

Tennessee Town NIA General Membership Meeting
6:30 p.m., Monday; July 11, 2022
Buchanan Center, 1195 SW Buchanan

The wearing of facial masks will be encouraged for this meeting to help to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

TENTATIVE AGENDA:

- I. Welcome, Distribution of Free Smoke Detectors and Batteries
- II. Kudos: NIA Resident Rob Cockerham for Helping Resident with Home Repairs (and City of Topeka's New Recognition of Neighbors Helping Neighbors)
- III. Adoption of Agenda (vote)
- IV. Approval of May 9, 2022 General Membership Meeting Minutes
- V. Acceptance of Treasurer's Reports
- VI. Old Business:
 - A. Walking Tour of Tennessee Town's History Presentation: Donna Rae Pearson
 - B. 2022 National Night Out, Basketball Tournament Updates: Don Fortin and Sandy Lassiter
 - C. 2022 DREAMS Neighborhood Goals (June 2022 Consults with the City of Topeka; pgs. 2-4)
 - D. Private-Public Partnership with Stormont Vail, the City of Topeka and GraceMed Update
 - E. Request for New Property Maintenance Officer
 - F. Central Topeka Grocery Store Update
 - G. City Council Report: Karen Hiller
 - H. Citizen Advisory Council Report: Don Fortin
 - I. International Academy Update: Sandy Lassiter
 - J. 12th Street Project Update
- VII. New Business:
 - A. None
- VIII. More Kudos:
 - A. Independence Day, Juneteenth Recognitions
- IX. Announcements:
 - A. Community Engagement Programs: (1) *Emergency Program*: Intended to help homeowners make repairs to immediate health or safety hazards, (2) *Accessibility Program*: Provides modifications to residential homes for owners or tenants with disabilities, (3) *Property Maintenance Repair Program*: Assists with repairs for low-income homeowners who need repairs to bring their homes up to code and make the home safe, livable, and healthy. All eligible households must have an active property maintenance violation and be on the deed of the property. For more info. or to apply, please call 785-368-3711.
 - B. Computers for Seniors, Free Lawn Mowing: Contact Community Engagement at 785-368-3711.
 - C. TOTO first-time homebuyers' assistance program: The program helps low-income families purchase their first home through HUD funding. The program helps Topeka residents become homeowners by providing education, financing, and home rehabilitation by partnering with Housing and Credit Counseling Inc. For more info., please call 785-234-0217, ext. 317.
 - D. Habitat's Aging in Place Program: Available to individuals living in Shawnee County, age 60 or older, living at or below 60% of the area median income. Must be the home's owner and currently residing in the home. Addresses basic repairs on homes, which reduces the need for critical repairs and enables seniors to live autonomously and with dignity in their homes. Shawnee County Advocacy Council on Aging partnership, business partners and community donors make program possible. To apply, please call Habitat at 785-234-4322.
 - E. Next Meeting: 6:30 p.m., Mon., September 12, 2022, Buchanan Ctr., 1195 SW Buchanan
- X. Adjournment

Tennessee Town NIA General Membership Meeting
6:30 p.m., Monday, July 11, 2022
Buchanan Center Conference Room, 1195 SW Buchanan

2022 DREAMS Neighborhood Goals (June 2022 Consults with the City of Topeka):

**2022 DREAMS Consults: Planning and Development, Parks & Rec, Public Works, and Public Utilities.
City-wide housing consult scheduled for July 13.**

Type of project:

- (1) Improvements at King's Court Complex (basketball courts, playground equipment)
- (2) Sidewalk repair/construction
- (3) Alley repairs and construction
- (4) Lane Garden acquisition, amenities
- (5) Creation of another pocket park on the eastern edge of the NIA
- (6) Pedestrian mid-block lighting
- (7) Community garden
- (8) 2023 Juneteenth Celebration
- (9) 2023 Brown v. Board of Education Recognition

Location/address for the project:

- (1) Northwest corner of SW Lincoln and Munson Sts.
- (2) Including and south of SW Munson (also including Huntoon, Washburn, Lane, Lincoln, Buchanan and Clay Sts. but not 12th St.).
- (3) Alley between Lincoln and Buchanan, 2nd 1100 block; alley behind Asbury-Mt. Olive Church; alley between Lane and Lincoln, 1st 1100 block (currently gravel).
- (4) Northeast corner of SW 12th and Lane Sts.
- (5) Along SW Clay (the NIA would own and manage it).
- (6) East-west streets: 11th, Munson Sts.; north-south streets: Lincoln, Buchanan, Clay
- (7) At various vacant lots throughout the NIA.
- (8) Possibilities include Faith Temple Church, 1st Church of the Nazarene, Shiloh Baptist Church, GraceMed Health Clinic.
- (9) Black history museum located at 1149 SW Lincoln (managed by Community First, Inc.).

