Wagner

City Central: Fred Brockway, Larry Campbell

GNRC: Eric Ameigh (also Hildreth Hill), Sage Gerling (also Castle Heights)

Hildreth Hill: Vicki Baroody, Len DeFrancesco, Carl Monson, Bob Stewart, Todd Taylor

Historic North: Leslie Kroeger, Scott & Katie Ostrowski

Washington Park: Tony DiConstanzo, Peg Kennedy, Erika Van Savage

Western Gardens: Jim Norwalk

2011 GNRC Initiatives Shared:

Better Block Sidewalk Program

Frontage sidewalks for up to 30 homes will be repaired through a 50 percent matching program. Property owners from the same block (at least four) apply as a group.

- **Applications Due:** *March 15th*

Best House on the Block

The GNRC has matching funds available for up to 60% of the project cost on significant curb appeal improvements (such as porch repair or construction, roofs, landscaping, and windows) up to a total of \$20,000!

- **Applications Available:** *By Early March*

Great Geneva Neighborhood Challenge

For the second annual Challenge, the curb appeal projects will focus on simple improvements, such as painting, screen doors, house plaques, exterior lights, mailboxes, shutters, and landscaping. Residents will be encouraged to apply in groups of four or more.

- **Applications Available:** *By Early March*

Neighborhood Strategy & Branding Projects

Neighborhood associations can sign-up to participate in a neighborhood branding exercise with SUNY Geneseo students. Student teams will work with up to four associations to develop their unique identity, and will propose marketing ideas for the neighborhood associations (such as logos, tag lines, social networking ideas, etc.). Parallel to the student project, the GNRC will lead associations in a strategic planning exercise. Important dates for this opportunity:

- **Neighbor. Assoc. Sign-Up:** *Until March 15th*

- **Class Geneva Visit:** *April 1st, Noon to 3 PM (required assoc. representation)*

- **Final Presentation at SUNY Geneseo:** *May 9th, Noon to 3 PM*

Other GNRC Updates Shared:

Helping Hands

From now until May 10th, we will be connecting neighbors with exterior project needs with Hobart & William Smith Colleges Habitat for Humanity Club student volunteers. Examples of projects the students can assist with include: simple carpentry, landscaping projects, hanging

mailboxes, or scraping and painting porch details. Labor is free, but materials are not. Help us find neighbors with project needs.

- **Contact the GNRC to sign-up: Through May 10th**

Neighborhood Policing

Officers assigned to specific neighborhoods will start foot patrol and greeting residents again in late spring. Due to shortage of officers not all neighborhoods had officers assigned to their neighborhood in 2010.

Pride In Our Pocket Parks Campaign

A group of residents from multiple neighborhoods are planning park physical improvements and social events to rejuvenate the City's eleven neighborhood parks. Projects for 2011 include:

- Entrance visibility and beautification
- Playground area benches
- Pocket Park Passport Parties (social events in every park- park awareness- spring to fall)
- Survey for Richards, Jefferson and Ridgewood

Possible 2012 projects include:

- Ridgewood pavilion
- Richards dog park

Residents can help by joining the group (next meeting is **Sat. Feb. 19th, from 9:30-10:30 AM** at the GNRC), adopting an entrance with their association, or hosting a Pocket Park Passport Party. See www.genevanrc.org for past meeting minutes for this campaign.

New Neighbor Welcome Packets

Neighborhood assoc. organizers from across the City prepared new neighbor welcome packets for new 2008-mid 2010 homeowners. Associations that have taken packets to distribute within their neighborhood include: Upper North, Hist. North, City Central, some in Castle Heights, Arbors, and Hildreth Hill.

As a large group, the following topics were discussed:

Neigh. Assoc. Member Recruitment

The group brainstormed ideas for increasing neighborhood association membership. Below are the ideas generated:

- Assigning street captains for individual block level communication
- Neighborhood-wide flyers (had mixed results in 2010)
- Phone tree
- Individual neighbor asks
- Association cards (which the GNRC can produce when requested)
- Ice cream walking tour

Communication: NING & Facebook

The group discussed the best way to communicate between the GNRC and neighborhood associations and within neighborhood associations. Email was the favored communication. Some were open to using Facebook. NING!, the current neighborhood organizers discussion site, was not favored due to the hassle of having one more website to check. However, NING! will still be available for neighborhood associations to communicate as a group and for organizers to

communicate across neighborhood associations. If NING! continues to not be used, then the GNRC will end the subscription.

In small groups, each neighborhood association present was asked to do the following:

- Brainstorm ideas for association activities in 2011
- Brainstorm five ideas for recruitment/involvement of new members to the association that seem doable
- Discuss whether interested in the branding/strategy exercise
- Next association interaction- plan for getting assoc. together

The meeting ended with a brief recap from all of the associations to the larger group:

Castle Heights

The group will be meeting on Thursday, Feb. 24th from 6:30 to 7:30 PM to discuss the following:

- neighborhood assoc. events for 2011
- GNRC initiatives
- participation in a neighborhood strategy and branding project with SUNY Geneseo students
- creating a rain barrel workshop with the City's Green Committee

City Central

City Center discussed focusing on recruiting. They discussed using the door knob flyers to recruit for a spring clean-up or to find residents wanting to participate in the Helping Hands program.

Hildreth Hill

Hildreth Hill's 2011 calendar includes: a garage sale; spring cleanup; picnic; garden tour; Planting Petunias for Pride™; Christmas caroling, and a music night. Other possible activities for the association include: recruiting organizers; cookbook; Christmas in July; street trees; and philanthropic activities (adopting 9-11, Musselman table, bell ringing). For recruiting members, Hildreth Hill will focus on establishing street leaders that could represent and share initiatives with their neighbors. Their next neighborhood association meeting is Thursday, Mar. 10 at 6 PM.

Historic North

Historic North discussed focusing on organizing on the block level with street leaders.

Washington Park

The group discussed how to generate participation in GNRC initiatives from their neighborhood. The group would like to focus on collaborating with HWS on solving student neighborhood issues and implementing beautification projects within the neighborhood. Tony DiConzanzo, Erika Van Savage and Sage Gerling attended a Community Relations meeting at HWS on Tues. Feb. 15th. HWS was open to working with the neighborhood association. A meeting will be scheduled soon for the association to further this topic.

Western Gardens

Jim Norwalk talked with Sage and Eric about neighbors that have expressed interest to help in the past. Bill Pealer came in on Tuesday to catch up on the meeting and said he would call Western Garden contacts to see interest restarting this association.