

Neighbors of Belknap Lookout Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 13, 2017
NOBL Office, 700 Clancy Ave NE
6:30 pm

1. Call to order
2. Additions to agenda
3. Update from GVSU – Pat Waring
4. Approval of January minutes and financials
5. Committee updates
 - a. Formation of Safety and other committees
6. New Business:
 - a. Elect 2 New Board Members, Appoint New Vice Chair (Motion for bank acct)
 - b. 990
7. Old Business:
 - a. Vision Statement
 - b. Annual Goals
 - c. HousingNOW (Motion to approve letter to commissioners, other actions?)
 - d. Homeless Encampment Update
8. Public Comment
9. Adjournment

2018 Schedule:

Knitting continues most first and third Saturdays – feel free to join us at 700 Clancy at 10 am.
TBD - Dumpster Day, Neighborhood Clean Up, Harvest Celebrations

Feb 17 - HousingNOW info, 1 pm Seymour Church (840 Alger), 4 pm West Grand (415 Leonard NW)

Feb 20 - city commission could set HousingNOW hearing or approve zoning, 7 pm 300 Monroe NW

Feb 28 - Conflict Resolution training, 12-3 pm lunch included at GRPD

Mar 3 – Neighborhood Summit – register at www.grandrapidsmi.gov/summit (no knitting today)

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Sign up for shifts at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/904044da5ac2fa31-sell>

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Neighbors of Belknap Lookout Meeting Minutes

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Board Members Present:	Steve Faas	Jill Gonzalez	Rob Kennedy
	Barbara LaBeau	Todd Leinberger	Loren Sturrs
	Jonathan Swets	Gretchen Warnimont	
Board Members Absent:	Angel Gonzalez		
Staff Present:	Elianna Bootzin		
Guests Present:	Brian Bremer	Chris Swenk (GVSU)	

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3. The December minutes were approved. Elianna noted that we have logged our depreciation for 2017 according to our accountant-created schedule and that although we appear to be in a good position we still have quarterly payments for taxes coming up. Financials were approved.
4. Committee updates: Loren suggested having Todd chair the development committee. We have not seen the 719 Prospect listing online yet; Elianna will check for an update. Loren would like to convene several new committees such as Communications, Fundraising, and By-Laws; he will send out a recruitment email. Gretchen is working on re-establishing Safety as well and should have a presentation next month. Elianna is working on scheduling the mobility meetings.
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 - b. 1136 Plainfield – The Development Committee was not unanimous but largely recommended not supporting the Special Land Use for a parking lot. Neighbors do not want it (Brian brought letters), it is not consistent with the plan and will inhibit redevelopment on that site. It might be better if it was a public lot. The board voted to “not support” then clarified that it “opposed” the project. Elianna will send in a letter.
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- d. Research Requests for Retreat – Loren would like to be sure we include the task list from the annual meeting. There was general interest in health and nutrition as topics of education (activities like mass canning at Newberry). We want to pay attention to communication – how can we get the word out? Examples would be a phone tree, more eye-catching window display, using On The Town or MLive.
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Retreat Results

During our discussion (Loren, Steve, Barb, Todd, John, Brian and Elianna) on January 26, we identified four major themes for why we are involved: primarily looking out for our neighbors, achieving connection, having people active in the neighborhood and having our voices heard in local government especially around land use. The activities we discussed on 1/26 fall into four major buckets starting with splitting the second into social and physical connection:

1. Social Connection (possible title “Neighbors teaching neighbors”) – On the operational side, we will build a network, *ensure we have the ability to communicate with neighbors as desired, *ensure we have the financial capacity to operate as desired, and affiliate with businesses in the Monroe North area. More visibly, we figured we could connect neighbors with each other by hosting a lecture series, teaching health/nutrition/canning and GED/ESL, offering tax prep, holding a neighborhood meal, hosting an immigration lawyer and creating a wifi network. We expect to continue making referrals to social services and city departments as well as fine tuning city services and reacting to issues as they arise. Overall, we can measure our success in this area with the VoiceKent survey item “feeling of belonging”.

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Creston Business district, and creating a bike/pedestrian trail along the railroad. We're also interested in transit for this section.

3. Active in the neighborhood – This section is mostly about amenities that will get people out and about. We highlighted having lights at Coit Park and better care for new trees there; figuring out where additional curbs are needed (particularly on the east side of the neighborhood) and reporting them to 311; advocating for a dog park as part of the Lookout Park redesign process and encouraging better pickup of dog poop generally; improving access to the greenspace at 712 North (but not too much); and getting a USPS box installed at Coit and Hastings (and maybe other locations).

4. Local government – Generally speaking we want development to occur slowly so we can adapt to changes in parking and traffic; we particularly want to make sure our voices are heard on land use issues, which includes monitoring the progress of the GVSU campus construction; we also want to recruit entities that will develop affordable housing in the neighborhood; *we want to secure incentives for entities to build businesses on Lafayette; and we will react to issues as they arise, such as the current need to organize Bradford/More/North/Sinclair so they can meet our neighborhood police officer, etc.

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We'll come back to these topics at the February board meeting agenda regarding a vision statement.

Director's Notes

Preparatory Information for Business items:

Committees - We already have **mobility** and **development**. Are we still adding **safety**? The other committees of interest would be **Health, Nutrition and Education** (bring in speakers and teachers and organized internet access for tax, language, canning, GED, etc.), **Fundraising** (Highland frisbee golf competition, monroe north bar crawl, king of the hill run or bike, carnival at belknap park and others), **Communication** (developing a standard for informing the neighborhood, increasing involvement), and next month we'll come back to **bylaws review** (make sure we are covering our bases and update).

Vision Statement – Based on our strategic conversation of 1/26 and follow up analysis by myself and Loren, we propose **retaining the current mission** – “to advocate for and enhance the quality of life in the Belknap community” – to be enhanced by a vision statement – “we envision a socially and physically connected neighborhood whose residents are active in the neighborhood and ALL of whose voices are heard in local government decisions, especially land use.”

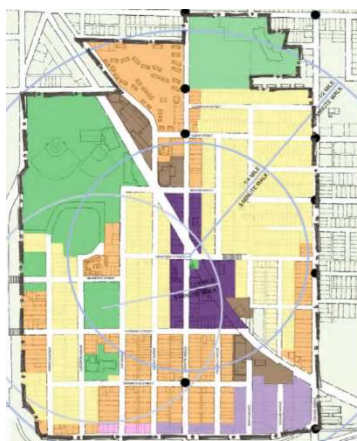
Note much of what we do will be advocating and fundraising for projects to be executed by the City. Similarly, it seems most consistent with discussion to have neighbors take the lead on teaching other neighbors (as opposed to having staff schedule outside presenters). So the organization provides the venue, the outreach, and if needed some materials, whereas the neighbors themselves provide the teaching information. With that in mind, a tactical question: what do we want our next NMF grant to be? This series? Block parties? Mile markers for the park? The community garden at 762 North?

Thinking more strategically and long term, as we built out to achieve this vision, what will the organization look like and what kind of budget will be needed to support it at that level for several years? Assuming no changes from the above description, one potential scenario suggests a part time staff person focusing on events/fundraising/communications/volunteer coordination, a shared part time social worker, and a full time lead staff person to focus on administration and public policy. Between probably \$100,000 in staffing costs, similar-to-current general operating, and major fundraising for public projects, we will be over the threshold for annual financial review. As Loren and I lay out specific activity targets for the year, we want to make sure they set us on a path to reach this new level - which we will prioritize together in the next section:

Annual Goals – What do we want to accomplish by the end of 2018? Loren suggests that we hold 1-2 fundraisers, increase our network (and we should attach a target number to this. Currently we have 146 email subscribers, 126 Facebook followers, 224 neighbors on NextDoor, and 70 members), and finish current projects. At the end of 2020 or 2010 we want to see access down Belknap Hill completed as well as the full Linear Park/Hastings Connector.

HousingNOW – The NAC has come down on a consensus position that we as neighborhoods are all opposed to the expansion of larger by right development in low density residential as it removes resident voice from the process. Similarly, we believe that there need to be design standards to preserve the character of the neighborhoods. We will advocate for the hearing to be held at the second meeting in April and ultimately for these types of changes to be considered in the Master Planning process. Two staffers from other organizations were in interviews with Wood TV 8 today (<http://woodtv.com/2018/02/08/neighborhoods-want-input-on-affordable-housing-moves/>) and more will likely follow. Add'l info sessions are in the event list.

