

## **First Avenue Business Corridor Meeting**

**April 16, 2007**

**Clark Alumni House**

**11:45 a.m.**

**Present:** Jim Galloway (JLG Architects), Lonnie Lafeen (JLG Architects), Rod Pritchard (Coe College), Erin Lenninger (Coe College), Kevin Platz (Cedar Rapids Area Association of Realtors), Phil Wasta (Pioneer Workspace Solutions), John Wasta (Pioneer Workspace Solutions), Richard Marsceau (Brewed Awakenings), Scott Crosby (EnCompass), Betsy Westphalen (Wells Fargo), Richard Luther (City of Cedar Rapids), Sandi Fowler (City of Cedar Rapids), Toni Floerchinger (Collins Community Credit Union), Jeff Ruppel (Wendy's), Joe Nosek (Mound View Neighborhood Association), Brent Heinz (HyVee), Rev. W. B. Harnish (Wedding Chapel), and Tony Nassif.

### **JLG Report**

JLG Architects representatives Jim Galloway and Lonnie Lafeen clarified that Coe has provided the funding for their consultation but stressed that they are working for the Mound View Neighborhood in this process. They presented the feedback received at the two Mound View Neighborhood open houses held in the last couple months. The following four areas are of concern to the residents: housing, Coe's plan for expansion, safety and retail. They have a number of ideas on how to improve these areas and will present a full executive summary to the neighborhood steering committee soon. After the steering committee approves the plan, it will be taken to City Council. The timing of this may coincide with the presentation of Vision Cedar Rapids' summary to the City Council. The final summary will be distributed to the Mound View Neighborhood Association and would be available through them to this group.

The group asked what types of commercial property the residents of Mound View (MV) would like to see in the area and JLG responded that they more readily know what they *don't* want. Any space that is dangerous or fosters an unclean environment is undesirable to say the least. A market analysis can be requested of the City if this group of commercial businesses is willing to organize and support the effort. This market analysis would be funded by the City and would take into account the two colleges, hospital and main highway that are a part of this unique neighborhood.

### **Formation of Group**

It was voted at the meeting to form a group of business owners along and on either side of First Avenue adjacent to the Mound View neighborhood. The boundaries of this group will be determined by the boundary of the downtown district (10<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> Street) and will be kept vague at first. An effort will be made to include as many businesses as are interested and the definitions may become firmer at a later time. The City will provide information on the boundaries of the downtown area.

It was requested that the group not be referred to as retail but as commercial or professional businesses. Once the group has organized, they will decide on who may join the association. There are some key property owners/managers that will be invited to join specifically, including Bill Olinger, John Khairallah, and the manager of the new Road Ranger convenience store. At the present time, mailings and invitations will be mailed to all properties between 10<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Streets, all local deed holders, and anyone who attended a previous meeting. The associations that formed in response to the revitalization of downtown Cedar Rapids and Mount Vernon Road would be good models for this group and the City will respond with the requirements of such an organization. Richard Marsceau will contact those associations in an effort to learn more about forming such a group. Members of the group will provide name or logo ideas to Richard Marsceau, Rod Pritchard, and Erin Lenninger and the group will decide on a name at the next meeting. Coe offered to help come up with a logo for the group.

### **Next Meeting**

Members thought the meeting location should vary in an effort to get to know the neighborhood and lessen the burden on any one place. The next meeting will take place at 11:45 a.m. on Tuesday, May 8 at Pioneer Workspace Solutions and will be catered by Hy-Vee.

Signed,

Erin Lenninger, Coe College