

MINUTES  
**SAFE COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2011  
ALLISON HENDERSON PARK BUILDING, 1500 LORAS BLVD.

**Meeting was called to order by Chair Doug Stillings at 6:05 p.m.**

Committee members present: Doug Stillings, Rachel Daack, Diane Callahan, Anthony Allen, Mary Rae Bragg, Ann Ernst, Susan Stork, Jon Cheatham (arrived at 6:35). Staff Present: Jerelyn O'Connor, Kevin Klein, Crenna Brumwell, David Harris, Laura Carstens. Others present: Joe Noll, Fred Miller

**Approval of Minutes of April 13, 2011.** Chair Stillings requested that the minutes be provided to the committee prior to the meeting. Ann Ernst noted a correction with regard to her comment on the cost of family counseling. Juvenile Court Services would pay for family counseling if ordered by the Court. Committee stated that they would prefer to review and approve the minutes prior to sending them to City Council. Motion by Bragg, second by Daack to approve the minutes as corrected. All approved.

**Progress Report, David Harris, Director, Housing and Community Development**

David Harris provided the committee a 7 page report detailing the Housing Department's response to the Safe Community Task Force recommendations and proceeded to review highlights of the report.

**Housing Code Enforcement:** He reported that as of the end of FY 2010, the annual cycle time of rental housing inspections has been reduced from 7 years to 5 years. He expects they'll be able to get the rental cycle time reduced further. Section 8 units are inspected annually. A critical improvement is the Housing Code has been amended to reduce time for compliance to 9 months total time. Keep in mind that there is a winter moratorium. Bragg asked about what goes into the housing inspection and Harris stressed that it's a minimum housing code. In response to Bragg's question about what would be an ideal inspection cycle, Harris responded that annual inspections would be ideal. David discussed the department's efforts to intensify exterior code enforcement—1) They are conducting exterior only inspections on the Downtown area rental properties which allows them to conduct many more inspections and is expected to result in notable changes in exterior appearance, and 2) Inspectors have completed an advisory inspection of owner occupied homes in the Washington Neighborhood. In addition, inspectors are now concentrating on exterior inspections of all rental properties identified in the NIU study as UCR crime "hot spots," along the Central Avenue Corridor.

**Section 8 Program –** Harris described how the waiting list was closed except for persons qualifying for "local preference points," which means they must either be Dubuque residents, elderly or disabled. He provided information on the efforts to expand the Family Self Sufficiency Program. 75 families are now enrolled in FSS and they hope to get to 90 families by the end of the year. In December, 2010, the Getting Ahead Program graduated its 108<sup>th</sup> participant. Stillings requested information on the department's tracking of the effectiveness of the Bridges program and noted that would be helpful to committee members as they talk to others in the community. Harris talked about petitioning HUD to approve exception rents and noted that it's been effective in their efforts to de-concentrate the number of Section 8 participants living in downtown neighborhoods. Harris also provided a handout detailing the history of the Section 8

Administrative Plan amendments since January 07, many of which were responses to concerns about behaviors of Section 8 participants.

Bragg noted that she was impressed with reading the survey comments from Section 8 Program landlords.

Stillings noted that Harris' report illustrated the department's responsiveness to concerns of the SCTF.

There was a question about the large number of families who have been terminated from the Section 8 Program and concerns about what happens to those families. Harris responded that they do not track the families after they've left the program.

Daack talked about anecdotal information on women being victimized by unwanted people living in the rental unit and her concerns about what assistance we can provide to those women.

Generally the committee was very complimentary to the Housing and Community Development Department on all the work they have done.

### **Open Discussion**

Committee discussed the City Manager's letter responding to concerns raised by representatives of the Dubuque Area Landlord Association.

Daack talked about the tie between physical disorder and crime. We need to be concerned about the condition of all properties, not just rental properties. Crenna Brumwell noted that there's a SCTF recommendation regarding police calls for service for all properties (rental and owner-occupied) that is still underway.

Bragg stated that being a landlord is a business and landlords should expect to have to comply with city regulations, just as any other business must.

### **New Business – Public Input**

There was a question on whether there have been any recent speaker requests from the community. There was a suggestion from the audience that the SCAC could offer to speak at neighborhood meetings. There was also a suggestion that Committee may need to specifically invite various groups/neighborhoods for input.

### **Scheduling Future Meetings**

Stillings suggested hearing from the Police. Allen suggested hearing from the Park Patrol. He noted that we're doing a better job being proactive to prevent problems. He suggested that hearing from Leisure Services in general will be helpful to the committee to learn more about their whole approach i.e., recreation, physical changes at Comiskey, Park patrol, etc. He also suggested that a field supervisor at Comiskey might be helpful providing consistency and making folks accountable.

Consensus of committee was to invite the Leisure Services Manager Marie Ware to the next meeting to provide a big view of the department's approach/initiatives.

Ann Ernst asked Laura Carstens about the Historic Millwork District and what plans are in place to plan for a safe neighborhood. Carstens suggested that perhaps she could facilitate a discussion with the four major property owners in the district. Stork said this is an opportunity to be proactive as a new neighborhood is being developed.

Committee requested that flyers be provided at least two weeks before the meeting. O'Connor offered that we could have a supply of flyers printed for committee members.

Committee discussed possible locations for the next meeting and would like to see a west end location for the June meeting. First choice is the community room at the Asbury Plaza Hy-Vee. Other possibilities mentioned include the Arboretum and Bunker Hill.

**Adjournment**

Motion by Callahan to adjourn. Second by Stork. All approved. Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Jerelyn O'Connor  
Neighborhood Development Specialist

These minutes were passed and approved on \_\_\_\_\_

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