Our own outreach materials center on the two maps below. The orange on the left is where we targeted medium density residential in our ASP. The blue on the right is where 8 unit noncondo zero lot lines and 2-4 units buildings would be allowed by right per Planning Commission recommendations.



Here is the proposed text of our letter to our commissioners:

Dear Mayor Bliss, Second Ward Commissioners Jones and Kelly and others,

Neighbors of Belknap Lookout is opposed to the changes to HousingNOW recommendations 3 and 9 submitted by the Planning Commission: the increased distance (500 feet instead of 100 feet) from commercial zones for non-condo zero lot lines and small scale (2-4 unit) development, the increased number of units for non-condo zero lot lines (up to 8 from the original 4), and the removal of the design guide. Our reasons are these: The proposed zone yields a picture opposite to where we determined we wanted to add density in our Area Specific Plan; we have been at the forefront of helping the city grow and increase density with several major projects in the neighborhood; we need breathing room to see how parking and traffic rebalance; and we care deeply about the appearance of our neighborhood. To elaborate: Since a picture is worth 1000 words, please note the blocks in orange identified for medium density residential development in our Area Specific Plan, an augmentation of the City's Master Plan which was adopted in 2010 (left) as compared with the red blocks slated for non-condo zero lot lines (up to 8 units) and small scale (2-4 unit) development by right in our neighborhood (right):

We know we need density. Over the last several years, many major developments have increased density in NOBL, and there are more to come. Already constructed are Newberry Cohousing north of Coit Park, the rebuilt low income housing at Creston Plaza, higher end apartments at the Gateway, and flats/lofts on the 500 and 600 blocks of Clancy. Additional developments are in progress (Fairview condos) and past the Special Land Use process (600 block of Coit). Neighbors requested a mixed income development on the north end of the block of GVSU's first building in the neighborhood, 500 Lafayette.

We know we need affordable housing. The above mentioned Creston Plaza and GVSU campus developments do and will provide opportunities on that end of the spectrum. Low income homebuyers can purchase a house from New Development Corporation, which rehabs existing single family homes.

These increases to HousingNOW recommendations 3 and 9 from the Planning Commission are simply NOT the way to do it. As related with the images on the previous page, they put the density in the exact opposite location as those we identified in our ASP.

We also need to adjust to the changes that have already been made. Parking has been and continues to be a challenge in Belknap Lookout. When increased business on Medical Mile led to increased competition for parking in the neighborhood, the City created its Residential Parking Permit Program at the request of Belknap Lookout. Now additional institutions are coming online and neighbors are poised to collect information about which areas will need to request an expansion from MobileGR.

The majority of the development in our neighborhood has taken place within Planned Redevelopment Districts. This approach has given the neighbors a greater measure of control over the exact look and feel of the developments. **Budgeting for and reinstating the creation of a design guide to help mediate future developments is a critical component** of adding density in the proper areas of the neighborhood.

Any adjustments before submission for part of the city commission meeting packet?

As noted in previous communications, we are expecting the City Commission to set a public hearing date on Feb 20 (but they do have the option of passing the zoning changes without one). I will print and distribute fliers for neighbors in the affected areas late next week promoting both the info sessions for Feb 17 and the commission meeting(s).

As requested, I got some more information about “treat as historic”: these areas (shaded below) are eligible for historic classification. If federal funds are used, they have to verify that they will not harm the property. There are no other current land use implications. Historic districts make it particularly expensive for property owners to maintain but the federal funding that helped Heritage Hill get set up is no longer available. I can seek additional information about creating historic districts immediately or as a fall back if the zoning changes are implemented at the Feb 20 city commission meeting.

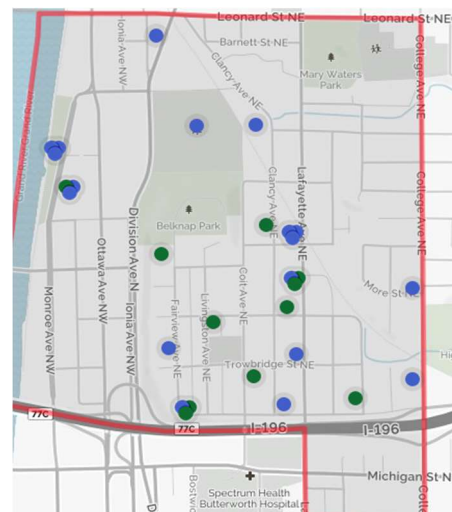
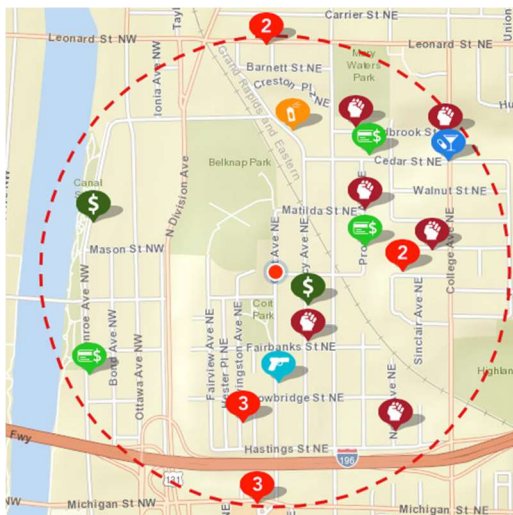


Homeless Encampment Update – Our neighbor continues to be concerned about the camp. Those who are camping are among those most at risk for the current Hep A outbreak. Better tree trimming was done on the site recently, and I have just started contact with the railroad to paint over the graffiti in the spring.

Regular Report Contents:

Public Safety – [www.grcity.us](http://grcity.us) Online services → (Lookup) Crime Data Destination is <http://grcity.us/police-department/Pages/Crime-Mapping.aspx>

Selected last 4 weeks with ½ mile circle around 800 Coit unfortunately losing the corners (left, below)



Development – www.grcity.us Online Services → (Permits & Applications) Permits & Applications Map Selected 1/5-2/8 in the Belknap Lookout neighborhood (right, above). Again, mostly small things.

Update on other major projects: The new building application has been put in for 813 Lafayette (Bazzani) and 617 Fairview (CopperRock).

Updates on Old Business

Vacant lot at 762 North – Finally got the lease for Loren to sign!

No further updates on 712 North, Kristi's recognition in the office signage.

Admin

Neglected in the attachments due to urgent HousingNOW additions, we (just NOBL) are also in the process of deciding where to request additional permit parking. The mobility committee met on January 31 and I intend to get a digital survey out between now and the board meeting; we'll analyze the results and prepare a recommendation for the board on Feb 28. The Other Way has posted their community engagement position and we will be included in the interview process. Computer class with Comprenew primarily for the parents of the after school kids (who will be done coming once spring break starts in April) will launch later this month. Our Monday/Thursday morning volunteer now has a key for the space.

Calvin College's public health nursing program will be holding a focus group the same night as our board meeting and will follow up with a very methodologically sound door-to-door survey process to determine residents' health needs in the neighborhood. We will receive a copy of the results.

The bus in the neighborhood that I mentioned at the retreat was just a detour for construction on Lafayette - nothing to be alarmed about!

Belknap Hill is not the subject of a focus group yet, but DGRI and the Parks Department will be interacting with residents soon about activating what are currently parking lots north of the Post Office/196 on Monroe as greenspaces. I'll be keeping an eye out for both that and the city's proposed Bikeshare system which I learned about in my first TIFA board meeting. I also did some research on the request for a USPS collection box from our annual meeting and learned that many were removed in the early 2000s due to disuse while others locally were vandalized; I'm waiting to hear back about what might be possible at this point.

