

# Indianola Hills Neighbors NEWS

Mark R. White, Editor, mrwhite@q.com or 515 282-5004

Winter 2013

The Next Indianola Hills Neighbors Meeting Will Be Held on Tuesday, April 9, 2013 at the Pioneer Columbus Community Center, 2100 SE 5th Street, at 6:30 pm.

## Crime in Our Neighborhood

The following statistics for the period October 9, 2012 through January 7, 2013 were taken from CrimeMapping. Please remember, these figures are NOT totals for Indianola Hills Neighborhood. The new Crimemapping system doesn't allow me access to those numbers. Instead I use those crimes occurring in a one mile diameter circle from the geographic center of Indianola Hills, which is Indianola Avenue and E. Bell Avenue. Comparisons are to the July to October 2012 report. (More Crime on page 3.)

Assault 11 (Down 10)

Burglary 22 (Down 5)

Theft/Larceny 18 (Down 8)



Motor Vehicle Theft 6 (Up 2)

Robbery 1 (Same)

### Councilman Meyer Attends January Meeting By Mark R. White

Brian Meyer stopped by our January 2013 meeting and updated us on projects in the Ward 4 part of Indianola Hills.

The Townhouse project at SE 8th and Indianola Avenue (Southern Meadows) is on schedule.

The mixed use project at SE 6th and Hartford (1938 SE 6th) is to be completed in the spring.

Des Moines Area Community College is a go at Southridge. Construction for DMACC in the former Penney location at Southridge has started. Marshalls is coming to Southridge. They will be located to the right of Younkers. An indoor soccer facility is still a possibility at the mall. Target is to receive tax increment financing money to renovate the outside of their building to better match the rest of the mall.

At our October meeting Councilman Meyer told us of plans to convert a property at the northeast corner of SW 9th and Army Post Road to green space. This intersection is thought of as a gateway to the city. The owner of the building just north of this property has contacted the City and expressed interest in joining in the redevelopment-

*(Meyer, Continued on page 2)*

### Councilmember Hensley Attends January Meeting By Mark R. White

Ward 3 Councilmember Christine Hensley attended our January 2013 meeting and presented information on several different subjects. The part of Indianola Hills Neighbors from SW 9th to South Union and from Park Avenue north to our north boundary is now in Councilmember Hensley's Ward. (Editor's note: I supplemented my meeting notes with information from the City of Des Moines web site when writing this article.)

#### Complete Streets

Complete streets provide a place for travel by all modes of transportation. These include pedestrians, bicyclists, and people in cars and buses. Complete streets include at least some of the following: Sidewalks, sidewalk bulb-outs, ( an extension of the sidewalk into the street), crosswalks, refuge medians, (a place in the middle of a multi lane road for pedestrians to wait), shared use paths, (a path that bikes, hikers and in-line skaters use), pedestrian signals, and bike lanes. They also might have special bus lanes. Complete streets provide a place for bicyclists and provide them a smooth surface. They slow traffic and reallocate roadway space to all modes of transportation.

*(Hensley, Continued on page 2)*

(Meyer, Continued from page 1)

ment of the area. His building needs work and will not be used as a church as previously planned.

CVS Pharmacy has purchased the former Osco Drug location at SE 14th and Park Avenue. They plan to demolish the building and build a new CVS there.

In response to a question about returning an ambulance to Station Six at SE 6th and Hartford, Brian said that, according to Fire Department

records, response times to calls are the same now as they were before Medic Squads were reassigned. Unless that changes, location of ambulances will remain as they are.

A developer for a property at 4315 SE 14th, a former trailer court, has not yet been found. It's still intended that once this property is sold the money can be used to purchase another trailer court in need. #####

(Hensley, Continued from page 1)

They help make drivers aware of the presence of walkers and bicyclists and make it safer for them.

Complete streets are important to Des Moines because they make it a more livable community by giving better access to the rivers, greenways and recreational trails. They also promote fitness, recreation and alternative transportation. In 2008, the Des Moines City Council voted that Des Moines become a Complete Streets City. This means that any newly built streets or streets being renovated will be built with places for pedestrians and bicyclists where possible.

Existing Complete Streets include E. Walnut from the river to E. 9th, Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway from the freeway to the Des Moines River, the SE Connector, SW 2nd to SE 9th, and SE 6th from Court Avenue to the Des Moines River.

### **Budget**

The City of Des Moines budget is in two parts, the Operating Budget and the Capitol Improvements Program (CIP) Budget.

The Operating Budget is shorter term, Des Moines recently went to a two-year budgeting process. The previous one-year process meant the Council was continuously working on budget. In the last five years the Operating Budget has been reduced by 24 million dollars. A big budget headache is funding pensions. The State dictates what the City has to contribute to pension funds. Because of the poor economy that number has gone up considerably. Millage rate is the only part of property taxes that the Council controls.

The Capitol Improvements Budget is forward looking, five years out, as compared to a more near term Operating Budget. Over five years the Capitol Budget shows \$650 to \$700 million in expenditures. The Council has spread out some capitol projects to lessen the impact on taxpayers.

In 2012 the City held budget forums to obtain public input. These were well attended. There

was also a tool on the web site that could be used for suggestions. However, when time came for the Council to vote on the budget, there were few members of the public in attendance. This is unfortunate, considering the impact that budgets have on citizens.