General Project Scope (what work needs to be done):

- (1) Resurfacing of basketball courts, new backboards, rims, nets, benches, bleachers, trash receptacles, grills, checking playground matting for replacement (about 7 years old).
- (2) See attached PDF.
- (3) Resurface or construct alleys with concrete.
- (4) Shawnee County corrects oversight that happened during the city-county parks and rec merger and bring Lane Garden under the county's umbrella, like the Aaron Douglas Art Park across the street; SnCo covers liability insurance and mows grass per its other holdings; NIA and SnCo work to identify funding for amenities (park sign, solar light, benches, grills, trash receptacles, greenery, etc.).
- (5) Park amenities similar to those proposed at Lane Garden.
- (6) Solar powered lights along the sidewalks in the project area. The NIA had received an initial commitment to this project from the previous public works director on Nov. 8, 2021 [funds from "'hot' zone as indicated on (the) Ward Meade NIA Night Time Part 1 Hot Spots Map: June 21, 2015 – June 20, 2020].
- (7) Flowers and/or fruits/vegetables. The challenge is finding volunteers to maintain the gardens.
- (8) Celebration to coincide with national holiday date to recognize the date that all former slaves were free. Food/beverages, family activities, presentations/testimonials.
- (9) Celebration/recognition of Tennessee Town's place in the historic Brown v. Board SCOTUS case.

Neighborhood Plan:

Neighborhood Planning Consult Meetings

Recommended if: you want to discuss minor changes to your plan, you don't have a plan or you need ideas for projects (minor changes).

- (1) Allowance for more “missing middle housing” (zoning and construction) and less of a focus on single-family housing (new and rehabbed) and a recognition that the blanket downzoning that was adopted in the initial neighborhood plan went too far. A recognition of and support for the historical density and size of properties in the NIA and not the suburban ideas that sometimes are thrust on center-city neighborhoods. A continuation of the historical architectural styles prevalent in the NIA (i.e. bungalows with raised foundations, front porches and alley-accessible garages for single-family housing).
- (2) Development of a new, full-service grocery store at the southeast corner of SW 12th and Washburn Sts. (and the role the Central Topeka Grocery Oasis, founded in March 2018 after the 2017 neighborhood plan update was adopted, has played in making that happen).
- (3) A continued commitment to embracing the NIA’s working class history, including affordable housing and other projects that keep and welcome LMI people to the NIA.
- (4) Acknowledgement of the housing and infrastructure accomplishments of the 2017-2019 SORT grant (in the northeast and west target areas north of and including Munson St.).
- (5) Any further changes to SW 12th St., as well as any future changes/improvements to SW Huntoon, MUST include the NIA from day one.
- (6) The process in which the intermittent city-wide neighborhood health maps are created should be reviewed.

Results of Consults:

Sidewalks:

The City of Topeka says that the sidewalks cited below all have been completed except the one on the north side of SW Munson between Lane and Lincoln, which is a current project where portions of it will be replaced.

- SW 11th, Lane east to Buchanan.
- SW Lincoln, east-west alley between 10th and 11th south to 11th.
- SW Buchanan, 11th south to Munson.
- SW Munson, Buchanan east to Clay.
- SW 12th, all sidewalks.

Alleys:

2023 DREAMS Neighborhood Initiatives Program:

Between SW Clay and Buchanan, Munson south to 12th
\$16 per linear foot for replacement, 500' x 22' x \$16 = \$176,000

Between Lane and Lincoln, 11th south to Munson
City policy is that no gravel alleys are eligible to be paved. Staff will grade the alley and add gravel as needed.

This is the email I sent on July 7, 2022 to Bryson Risley in response:

“I wanted to follow up with you regarding our discussions during the recently completed DREAMS public works consult on the unpaved alley between SW Lane and Lincoln Sts., running from SW 11th south to SW Munson. Specifically, I wanted to address the city policy you articulated regarding not paving unpaved alleys.

“That policy is arbitrary and punitive. It is arbitrary because paved but distressed alleys can be torn up and replaced with new alleys while unpaved alleys cannot be paved. Multiple paved but distressed alleys in Tennessee Town over the past 15+ years have been replaced with new alleys. Why can paved but distressed alleys be replaced while unpaved alleys cannot be replaced with paved alleys? It can't be because of costs because the difference between the two alleys, one torn out and repaved and one unpaved, couldn't be enough to justify that.

“That policy is punitive most notably because of the affects it has on the residents who use the alley to access their homes from it. Inclement weather (rain, melted snow) create drainage problems as water collects in the unpaved alley. That creates challenges for those attempting to navigate the alley to get to their homes or simply to pass through.

“The alley in question has been a source of concern for years, yet nothing changes. I am asking that this policy be reviewed and changed to enable the paving of the alley in question.”

(Note: This alley is the only unpaved alley in the NIA.)

Between Lincoln and Buchanan, Munson south to 12th
\$16 per linear foot for replacement, 515' x 22' x \$16 = \$181,280

Storm Sewer between Lincoln and Buchanan, Munson south to 12th
\$400 per linear foot if replacement is needed, 515' x \$400 = \$206,000

Lane Garden acquisition, amenities:

Shaw. Co. Parks and Rec. Director Tim Laurent said:

Will start work on bringing Lane Garden lawn mowing under the county.
Will follow up with us on ownership issues.

Creation of another pocket park on the eastern edge of the NIA, Community Garden:

Laurent said he will follow up with us.

Pedestrian mid-block lighting:

Risley said he'd look into funding.

2023 Juneteenth Celebration and Brown v. Board of Education Recognitions:

Will follow up with Community Engagement later this year.