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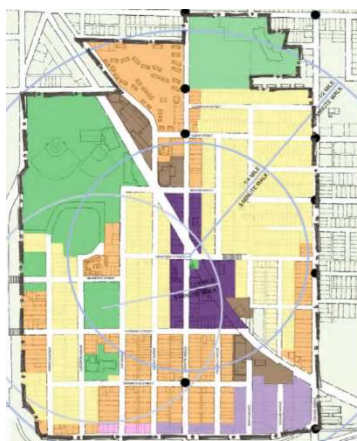
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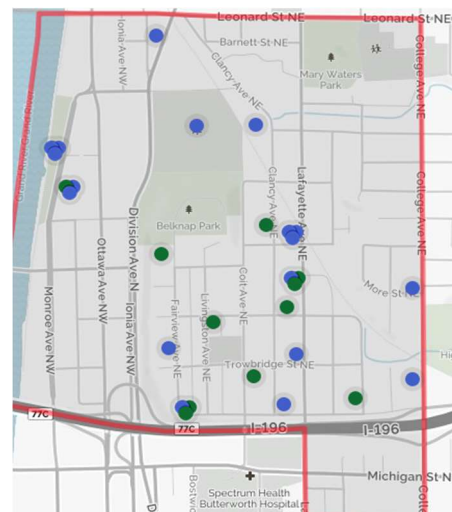
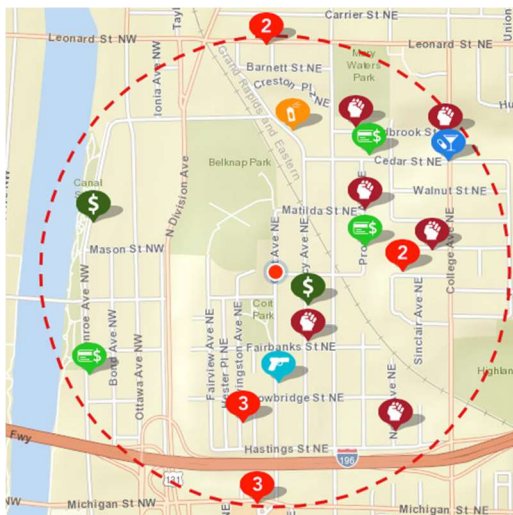


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6:30 pm

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4. Approval of January minutes and financials
5. Committee updates
 - a. Formation of Safety and other committees
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 - a. Elect 2 New Board Members, Appoint New Vice Chair (Motion for bank acct)
 - b. 990
7. Old Business:
 - a. Vision Statement
 - b. Annual Goals
 - c. HousingNOW (Motion to approve letter to commissioners, other actions?)
 - d. Homeless Encampment Update
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Neighbors of Belknap Lookout Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 9, 2017

Board Members Present:	Steve Faas	Jill Gonzalez	Rob Kennedy
	Barbara LaBeau	Todd Leinberger	Loren Sturrs
	Jonathan Swets	Gretchen Warnimont	
Board Members Absent:	Angel Gonzalez		
Staff Present:	Elianna Bootzin		
Guests Present:	Brian Bremer	Chris Swenk (GVSU)	

1. Call to order - The meeting was called to order at 6:34 pm.
2. Additions – There were no official additions to the agenda. It was noted that there has been no movement on the L&L Special Land Use application but we might anticipate a spring start.
3. The December minutes were approved. Elianna noted that we have logged our depreciation for 2017 according to our accountant-created schedule and that although we appear to be in a good position we still have quarterly payments for taxes coming up. Financials were approved.
4. Committee updates: Loren suggested having Todd chair the development committee. We have not seen the 719 Prospect listing online yet; Elianna will check for an update. Loren would like to convene several new committees such as Communications, Fundraising, and By-Laws; he will send out a recruitment email. Gretchen is working on re-establishing Safety as well and should have a presentation next month. Elianna is working on scheduling the mobility meetings.
5. New business:
 - a. After School Program – We can include this topic in our overview retreat conversation. John likes the idea of helping low income neighbors get their own computers. For kids, NPR ran a story on the dangers of too much computer use and the need to limit screen time. Loren felt the program takes too much time, while Todd is not sure it is strategically appropriate. Steve wanted to be sure we understood what commitment we had made, and Barb advocated cutting the program. We prefer to be a resource. We might look at options for helping adults with GED, ESL, etc. Elianna should check the grant, but may stop early this winter/spring if desired and appropriate.
 - b. 1136 Plainfield – The Development Committee was not unanimous but largely recommended not supporting the Special Land Use for a parking lot. Neighbors do not want it (Brian brought letters), it is not consistent with the plan and will inhibit redevelopment on that site. It might be better if it was a public lot. The board voted to “not support” then clarified that it “opposed” the project. Elianna will send in a letter.
 - c. Homeless Encampment – Police engaged in pick up to go to the shelters during the freeze. The camp was empty yesterday. We will say thanks for keeping them from freezing and for the additional presence.

- d. Research Requests for Retreat – Loren would like to be sure we include the task list from the annual meeting. There was general interest in health and nutrition as topics of education (activities like mass canning at Newberry). We want to pay attention to communication – how can we get the word out? Examples would be a phone tree, more eye-catching window display, using On The Town or MLive.
6. Public Comment – Chris Swenk gave an update from GVSU: 500 Lafayette is on schedule, GRAAHI will be moving in to the first floor. 333 Michigan is having post bid meetings. No info on housing yet. Chris may be able to recommend a person to work on fundraising. We might be able to get computers via their IT department as well. Brian asked if mobility will be meeting; we are working on scheduling. Todd mentioned that the Fairview condos are engaged in digging and framing. The DTN restaurant will be opening “soon” - sometime this year. It’s a Meritage project, and still not well defined. Elianna will forward the links about housing again. She and Barb mentioned the equity session with the City and the Johnson Center that took place last week. Elianna will ask if we can broadcast the information from the sessions.
7. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 7:27 pm.

Retreat Results

During our discussion (Loren, Steve, Barb, Todd, John, Brian and Elianna) on January 26, we identified four major themes for why we are involved: primarily looking out for our neighbors, achieving connection, having people active in the neighborhood and having our voices heard in local government especially around land use. The activities we discussed on 1/26 fall into four major buckets starting with splitting the second into social and physical connection:

1. Social Connection (possible title “Neighbors teaching neighbors”) – On the operational side, we will build a network, *ensure we have the ability to communicate with neighbors as desired, *ensure we have the financial capacity to operate as desired, and affiliate with businesses in the Monroe North area. More visibly, we figured we could connect neighbors with each other by hosting a lecture series, teaching health/nutrition/canning and GED/ESL, offering tax prep, holding a neighborhood meal, hosting an immigration lawyer and creating a wifi network. We expect to continue making referrals to social services and city departments as well as fine tuning city services and reacting to issues as they arise. Overall, we can measure our success in this area with the VoiceKent survey item “feeling of belonging”.

* indicates additional conversation is needed about what that means. Communication options included news kiosk, ham radio, phone tree, texting, quarterly flier, and issuing a call to action as part of that communication. Fundraising options included an event using the X, the stairs, or a walking path, such as holding a tough mudder/king of the hill, as well as carnivals, disc golf tournament, and bar crawls to Monroe North.

2. Physical connection (possible resumed title “MOBL NOBL”) – Focuses include creating connections within and out of the neighborhood, namely getting down Belknap Hill (with lights), completing the Hastings Connection/Linear Park, improving access to Michigan Street and the

Creston Business district, and creating a bike/pedestrian trail along the railroad. We're also interested in transit for this section.

3. Active in the neighborhood – This section is mostly about amenities that will get people out and about. We highlighted having lights at Coit Park and better care for new trees there; figuring out where additional curbs are needed (particularly on the east side of the neighborhood) and reporting them to 311; advocating for a dog park as part of the Lookout Park redesign process and encouraging better pickup of dog poop generally; improving access to the greenspace at 712 North (but not too much); and getting a USPS box installed at Coit and Hastings (and maybe other locations).

4. Local government – Generally speaking we want development to occur slowly so we can adapt to changes in parking and traffic; we particularly want to make sure our voices are heard on land use issues, which includes monitoring the progress of the GVSU campus construction; we also want to recruit entities that will develop affordable housing in the neighborhood; *we want to secure incentives for entities to build businesses on Lafayette; and we will react to issues as they arise, such as the current need to organize Bradford/More/North/Sinclair so they can meet our neighborhood police officer, etc.

* Incentives for Lafayette could take the form of a CID, us applying our PILOT funds, and others. We also need to investigate further what types of businesses in particular we would like to see there. We generally anticipate that being something to do with food, fun, or exercise.

There were also a couple of small but critical operational notes to define and communicate the value of membership. Big picture, we want to make sure we have a neighbor-driven agenda. While we don't anticipate adopting values at this time, the words that seem appropriate include: aesthetics, bridge-building, compassion, diversity, engagement, equity and integrity.

We'll come back to these topics at the February board meeting agenda regarding a vision statement.

