

First Avenue Uptown College District Meeting
Coe College Lynch Room
Thursday, Nov. 20, 2008
8 a.m.

Present: Rod Pritchard (Coe College), Kristy Upah (Coe College), Phil Wasta (Pioneer Workspace Solutions), Brent Heinz (Hy-Vee), Kevin Platz (Cedar Rapids Area Association of Realtors), Chief Greg Graham (CRPD), Cpt. Bernie Walther (CRPD), Lt. Chuck Mincks (CRPD), Cpt. Steve O’Konek (CRPD), John Wasta (Pioneer Workspace Solutions), Jeff Frese (Commonwealth Apartments), Wade Hiner (Hunter Companies), Alex Michaud (Coe College), DeLane Duval (Coe College), Dan Knight (Coe College, Head of Security), Joan Walton (H&R Block), Keith Slaymaker (Slaymaker Chiropractic, P.C.)

I. Agenda Items

A. Welcome by Rod Pritchard

B. Cedar Rapids Police Department Update

Chief Greg Graham, who joined the CRPD on June 1, 2008, discussed the following:

- Community policing began in 1997. Cedar Rapids is now moving to the next step – a community oriented government with three CR districts and a Lt. designated to each: East, West and Central. There will be a community police station in each district, and officers will be based out of all three locations. “Community policing is all about groups like this,” said Chief Graham. “It’s a change of mindset.” Sanitation efforts, public works and cleaning up our district on a daily basis are vital to this revamped community policing initiative.
- Liquor & Tobacco Point: This store recently moved into our district at 1545 First Ave. SE . The City Council voted to revoke the liquor license it had granted to this business in August. The new store violates a city ordinance which prohibits an establishment, such as this one, to be located within 300 feet of a church. In this case, Mission of Hope is only about 140 feet away. The Liquor & Tobacco Point is appealing to the State Beverage Commission. The issue will be decided at a hearing on January 21, 2009. Until then, the store is allowed to operate as normal. For liquor licenses and similar requests going forward, Chief Graham said there will be more communication with surrounding businesses and residents. Letters to announce such establishments, as well a more formal process to attain the license, will be put into place.
- Questions/Answers/Comments
 - The Central District includes five different neighborhoods. The CRPD is still identifying the beats to which officers will be assigned. More police presence of First Ave. would help the FAUCD’s perception issues and ideally lower crimes in this area.
 - Lt. Mincks: Plain clothed officers have been helping to combat illegal drug trafficking and prostitution. Aggressive patrol will concentrate on the worst areas first, understanding that long-term initiatives will take time.
 - Chief: There are two problems – 1) Crime problem; 2) Perception problem. Both need to improve.
 - Will bike and foot patrol still be in affect during the winter season? Decreasing temperatures during the winter naturally keep people inside, but there will be more patrol cars. There will no longer be one patrol car with two officers; rather, there will be one officer assigned to each car.
 - Fire and zoning issues – will the city have tougher codes? Alcohol and city codes are currently being revised, specifically landlord accountability and stricter policies to attain liquor and tobacco licenses.

- Property owner and homeowner's code and enforcement discrimination? There needs to be equal accountability. If standards are kept high, there will be an improvement in management between all types of property.
- Cpt. Walther update: Crime stats are relatively low compared to October. Calls for service are down 25%, aggravated and armed assaults have decreased, and the number of arrests is the same. The only statistic to increase is the number of firearm offenses. The CRPD is focusing on repeat offenders to combat this issue. Overall, Cedar Rapids crime rates continue to follow the national crime rate patterns.
- Lt. Chuck Mincks in the CRPD representative for our area. Contact him with your concerns at 319-286-5347 or 319-521-3270.

C. District Opportunities

- Greater Cedar Rapids Community Fund Grant Update
Submitted Wednesday, Oct. 15, 2008 – Total: \$18,000
 1. The Community Fund: \$10,000
 2. The Gazette Foundation Donor-Advised Fund: \$1,500
 3. Lil' Drug Store Products Fund: \$5,000
 4. First Avenue Uptown College District: \$ 1,500

The overall goal is to create a destination district by beautifying First Avenue. Attaining grant money would allow us to add banners, benches, bike racks and planters to help create district boundaries and encourage redevelopment within the district. Grant recipients will be notified in December.

- Beautify: Please encourage your employees to smoke behind your business instead of First Avenue, pick up trash daily, and support fellow district members by shopping locally!

E. Future Goals: Developers & Membership growth

Developers: The steering committee meeting will continue to discuss potential developers interested in revitalizing our district.

Members: The FAUCD is approaching 40 active members. Our goal is to have 60 members in 2009. To renew your 2009 membership, please visit the district Web site, and complete the 2009 membership application. Membership contributions may be submitted to Coe College, c/o Kristy Upah.

II. Next Meeting-**HOLIDAY PARTY!**

The FAUCD Holiday Party will take the place of our regular large-group meeting for the month of December. This district-wide holiday celebration will take place on Thursday, December 18, 2008. Gather with fellow district members at Who's on First Restaurant and Sports Bar at 4 p.m. for fellowship, food (complimentary appetizers!), and fun. ☺

*If you have any questions or comments,
please contact Kristy Upah at 319-399-8581 or kupah@coe.edu.*

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