

Oct. 24, 2009 Minutes

Delaware Ave. Neighborhood Meeting

Residents and property owners of Delaware Ave. met at the home of Tim and Jennifer Grove (318 N. Delaware) on Oct. 24th to discuss sidewalks and other public improvements for Delaware St. and the Truman Historic District. Approximately 30 people were in attendance.

City officials present: Councilmember **Marcie Gragg**, **John Powell** (Public Works Director); **Jennifer Clark** (Community Development Director); and **Wendy Shay** (Historic Preservation Manager).

The minutes from the July 25, 2009 meeting were shared.

These notes summarize the general discussion and are not a point-by-point transcription of the meeting.

Sidewalks

Powell shared that the city had agreements with two private contractors to replace sidewalks.

Powell shared some general costs estimates for potential costs for a Delaware project that would extend from Truman Road to College Ave (approximately the 300, 400, 500 and 600 blocks).

Powell provided two general cost estimates:

- \$150,000 for a 5-foot wide continuous sidewalk on the east and west side
- \$370,000 for a 5-foot wide continuous sidewalk on the east and west side with curb, driveway aprons, asphalt resurfacing on the street and catch basins.

If new street lights were included, the cost would be an additional \$4,000 per fixture.

Funding

Clark reviewed possible public funding options.

Transportation Enhancement Funds

Sidewalks are eligible projects. The federal program includes a 75% federal 25% local match.

The city has successfully applied for Transportation Enhancement Funds for sidewalk projects and would consider a possible Delaware project as a city priority. The next round of applications is due in December.

NOTE: More details are available on the Mid-America Regional Council website at www.marc.org/transportation/committees/moenhancement.htm.

Revolving Funds

The city preservation staff is interested in establishing a low-interest revolving fund that could be used by property owners within the city historic district. No fund currently exists. The revolving fund would be intended for property improvements and not initially designed for infrastructure.

Property Tax Abatement

The question was raised whether property tax abatement, initially available through the Mid-Town Truman Road Corridor project could be reopened or extended at the end of the abatement period for currently participating properties.

MTRC funding is limited. A new redevelopment corporation might be necessary. The 353 program is based upon the establishment of blight. This would need to be re-established in order to re-open the program.

Project Funding

Improvements on Walnut were cited as a potential example of how project funding could be assembled. Four sources were used: city streets tax, MTRC funds, Neighborhood Improvement District and City Council Goals Funds.

Utilities

There remains strong interest in undergrounding utilities. This will require direct conversations with Independence Power and Light, the National Park Service, and other utilities.

This would be a larger project because the feeder transmission line comes from a substation at Truman and Noland and runs down Farmer.

Subcommittee

The following persons agreed to serve on a subcommittee to develop further projects costs, options and details.

- Tim Grove
- Diane Marshall
- Ken McClain
- David Melton
- Brent Schondelmeyer
- Rod Stuck

The subcommittee will try and meet in the next 30 days to work on details that could be brought back to the larger group. The subcommittee will be convened by Gragg.

Other ideas

There was agreement that an educational effort was needed to inform property owners that sidewalks are their responsibility and not the city's. An article will be written and put in The Real McCoy, the neighborhood newsletter.

Conclusion

Additional information was developed during the second meeting, but more specific details – particularly the potential costs to individual property owners – are needed before a general project plan could be put together for consideration by the neighborhood.

Meeting summary was prepared by Brent Schondelmeyer

Please call if you want more information or share thoughts and comments.

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