Director's Notes

Preparatory Information for Business items:

Committees - We already have **mobility** and **development**. Are we still adding **safety**? The other committees of interest would be **Health, Nutrition and Education** (bring in speakers and teachers and organized internet access for tax, language, canning, GED, etc.), **Fundraising** (Highland frisbee golf competition, monroe north bar crawl, king of the hill run or bike, carnival at belknap park and others), **Communication** (developing a standard for informing the neighborhood, increasing involvement), and next month we'll come back to **bylaws review** (make sure we are covering our bases and update).

Vision Statement – Based on our strategic conversation of 1/26 and follow up analysis by myself and Loren, we propose **retaining the current mission** – “to advocate for and enhance the quality of life in the Belknap community” – to be enhanced by a vision statement – “we envision a socially and physically connected neighborhood whose residents are active in the neighborhood and ALL of whose voices are heard in local government decisions, especially land use.”

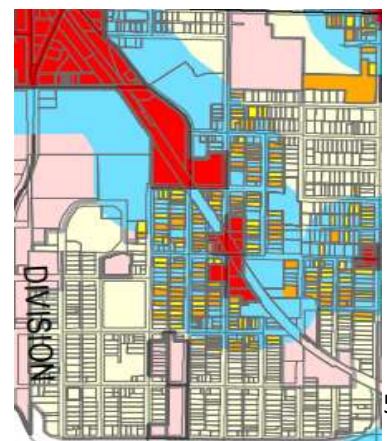
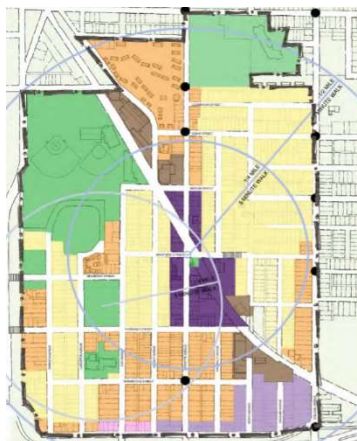
Note much of what we do will be advocating and fundraising for projects to be executed by the City. Similarly, it seems most consistent with discussion to have neighbors take the lead on teaching other neighbors (as opposed to having staff schedule outside presenters). So the organization provides the venue, the outreach, and if needed some materials, whereas the neighbors themselves provide the teaching information. With that in mind, a tactical question: what do we want our next NMF grant to be? This series? Block parties? Mile markers for the park? The community garden at 762 North?

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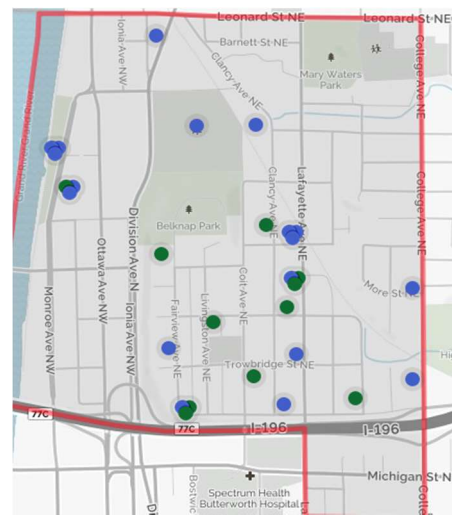
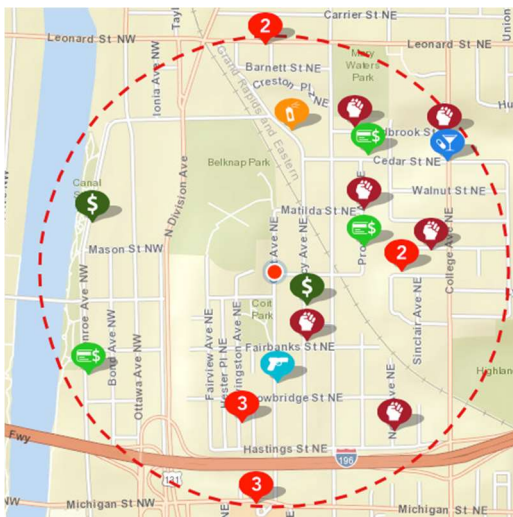


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Retreat Results

During our discussion (Loren, Steve, Barb, Todd, John, Brian and Elianna) on January 26, we identified four major themes for why we are involved: primarily looking out for our neighbors, achieving connection, having people active in the neighborhood and having our voices heard in local government especially around land use. The activities we discussed on 1/26 fall into four major buckets starting with splitting the second into social and physical connection:

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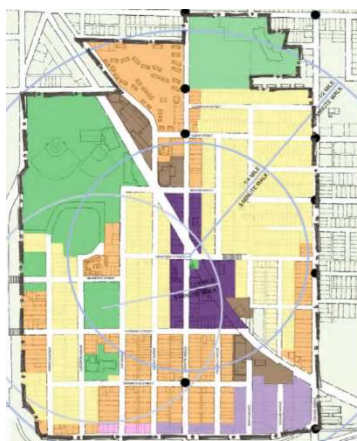
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Our own outreach materials center on the two maps below. The orange on the left is where we targeted medium density residential in our ASP. The blue on the right is where 8 unit noncondo zero lot lines and 2-4 units buildings would be allowed by right per Planning Commission recommendations.



Here is the proposed text of our letter to our commissioners:

Dear Mayor Bliss, Second Ward Commissioners Jones and Kelly and others,

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We know we need density. Over the last several years, many major developments have increased density in NOBL, and there are more to come. Already constructed are Newberry Cohousing north of Coit Park, the rebuilt low income housing at Creston Plaza, higher end apartments at the Gateway, and flats/lofts on the 500 and 600 blocks of Clancy. Additional developments are in progress (Fairview condos) and past the Special Land Use process (600 block of Coit). Neighbors requested a mixed income development on the north end of the block of GVSU's first building in the neighborhood, 500 Lafayette.

We know we need affordable housing. The above mentioned Creston Plaza and GVSU campus developments do and will provide opportunities on that end of the spectrum. Low income homebuyers can purchase a house from New Development Corporation, which rehabs existing single family homes.

These increases to HousingNOW recommendations 3 and 9 from the Planning Commission are simply NOT the way to do it. As related with the images on the previous page, they put the density in the exact opposite location as those we identified in our ASP.

We also need to adjust to the changes that have already been made. Parking has been and continues to be a challenge in Belknap Lookout. When increased business on Medical Mile led to increased competition for parking in the neighborhood, the City created its Residential Parking Permit Program at the request of Belknap Lookout. Now additional institutions are coming online and neighbors are poised to collect information about which areas will need to request an expansion from MobileGR.

The majority of the development in our neighborhood has taken place within Planned Redevelopment Districts. This approach has given the neighbors a greater measure of control over the exact look and feel of the developments. **Budgeting for and reinstating the creation of a design guide to help mediate future developments is a critical component** of adding density in the proper areas of the neighborhood.

Any adjustments before submission for part of the city commission meeting packet?

As noted in previous communications, we are expecting the City Commission to set a public hearing date on Feb 20 (but they do have the option of passing the zoning changes without one). I will print and distribute fliers for neighbors in the affected areas late next week promoting both the info sessions for Feb 17 and the commission meeting(s).

As requested, I got some more information about “treat as historic”: these areas (shaded below) are eligible for historic classification. If federal funds are used, they have to verify that they will not harm the property. There are no other current land use implications. Historic districts make it particularly expensive for property owners to maintain but the federal funding that helped Heritage Hill get set up is no longer available. I can seek additional information about creating historic districts immediately or as a fall back if the zoning changes are implemented at the Feb 20 city commission meeting.

