

Greentree Neighborhood Association Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 4, 2010
Falk Elementary School Library

Present: Nancy Priegel (President), Rick Floyd, Durrell Ramer, Earl Gritton, Chuck Kime, Alan Youngwood, Larry Sperling, Linda Johnson, and guest.

Understanding the Dane County Court system – Given recent burglaries in the neighborhood and pending charges against an alleged burglar, the Board had a conversation with a Greentree resident who has worked for judges on the circuit court and formerly worked in the Dane County District Attorney's Office. The guest discussed how to find public information posted on court web sites and how to interpret the information. They also provided suggestions on how to craft correspondence to the court since the Greentree Neighborhood Watch program was asked to provide such advice to residents who had expressed interest in communicating with the court and district attorneys handling these cases. They explained that written correspondence is preferable to phone messages, e-mails and voice mail and that individual letters expressing people's observations, feelings and concerns were preferable to mass petitions as a means of expressing opinions. They advised that concise letters expressing concerns and feelings were preferable. They also advised giving the judge an idea of one's goals for the cases and the neighborhood.

Neighborhood Watch -- Since neighborhood burglaries became more frequent in fall 2009, at least 109 families have signed up to become part of a network (Greentree Neighborhood Watch) to stay abreast of reported crimes, suspicious behavior reported to police and known police response to neighborhood crime issues.

Treasurer's Report – Mr. Youngwood reported the GTNA checking account had a balance of approximately \$3,400 and he handed out a summary of current Certificates of Deposit owned by GTNA amounting to approximately \$7,600. As these CDs mature they are either invested in neighborhood projects and events or reinvested for future use.

West Beltline studies follow-up – No response to most recent questions forwarded to the Wisconsin Dept. of Transportation contacts.

Stump –Ms. Johnson reviewed a list of anticipated stories for the January-February newsletter and extended the deadline for stories to Friday, January 15th. She also reviewed projected Stump advertising revenues.

Biannual Directory – Ms. Johnson reviewed revenues from advertising secured for the Membership Directory and it appears revenues will offset our costs for printing and mailing. Luckily Ms. Johnson donates her time compiling the directory and preparing it for printing. Thanks for that substantial donation. She anticipates following preparatory work, and checking that the directory will be forwarded for printing and delivery by the end of January.

Adult Party – Mr. Floyd secured meeting space for the annual neighborhood adult party for Sunday, February 6th starting at 3 p.m. at Babes. GTNA would certainly have considered holding the event at Vitense Golf and facility given that business' support at GTNA, but meeting rooms of sufficient size have typically not been available on Sunday afternoons.

Annual Neighborhood Forum – Mr. Sperling confirmed that our annual forum meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 14th from 7-9 p.m. at the Meadowood Community Center in the Meadowood Shopping Center.

Neighborhood Garage Sale – Chris Eckner will oversee the event and purchase an ad in the Wisconsin State Journal at the appropriate time in advance of the May event.

Shoreland Zoning – Mr. Sperling distributed articles explaining some of the concerns about revisions to state Shoreland Zoning requirements (Natural Resources Code 115). The law revised for the first time in 40 years codifies revisions on setback requirements and shoreland property buffers designed to stem runoff into water, protect nearshore habitat and provide aesthetic screening for both riparian property owners and water users. County ordinance provide an opportunity for more restrictive measures to protect public interests and rights to waters. Dane County is developing a plan to update its ordinances which may not be enacted for up to two more years. Copies of news accounts describing potential plans are available through Mr. Sperling and the Dane County Lakes Program will be posting informational updates on its web site.

Fruit and Nut Tree grants – Ms. Priegel describes a grant to Dane County to plan and plant fruit and nut trees along public spaces. Though the idea is attractive and might provide edible produce for neighborhood gatherers, such trees often need spraying and attention to produce unblemished fruits and nuts. Also they need regular harvesting. Some trees might be placed along public bike paths leading some to question if the trees also attract bees, other pollinators, squirrels and other insects/animals that might not be compatible with walkers, bikers and hikers. Unharvested fruits might also lead children to throw the fruits on neighboring properties. Before accepting such grants and planting such trees neighbors from surrounding properties where trees might be planted ought to be surveyed.

Sunridge Park improvements –The board received correspondence from Gary Becker whose property adjoins the northeast corner of Sunridge Park stating that a group of Sunridge neighbors had been fundraising to bring some improvements to the park. They informed the board of the nature of some improvements including drainage and berm work to redirect water flow near the southeast corner of the park that currently drains to a neighbor's basement, potential changes in plantings, work with the city to reconsider moving playground equipment to an area of the park receiving less car traffic than Piping Rock Road, and other potential changes. Becker and group have been in contact with city planners. Ms. Priegel also advised Becker that the projects might qualify for the Parks For People Project that underwrites up to 50% of the cost of park improvement projects.

City of Madison Neighborhood Indicators Project – Mr. Kime distributed a handout he prepared raising issues associated with the City's Neighborhood Indicators program. The program is designed to provide measures in areas of the city that might provide an early warning of developing problem areas that could be fruitfully addressed to prevent decreases in neighborhood property values and quality of life issues. One concern for our area is that the City's Planning and Development Office labels part of its analysis as the "Greentree Planning District" when, in fact that sector includes the actual Greentree Neighborhood, portions of the Park Ridge Neighborhoods, portions of the Meadowood Neighborhood, portions of the Prairie Hills Neighborhood, several low-income apartment complexes. Woodman's, the Spectrum Brands property, Forward Drive up to the Beltline. RayoVac Drive and the Midwest Broadcasting area, Woodman's Market, Vitense Golfland and other commercial properties. Several of the businesses, apartment complexes and portions of the neighborhoods included in the planning area are well outside of the Greentree Neighborhood and several of these are stressed, troubled properties,

yet statistics for the area including crime statistics, parental education, high school mobility, maternal health care and families receiving medical assistance are all lumped together in the plan and summarized as the "Greentree Area." Many of these statistics reflect badly on the area because of the concentrations of poverty and lower income housing included in the planning area that do not accurately reflect performance within the actual Greentree Neighborhood boundaries. These statistics are misleading and create economic harm for the neighborhood as ours becomes a perceived "problem area" or a deteriorating neighborhood inaccurately. This is especially harmful as the statistics are reviewed and used by potential property buyers in the area and realtors have led GTNA people to believe the states are suppressing neighborhood property values in the current sales market. For instance, Woodman's Markets is aggressive about reporting crimes committed at its facility given the slim profit margins typically found at a large discount food market. This higher volume of crime incidence is lumped together as crimes in the Greentree area in these planning documents, and that is unfair to the neighborhood. Mr. Kime provided other examples as well. He suggested the importance of discussing with the city how such statistics are aggregated since they leave an undeserved, negative impression of the quality of life one can expect within the Greentree neighborhood.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:10 p.m.