### **Projects**

Des Moines has received 40 national recognitions in the last four years. Previously it was unusual to receive more than one or two. Many projects have helped win these awards and more are on the way. They include:

**The Dart Center**, 620 Cherry, a \$20 million project on the south edge of downtown with 15 bus platforms,

**Fire Station 1**, at 1330 Mulberry, adjacent to the new **Central Iowa Shelter and Services**,

The Fire Department **Administrative, Maintenance and Training Center** on Dean,

**The Principal River Walk.**

There are housing projects being constructed in the **Fleming Building** 218 6th Avenue, and **Des Moines Building** at 604 Locust.

Five floors of the Liberty Building, 418 6th Avenue, will become a 95 room **Hyatt Place Hotel**.

Down by the Des Moines River, south of Court Avenue, **Waterfront Lodging** will offer both long stay and standard hotel accommodations.

The former **Younkers** building at 713 Walnut will have commercial space on the bottom two floors and apartments in the upper floors. The Tea Room returns!

**The Botanical Center** has just been taken over by a newly formed non profit. They plan to close this summer for two months while renovations take place.

(Hensley, Continued on page 3)

*(Hensley, Continued from page 2)*

**Kemin Industries** at 2100 Maury is planning a 330,000 sf. expansion valued at \$21.85 million for construction and \$7.8 million in furniture and fixtures.

A new **Municipal Services Park** for the City of Des Moines is planned for SE 14th and Maury area.

The **Cityville on 9th** project is planned for River Point. Cityville will be built in the area between 9th and 11th, Murphy to DART Lane. It's a mixed use project with both apartments and commercial space. Phase One is to start construction this spring.

With **Walnut Street** no longer being used as a transit hub, renovations are planned with the aim of returning retail to the area.

The **Blank Park Zoo** is expanding.

### ***Peddler's Ordinance***

As a result of complaints from Citizens, Councilmember Hensley has proposed, and the Council is in the process of passing, an ordinance meant to regulate Peddlers in the City of Des Moines. Purpose of this ordinance change is "...to protect residents of the city against fraud, and to ensure the safety of the residents by protecting them from intrusion into the privacy of their homes by licensing and regulating peddlers".

Any peddlers going door to door will be required to obtain a license and post a cash bond having a minimum value of \$200. The bond will pay the city for cost incurred in enforcement and will also be used to compensate citizens who have been cheated by a peddler. The unused portion of the bond will be returned to the peddler on request.

There is an exception made for "Persons making sales for the purpose of a community improvement or benefit approved by the city council on behalf of nonprofit, tax exempt corporations...."

(Girl Scouts can still sell cookies!)

### ***Legislative Priorities***

Des Moines is partnering with nine other cities in Iowa to coordinate legislative priorities.

These cities are asking the Legislature for help in dealing with fast growing pension costs. They want a State contribution to pension plans. They want the Cities contribution to pension plans capped and they want contribution rates adjusted. (Please see budget topic earlier in this article.)

The Cities also want required notices to be posted online instead of in newspapers to save costs. If property tax income to the Cities is reduced by the Legislature they want the Legislature to also impose a local sales tax on the citizens of the affected Cities.

They are asking help in funding expensive water and waste water construction mandated by the State and Federal governments.

They ask for a gas tax increase to support road and bridge repair.

They ask for funding for the Chicago to Omaha passenger rail.

To create jobs, they ask that corporate and personal income tax be reduced, commercial property tax be reformed, (any revenue lost to the cities must be replaced by the state), the historic tax credit be increased, and that the workforce housing fund within the Iowa Finance Authority be supported with funding.

These Cities would also like adult entertainment zoning enforcement and they don't want automated traffic cameras outlawed. #####

### **Horticultural Entrepreneurs Busted**

By Mark R. White

On the front page of the Metro&Iowa section of the Des Moines Register on Saturday, January 12, 2013, Regina Zilbermints reported a Des Moines Police success. A marijuana grow operation was discovered and shut down. It was on Leland Avenue in the 1000 block.

This was a sophisticated and expensive hydroponic system in which plants are grown in water rather than soil. Apparently this sort of system yields a better drug.

Congratulations to DMPD on shutting down this drug operation! #####

# Indianola Hills Neighbors

## **As a Member of Indianola Hills Neighbors You Will:**

- Receive support of people in your neighborhood to accomplish what you could not accomplish alone.
- Be able to vote on and help decide issues within the organization
- Receive information from the City of Des Moines about issues affecting you.
- Get to know your neighbors.

## **Who Can Be A Member?**

Anyone who agrees with our mission statement and goals and who lives within our boundaries may join.

## **What Are Our Boundaries?**

- North—Hartford, Indianola Ave. and Indianola Rd.
- South—Park Avenue
- East—S.E. 14th Street
- West—S.W. 9th

## **When Do We Meet?**

Indianola Hills Neighbors meets quarterly on the second Tuesday of January, April, July and October at the Pioneer Columbus Community Center, 2100 SE 5th Street. Our meetings begin at 6:30 pm.

*To become a member, all you need to do is fill out the information below, attach a check and mail it to:*

**Mark R. White,**

**Indianola Hills Neighbors**

**2926 SE 5th Street**

**Des Moines, IA 50315-7001**

**Yes! Count me in! Sign me up for a one-year membership to Indianola Hills Neighbors**

**Dues:**

*To encourage maximum participation from our neighbors, annual membership dues have been reduced to \$5.00 per person.*

**Make checks payable to : Indianola Hills Neighbors.**

**Please Print**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**City/State/Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_