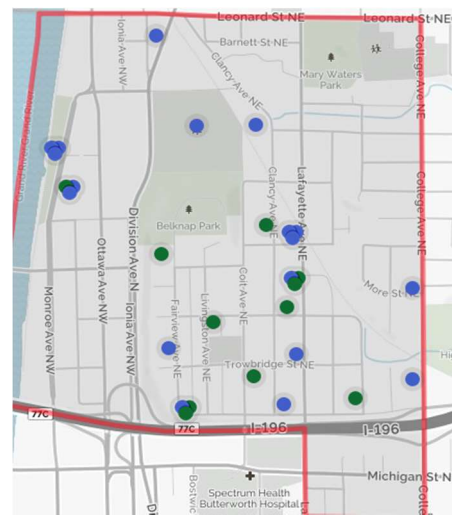
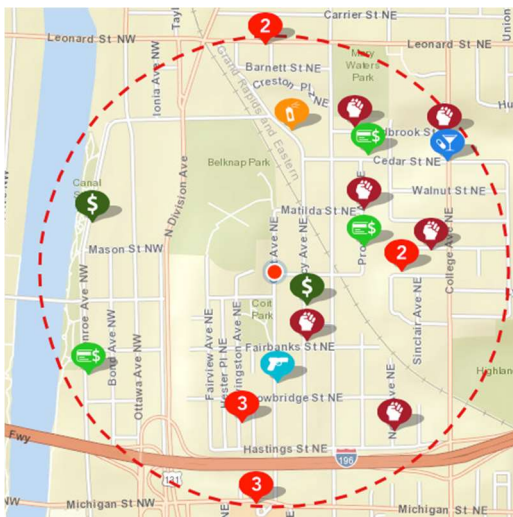


Homeless Encampment Update – Our neighbor continues to be concerned about the camp. Those who are camping are among those most at risk for the current Hep A outbreak. Better tree trimming was done on the site recently, and I have just started contact with the railroad to paint over the graffiti in the spring.

Regular Report Contents:

Public Safety – www.grcity.us Online services → (Lookup) Crime Data Destination is <http://grcity.us/police-department/Pages/Crime-Mapping.aspx>

Selected last 4 weeks with ½ mile circle around 800 Coit unfortunately losing the corners (left, below)



Development – www.grcity.us Online Services → (Permits & Applications) Permits & Applications Map Selected 1/5-2/8 in the Belknap Lookout neighborhood (right, above). Again, mostly small things.

Update on other major projects: The new building application has been put in for 813 Lafayette (Bazzani) and 617 Fairview (CopperRock).

Updates on Old Business

Vacant lot at 762 North – Finally got the lease for Loren to sign!

No further updates on 712 North, Kristi's recognition in the office signage.

Admin

Neglected in the attachments due to urgent HousingNOW additions, we (just NOBL) are also in the process of deciding where to request additional permit parking. The mobility committee met on January 31 and I intend to get a digital survey out between now and the board meeting; we'll analyze the results and prepare a recommendation for the board on Feb 28. The Other Way has posted their community engagement position and we will be included in the interview process. Computer class with Comprenew primarily for the parents of the after school kids (who will be done coming once spring break starts in April) will launch later this month. Our Monday/Thursday morning volunteer now has a key for the space.

Calvin College's public health nursing program will be holding a focus group the same night as our board meeting and will follow up with a very methodologically sound door-to-door survey process to determine residents' health needs in the neighborhood. We will receive a copy of the results.

The bus in the neighborhood that I mentioned at the retreat was just a detour for construction on Lafayette - nothing to be alarmed about!

Belknap Hill is not the subject of a focus group yet, but DGRI and the Parks Department will be interacting with residents soon about activating what are currently parking lots north of the Post Office/196 on Monroe as greenspaces. I'll be keeping an eye out for both that and the city's proposed Bikeshare system which I learned about in my first TIFA board meeting. I also did some research on the request for a USPS collection box from our annual meeting and learned that many were removed in the early 2000s due to disuse while others locally were vandalized; I'm waiting to hear back about what might be possible at this point.

Neighbors of Belknap Lookout Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 13, 2017
NOBL Office, 700 Clancy Ave NE
6:30 pm

1. Call to order
2. Additions to agenda
3. Update from GVSU – Pat Waring
4. Approval of January minutes and financials
5. Committee updates
 - a. Formation of Safety and other committees
6. New Business:
 - a. Elect 2 New Board Members, Appoint New Vice Chair (Motion for bank acct)
 - b. 990
7. Old Business:
 - a. Vision Statement
 - b. Annual Goals
 - c. HousingNOW (Motion to approve letter to commissioners, other actions?)
 - d. Homeless Encampment Update
8. Public Comment
9. Adjournment

2018 Schedule:

Knitting continues most first and third Saturdays – feel free to join us at 700 Clancy at 10 am.
TBD - Dumpster Day, Neighborhood Clean Up, Harvest Celebrations

Feb 17 - HousingNOW info, 1 pm Seymour Church (840 Alger), 4 pm West Grand (415 Leonard NW)

Feb 20 - city commission could set HousingNOW hearing or approve zoning, 7 pm 300 Monroe NW

Feb 28 - Conflict Resolution training, 12-3 pm lunch included at GRPD

Mar 3 – Neighborhood Summit – register at www.grandrapidsmi.gov/summit (no knitting today)

Mar 13 - board meeting, 6:30 pm 700 Clancy

Mar 15-18 - poker tournament at Russo's 6209 S Division 10:15 am-5:30 pm (no knitting today)

Sign up for shifts at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/904044da5ac2fa31-sell>

Apr 10 - board meeting, 6:30 pm 700 Clancy

May 8 - semi annual meeting re: goals, 6:30 pm East Leonard Elementary

May 31-Jun 3 - poker tournament at Russo's 6209 S Division 10:15 am-5:30 pm (no knitting today)

Jun 12 - board meeting, 6:30 pm 700 Clancy

Jul 10 - board meeting, 6:30 pm 700 Clancy

Aug 1 - national night out, Mary Waters Park?

Aug 14 - board meeting, 6:30 pm 700 Clancy

Sep 11 - board meeting, 6:30 pm 700 Clancy

Sep 27-30 - poker tournament at Russo's 6209 S Division 10 am-5:30 pm

Oct 9 - board meeting, 6:30 pm 700 Clancy

Nov 8-11 - poker tournament at Russo's 6209 S Division 10 am-5:30 pm

Nov 13 - annual meeting & board election, 6:30 pm Coit Creative Arts Academy

Dec 11 - board meeting, 6:30 pm 700 Clancy

Neighbors of Belknap Lookout Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 9, 2017

Board Members Present:	Steve Faas	Jill Gonzalez	Rob Kennedy
	Barbara LaBeau	Todd Leinberger	Loren Sturrs
	Jonathan Swets	Gretchen Warnimont	
Board Members Absent:	Angel Gonzalez		
Staff Present:	Elianna Bootzin		
Guests Present:	Brian Bremer	Chris Swenk (GVSU)	

1. Call to order - The meeting was called to order at 6:34 pm.
2. Additions – There were no official additions to the agenda. It was noted that there has been no movement on the L&L Special Land Use application but we might anticipate a spring start.
3. The December minutes were approved. Elianna noted that we have logged our depreciation for 2017 according to our accountant-created schedule and that although we appear to be in a good position we still have quarterly payments for taxes coming up. Financials were approved.
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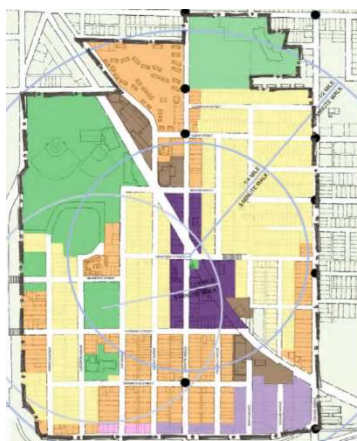
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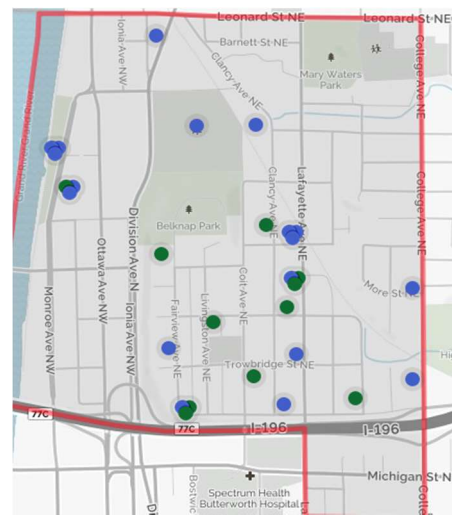
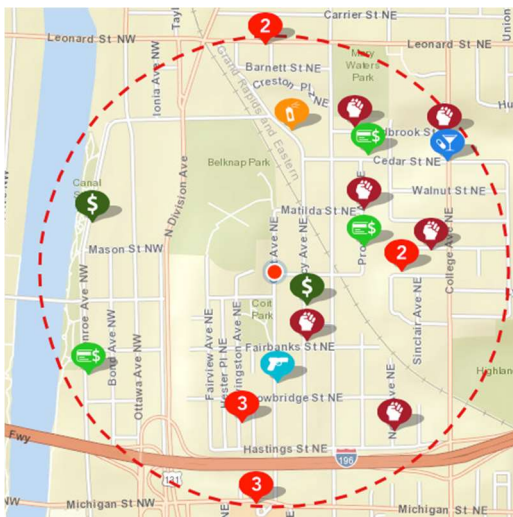


