

**DRAKE NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING MEETING**  
**HOUSING SUB-COMMITTEE**  
**Thursday December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2009 at 6:30pm**  
**Holiday Inn Express, 1140 24<sup>th</sup> Street**

**Continuation of Des Moines Area Non-profit Housing Providers:**

1. Greater Des Moines Habitat for Humanity – 30-45 mins.  
Lance Henning, Executive Director & Jason Ekstrom, Land Development Manager
  - Organization overview
  - Housing Programs
  - Opportunities in the Drake Neighborhood
  
2. Des Moines Dream Center, Rob Cain – 30-45 mins.
  - Organization overview
  - Work in the King Irving & Mondamin Presidential Neighborhoods

**Meeting Notes:**

Lance Henning, Executive Director for Greater Des Moines Habitat for Humanity (GDMHFH), gave an overview of their programs and recent activities. Habitat serves families that are hard working, but low-wage earning by providing opportunities for affordable homeownership. Their average clientele makes less than 50% of Area Median Income, or around \$20-25,000 per year. The program in Des Moines began in 1986, but has been growing significantly since 2001. In 2009, Habitat built 22 homes, a new record for the organization.

Lance explained that families who meet the income qualifications go through an intensive application process, invest 400 hours of “sweat equity” into building their home and others, and attend educational courses and one-on-one counseling sessions on topics ranging from finances to being a good neighbor, to home maintenance. The families then purchase the homes for the hard costs that Habitat has in to that property. Partnerships with the City and other local agencies as well as private donations allow Habitat to provide the families with a no interest mortgage, and to keep the housing affordable. For more information on the Habitat program, see the attached handout.

Lance also described some of the “green” initiatives that GDMHFH is beginning to work on. All of their homes meet energy star standards. They recently completed a house that is expected to be LEED certified at the silver level. While future homes may not go after the certification because of the extensive documentation process involved, the organization has learned a number of things that they can easily change in the construction of homes that improve energy efficiency and are considered “green”. Committee members expressed interest in pursuing training opportunities in this area.

Deric asked how Habitat works with an area that has historic homes, since Drake has historic preservation goals. One of Habitat's goals is to add value to the neighborhood, and they are willing to work with neighborhoods and partner with other organizations to do so. Lance stressed that there is always a balance between this goal and providing affordable housing solutions. However, BSB Design currently donates architectural services, and tries to design homes that are in keeping with the character of the neighborhood. An example is one of the homes recently completed in the Drake area has hardy plank siding and a craftsman bungalow style.

Deric asked if Habitat would be willing to open their training sessions to the public, if there was an interest. Lance said they would be happy to do so, but it may mean finding a new space and adjusting the format. The subcommittee expressed an interest in partnering with Habitat on some of their homeowner education goals for the Drake neighborhood. Lance mentioned that they are in the process of applying for a Dept. of Energy grant in partnership with Rebuilding Together in order to do energy efficiency retrofits. The Drake neighborhood could be a partner in that effort if the project receives the funds. The committee also discussed including Habitat if they organize a housing fair. Committee members proposed developing a list of area housing resources to have available for residents.

Lance noted that Habitat has built a number of homes in the Drake neighborhood now and is scheduled to dedicate two new homes, 1152 and 1162 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, at 10:00 am on December 19<sup>th</sup>. Anyone is welcome to attend the dedication. Habitat also owns three lots on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street; the foundations are currently in, but the homes will be completed next spring. The neighborhood is encouraged to advise Habitat (Jason Ekstrom, Land Development Manager [jekstrom@gdmhabitat.org]) on vacant lots that might be appropriate for their homes. In addition, Habitat is a partner with the City in the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), working on foreclosures. The eastern side of the Drake neighborhood is NSP eligible. Habitat has been getting more involved in rehab projects as well, including 2616 Kingman.

Rob McCain from the Dream Center did not attend the meeting.

Todd Bishop asked about the overlapping neighborhood boundaries. He lives in the area shared by Waveland Park and Beaverdale, and is therefore unable to qualify for NFC loans. Committee members explained some of the history of this issue and Kyle and Amber reiterated the need to resolve it. Bill Cappuccio suggested the resolution should come from residents in that area, rather than just the neighborhood association presidents.

The next meeting will be Thursday January 7<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30pm. Shallee Keenan from the Neighborhood Resource Office will attend.