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Neighbors of Belknap Lookout Board Meeting

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6:30 pm

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4. Approval of January minutes and financials
5. Committee updates
 - a. Formation of Safety and other committees
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 - a. Elect 2 New Board Members, Appoint New Vice Chair (Motion for bank acct)
 - b. 990
7. Old Business:
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 - b. Annual Goals
 - c. HousingNOW (Motion to approve letter to commissioners, other actions?)
 - d. Homeless Encampment Update
8. Public Comment
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Neighbors of Belknap Lookout Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 9, 2017

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	Barbara LaBeau	Todd Leinberger	Loren Sturrs
	Jonathan Swets	Gretchen Warnimont	
Board Members Absent:	Angel Gonzalez		
Staff Present:	Elianna Bootzin		
Guests Present:	Brian Bremer	Chris Swenk (GVSU)	

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- d. Research Requests for Retreat – Loren would like to be sure we include the task list from the annual meeting. There was general interest in health and nutrition as topics of education (activities like mass canning at Newberry). We want to pay attention to communication – how can we get the word out? Examples would be a phone tree, more eye-catching window display, using On The Town or MLive.
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7. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 7:27 pm.

Retreat Results

During our discussion (Loren, Steve, Barb, Todd, John, Brian and Elianna) on January 26, we identified four major themes for why we are involved: primarily looking out for our neighbors, achieving connection, having people active in the neighborhood and having our voices heard in local government especially around land use. The activities we discussed on 1/26 fall into four major buckets starting with splitting the second into social and physical connection:

1. Social Connection (possible title “Neighbors teaching neighbors”) – On the operational side, we will build a network, *ensure we have the ability to communicate with neighbors as desired, *ensure we have the financial capacity to operate as desired, and affiliate with businesses in the Monroe North area. More visibly, we figured we could connect neighbors with each other by hosting a lecture series, teaching health/nutrition/canning and GED/ESL, offering tax prep, holding a neighborhood meal, hosting an immigration lawyer and creating a wifi network. We expect to continue making referrals to social services and city departments as well as fine tuning city services and reacting to issues as they arise. Overall, we can measure our success in this area with the VoiceKent survey item “feeling of belonging”.

* indicates additional conversation is needed about what that means. Communication options included news kiosk, ham radio, phone tree, texting, quarterly flier, and issuing a call to action as part of that communication. Fundraising options included an event using the X, the stairs, or a walking path, such as holding a tough mudder/king of the hill, as well as carnivals, disc golf tournament, and bar crawls to Monroe North.

2. Physical connection (possible resumed title “MOBL NOBL”) – Focuses include creating connections within and out of the neighborhood, namely getting down Belknap Hill (with lights), completing the Hastings Connection/Linear Park, improving access to Michigan Street and the

Creston Business district, and creating a bike/pedestrian trail along the railroad. We're also interested in transit for this section.

3. Active in the neighborhood – This section is mostly about amenities that will get people out and about. We highlighted having lights at Coit Park and better care for new trees there; figuring out where additional curbs are needed (particularly on the east side of the neighborhood) and reporting them to 311; advocating for a dog park as part of the Lookout Park redesign process and encouraging better pickup of dog poop generally; improving access to the greenspace at 712 North (but not too much); and getting a USPS box installed at Coit and Hastings (and maybe other locations).

4. Local government – Generally speaking we want development to occur slowly so we can adapt to changes in parking and traffic; we particularly want to make sure our voices are heard on land use issues, which includes monitoring the progress of the GVSU campus construction; we also want to recruit entities that will develop affordable housing in the neighborhood; *we want to secure incentives for entities to build businesses on Lafayette; and we will react to issues as they arise, such as the current need to organize Bradford/More/North/Sinclair so they can meet our neighborhood police officer, etc.

* Incentives for Lafayette could take the form of a CID, us applying our PILOT funds, and others. We also need to investigate further what types of businesses in particular we would like to see there. We generally anticipate that being something to do with food, fun, or exercise.

There were also a couple of small but critical operational notes to define and communicate the value of membership. Big picture, we want to make sure we have a neighbor-driven agenda. While we don't anticipate adopting values at this time, the words that seem appropriate include: aesthetics, bridge-building, compassion, diversity, engagement, equity and integrity.

We'll come back to these topics at the February board meeting agenda regarding a vision statement.

Director's Notes

Preparatory Information for Business items:

Committees - We already have **mobility** and **development**. Are we still adding **safety**? The other committees of interest would be **Health, Nutrition and Education** (bring in speakers and teachers and organized internet access for tax, language, canning, GED, etc.), **Fundraising** (Highland frisbee golf competition, monroe north bar crawl, king of the hill run or bike, carnival at belknap park and others), **Communication** (developing a standard for informing the neighborhood, increasing involvement), and next month we'll come back to **bylaws review** (make sure we are covering our bases and update).

Vision Statement – Based on our strategic conversation of 1/26 and follow up analysis by myself and Loren, we propose **retaining the current mission** – “to advocate for and enhance the quality of life in the Belknap community” – to be enhanced by a vision statement – “we envision a socially and physically connected neighborhood whose residents are active in the neighborhood and ALL of whose voices are heard in local government decisions, especially land use.”

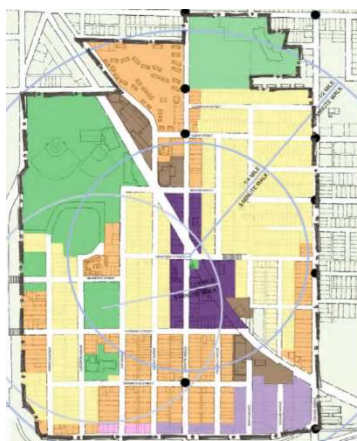
Note much of what we do will be advocating and fundraising for projects to be executed by the City. Similarly, it seems most consistent with discussion to have neighbors take the lead on teaching other neighbors (as opposed to having staff schedule outside presenters). So the organization provides the venue, the outreach, and if needed some materials, whereas the neighbors themselves provide the teaching information. With that in mind, a tactical question: what do we want our next NMF grant to be? This series? Block parties? Mile markers for the park? The community garden at 762 North?

Thinking more strategically and long term, as we built out to achieve this vision, what will the organization look like and what kind of budget will be needed to support it at that level for several years? Assuming no changes from the above description, one potential scenario suggests a part time staff person focusing on events/fundraising/communications/volunteer coordination, a shared part time social worker, and a full time lead staff person to focus on administration and public policy. Between probably \$100,000 in staffing costs, similar-to-current general operating, and major fundraising for public projects, we will be over the threshold for annual financial review. As Loren and I lay out specific activity targets for the year, we want to make sure they set us on a path to reach this new level - which we will prioritize together in the next section:

Annual Goals – What do we want to accomplish by the end of 2018? Loren suggests that we hold 1-2 fundraisers, increase our network (and we should attach a target number to this. Currently we have 146 email subscribers, 126 Facebook followers, 224 neighbors on NextDoor, and 70 members), and finish current projects. At the end of 2020 or 2010 we want to see access down Belknap Hill completed as well as the full Linear Park/Hastings Connector.

HousingNOW – The NAC has come down on a consensus position that we as neighborhoods are all opposed to the expansion of larger by right development in low density residential as it removes resident voice from the process. Similarly, we believe that there need to be design standards to preserve the character of the neighborhoods. We will advocate for the hearing to be held at the second meeting in April and ultimately for these types of changes to be considered in the Master Planning process. Two staffers from other organizations were in interviews with Wood TV 8 today (<http://woodtv.com/2018/02/08/neighborhoods-want-input-on-affordable-housing-moves/>) and more will likely follow. Add'l info sessions are in the event list.

Our own outreach materials center on the two maps below. The orange on the left is where we targeted medium density residential in our ASP. The blue on the right is where 8 unit noncondo zero lot lines and 2-4 units buildings would be allowed by right per Planning Commission recommendations.



Here is the proposed text of our letter to our commissioners:

Dear Mayor Bliss, Second Ward Commissioners Jones and Kelly and others,

Neighbors of Belknap Lookout is opposed to the changes to HousingNOW recommendations 3 and 9 submitted by the Planning Commission: the increased distance (500 feet instead of 100 feet) from commercial zones for non-condo zero lot lines and small scale (2-4 unit) development, the increased number of units for non-condo zero lot lines (up to 8 from the original 4), and the removal of the design guide. Our reasons are these: The proposed zone yields a picture opposite to where we determined we wanted to add density in our Area Specific Plan; we have been at the forefront of helping the city grow and increase density with several major projects in the neighborhood; we need breathing room to see how parking and traffic rebalance; and we care deeply about the appearance of our neighborhood. To elaborate: Since a picture is worth 1000 words, please note the blocks in orange identified for medium density residential development in our Area Specific Plan, an augmentation of the City's Master Plan which was adopted in 2010 (left) as compared with the red blocks slated for non-condo zero lot lines (up to 8 units) and small scale (2-4 unit) development by right in our neighborhood (right):

We know we need density. Over the last several years, many major developments have increased density in NOBL, and there are more to come. Already constructed are Newberry Cohousing north of Coit Park, the rebuilt low income housing at Creston Plaza, higher end apartments at the Gateway, and flats/lofts on the 500 and 600 blocks of Clancy. Additional developments are in progress (Fairview condos) and past the Special Land Use process (600 block of Coit). Neighbors requested a mixed income development on the north end of the block of GVSU's first building in the neighborhood, 500 Lafayette.

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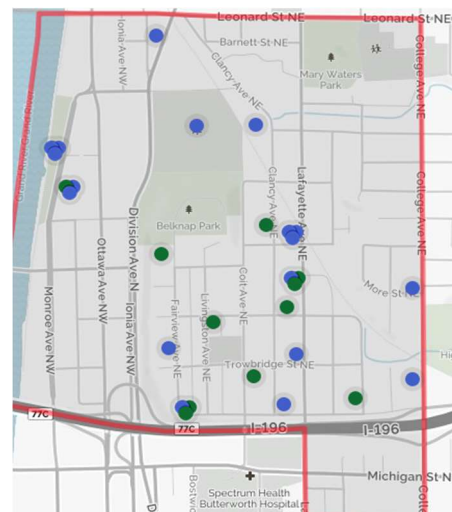
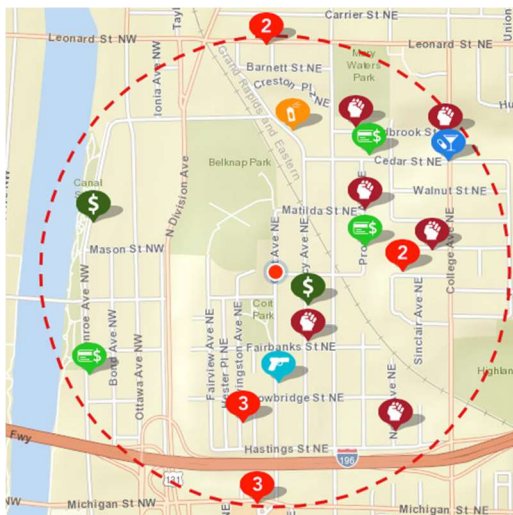


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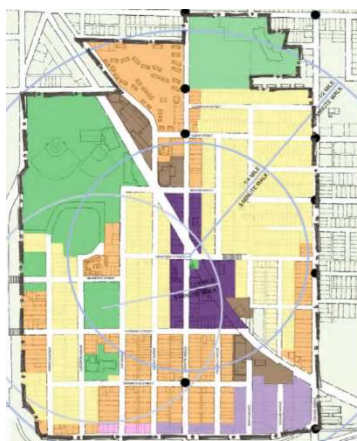
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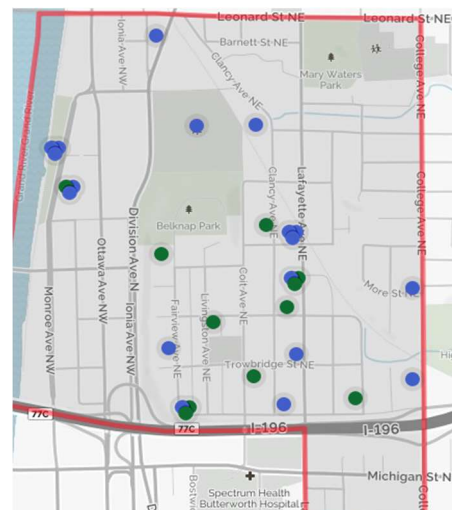
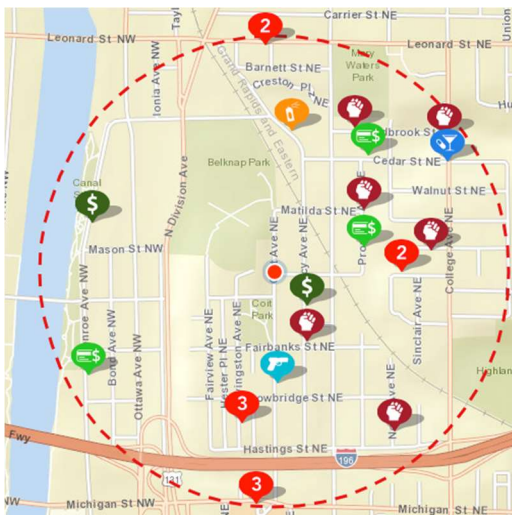


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Selected last 4 weeks with ½ mile circle around 800 Coit unfortunately losing the corners (left, below)



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Update on other major projects: The new building application has been put in for 813 Lafayette (Bazzani) and 617 Fairview (CopperRock).

Updates on Old Business

Vacant lot at 762 North – Finally got the lease for Loren to sign!

No further updates on 712 North, Kristi's recognition in the office signage.

Admin

Neglected in the attachments due to urgent HousingNOW additions, we (just NOBL) are also in the process of deciding where to request additional permit parking. The mobility committee met on January 31 and I intend to get a digital survey out between now and the board meeting; we'll analyze the results and prepare a recommendation for the board on Feb 28. The Other Way has posted their community engagement position and we will be included in the interview process. Computer class with Comprenew primarily for the parents of the after school kids (who will be done coming once spring break starts in April) will launch later this month. Our Monday/Thursday morning volunteer now has a key for the space.

Calvin College's public health nursing program will be holding a focus group the same night as our board meeting and will follow up with a very methodologically sound door-to-door survey process to determine residents' health needs in the neighborhood. We will receive a copy of the results.

The bus in the neighborhood that I mentioned at the retreat was just a detour for construction on Lafayette - nothing to be alarmed about!

Belknap Hill is not the subject of a focus group yet, but DGRI and the Parks Department will be interacting with residents soon about activating what are currently parking lots north of the Post Office/196 on Monroe as greenspaces. I'll be keeping an eye out for both that and the city's proposed Bikeshare system which I learned about in my first TIFA board meeting. I also did some research on the request for a USPS collection box from our annual meeting and learned that many were removed in the early 2000s due to disuse while others locally were vandalized; I'm waiting to hear back about what might be possible at this point.

Neighbors of Belknap Lookout Board Meeting

Tuesday, February 13, 2017
NOBL Office, 700 Clancy Ave NE
6:30 pm

1. Call to order
2. Additions to agenda
3. Update from GVSU – Pat Waring
4. Approval of January minutes and financials
5. Committee updates
 - a. Formation of Safety and other committees
6. New Business:
 - a. Elect 2 New Board Members, Appoint New Vice Chair (Motion for bank acct)
 - b. 990
7. Old Business:
 - a. Vision Statement
 - b. Annual Goals
 - c. HousingNOW (Motion to approve letter to commissioners, other actions?)
 - d. Homeless Encampment Update
8. Public Comment
9. Adjournment

2018 Schedule:

Knitting continues most first and third Saturdays – feel free to join us at 700 Clancy at 10 am.
TBD - Dumpster Day, Neighborhood Clean Up, Harvest Celebrations

Feb 17 - HousingNOW info, 1 pm Seymour Church (840 Alger), 4 pm West Grand (415 Leonard NW)

Feb 20 - city commission could set HousingNOW hearing or approve zoning, 7 pm 300 Monroe NW

Feb 28 - Conflict Resolution training, 12-3 pm lunch included at GRPD

Mar 3 – Neighborhood Summit – register at www.grandrapidsmi.gov/summit (no knitting today)

Mar 13 - board meeting, 6:30 pm 700 Clancy

Mar 15-18 - poker tournament at Russo's 6209 S Division 10:15 am-5:30 pm (no knitting today)

Sign up for shifts at <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/904044da5ac2fa31-sell>

Apr 10 - board meeting, 6:30 pm 700 Clancy

May 8 - semi annual meeting re: goals, 6:30 pm East Leonard Elementary

May 31-Jun 3 - poker tournament at Russo's 6209 S Division 10:15 am-5:30 pm (no knitting today)

Jun 12 - board meeting, 6:30 pm 700 Clancy

Jul 10 - board meeting, 6:30 pm 700 Clancy

Aug 1 - national night out, Mary Waters Park?

Aug 14 - board meeting, 6:30 pm 700 Clancy

Sep 11 - board meeting, 6:30 pm 700 Clancy

Sep 27-30 - poker tournament at Russo's 6209 S Division 10 am-5:30 pm

Oct 9 - board meeting, 6:30 pm 700 Clancy

Nov 8-11 - poker tournament at Russo's 6209 S Division 10 am-5:30 pm

Nov 13 - annual meeting & board election, 6:30 pm Coit Creative Arts Academy

Dec 11 - board meeting, 6:30 pm 700 Clancy

Neighbors of Belknap Lookout Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 9, 2017

Board Members Present:	Steve Faas	Jill Gonzalez	Rob Kennedy
	Barbara LaBeau	Todd Leinberger	Loren Sturrs
	Jonathan Swets	Gretchen Warnimont	
Board Members Absent:	Angel Gonzalez		
Staff Present:	Elianna Bootzin		
Guests Present:	Brian Bremer	Chris Swenk (GVSU)	

1. Call to order - The meeting was called to order at 6:34 pm.
2. Additions – There were no official additions to the agenda. It was noted that there has been no movement on the L&L Special Land Use application but we might anticipate a spring start.
3. The December minutes were approved. Elianna noted that we have logged our depreciation for 2017 according to our accountant-created schedule and that although we appear to be in a good position we still have quarterly payments for taxes coming up. Financials were approved.
4. Committee updates: Loren suggested having Todd chair the development committee. We have not seen the 719 Prospect listing online yet; Elianna will check for an update. Loren would like to convene several new committees such as Communications, Fundraising, and By-Laws; he will send out a recruitment email. Gretchen is working on re-establishing Safety as well and should have a presentation next month. Elianna is working on scheduling the mobility meetings.
5. New business:
 - a. After School Program – We can include this topic in our overview retreat conversation. John likes the idea of helping low income neighbors get their own computers. For kids, NPR ran a story on the dangers of too much computer use and the need to limit screen time. Loren felt the program takes too much time, while Todd is not sure it is strategically appropriate. Steve wanted to be sure we understood what commitment we had made, and Barb advocated cutting the program. We prefer to be a resource. We might look at options for helping adults with GED, ESL, etc. Elianna should check the grant, but may stop early this winter/spring if desired and appropriate.
 - b. 1136 Plainfield – The Development Committee was not unanimous but largely recommended not supporting the Special Land Use for a parking lot. Neighbors do not want it (Brian brought letters), it is not consistent with the plan and will inhibit redevelopment on that site. It might be better if it was a public lot. The board voted to “not support” then clarified that it “opposed” the project. Elianna will send in a letter.
 - c. Homeless Encampment – Police engaged in pick up to go to the shelters during the freeze. The camp was empty yesterday. We will say thanks for keeping them from freezing and for the additional presence.

- d. Research Requests for Retreat – Loren would like to be sure we include the task list from the annual meeting. There was general interest in health and nutrition as topics of education (activities like mass canning at Newberry). We want to pay attention to communication – how can we get the word out? Examples would be a phone tree, more eye-catching window display, using On The Town or MLive.
6. Public Comment – Chris Swenk gave an update from GVSU: 500 Lafayette is on schedule, GRAAHI will be moving in to the first floor. 333 Michigan is having post bid meetings. No info on housing yet. Chris may be able to recommend a person to work on fundraising. We might be able to get computers via their IT department as well. Brian asked if mobility will be meeting; we are working on scheduling. Todd mentioned that the Fairview condos are engaged in digging and framing. The DTN restaurant will be opening “soon” - sometime this year. It’s a Meritage project, and still not well defined. Elianna will forward the links about housing again. She and Barb mentioned the equity session with the City and the Johnson Center that took place last week. Elianna will ask if we can broadcast the information from the sessions.
7. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 7:27 pm.

Retreat Results

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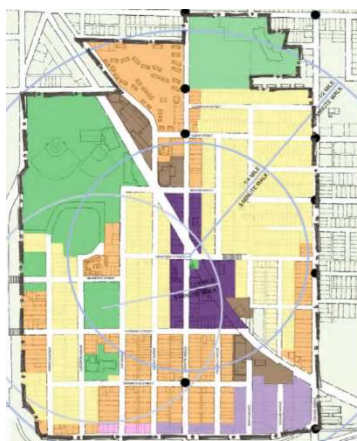
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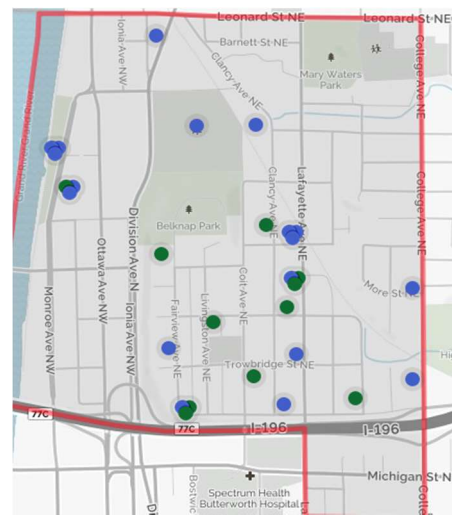
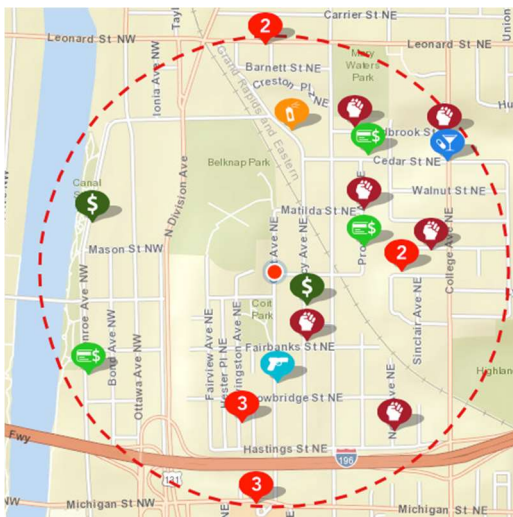


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No further updates on 712 North, Kristi's recognition in the office signage.

Admin

Neglected in the attachments due to urgent HousingNOW additions, we (just NOBL) are also in the process of deciding where to request additional permit parking. The mobility committee met on January 31 and I intend to get a digital survey out between now and the board meeting; we'll analyze the results and prepare a recommendation for the board on Feb 28. The Other Way has posted their community engagement position and we will be included in the interview process. Computer class with Comprenew primarily for the parents of the after school kids (who will be done coming once spring break starts in April) will launch later this month. Our Monday/Thursday morning volunteer now has a key for the space.

Calvin College's public health nursing program will be holding a focus group the same night as our board meeting and will follow up with a very methodologically sound door-to-door survey process to determine residents' health needs in the neighborhood. We will receive a copy of the results.

The bus in the neighborhood that I mentioned at the retreat was just a detour for construction on Lafayette - nothing to be alarmed about!

Belknap Hill is not the subject of a focus group yet, but DGRI and the Parks Department will be interacting with residents soon about activating what are currently parking lots north of the Post Office/196 on Monroe as greenspaces. I'll be keeping an eye out for both that and the city's proposed Bikeshare system which I learned about in my first TIFA board meeting. I also did some research on the request for a USPS collection box from our annual meeting and learned that many were removed in the early 2000s due to disuse while others locally were vandalized; I'm waiting to hear back about what might be possible at this point.