

A New Day

Volume 1, Issue 2

Newsletter Date
3/1/2008

Special points of history:

2008 Board Meetings

Renaissance
Downtown Joliet
11:30 AM to 1:00 PM
Monday, March 10
Monday, June 9
Monday, September 8
Monday, December 8

Neighborhood Council

Sacred Heart Church
5:00 PM to 6:15 PM
Monday, April 7

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Unity CDC to Partner with Empress Casino



Frank Quigley
General Manager Empress

The Illinois Gaming Board reversed its 2005 decision ordering Penn National to sell the Empress. That decision has presented Unity CDC with a great opportunity. The gaming board's action will mean a \$50 million investment by the casino owner into the Joliet

Empress property. Penn National officials said they were committed to spend that amount on the Joliet operation if allowed to keep the casino, and gaming board members said they'd be watching. As a part of the order not to sell, the gaming board indicated that the project must provide minority and women a substantial share. In order to make that commitment happen, Penn National is partnering with Unity CDC to consult in developing an equitable diversity plan. Penn National Vice President, Public Affairs &

Government Relations, Eric Schippers said, "We are thrilled with the Board's decision and greatly look forward to mapping out our plans for the \$50 million in new capital improvements. I am eager to come to Joliet to meet with you and discuss next steps in terms of developing an effective diversity plan for this project." President Charles Jones, First Vice President Dave Evans, Empress General Manager, Frank Quigley and Eric Schippers will meet to iron out the details.

January Board Meeting Held



The meeting was convened at 1:00 p.m. on Monday January 14, 2008 by President Charles E. Jones at the Joliet Junior College Renaissance Center in downtown Joliet. Bishop J. E.

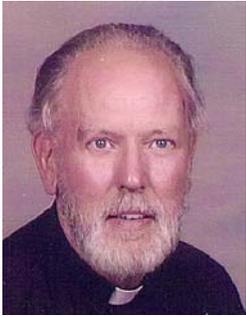
Moore led an opening prayer. There were 20 Board members present as well as City Liaison of Joliet Pete Saunders.

A history of the City of Joliet Quality of Life Task Force and the completion of the Quality of Life Plan was presented. It was explained that the Plan calls for a community development corporation to be created to oversee the implementa-

tion of the Plan's recommendations and that was the reason the Unity Community Development Corporation was formed.

A financial report was presented and Pete Saunders reported that the City of Joliet is very pleased with the Quality of Life Plan. He explained that \$630,000 has been allocated over the (Con't on Page 2)

Spirit of Cooperation



Father Ray Lescher
Board Member

As a result of a suggestion by Unity Board Member Father Ray Lescher, a meeting was held with Joliet Park District Executive Director Dominic Egizio to discuss a way to upgrade Varnardo Park (just south of McDonough Street Bridge). Father Lescher had a dream to put a baseball diamond for young boys and girls including, lights, dugouts and fencing. After several meetings it was determined that

the field was not large enough for a league field, but a softball field could be completed. The initial meeting spurred conversation about Nowell Park and Forest Park. Dominic Egizio indicated that ongoing conversations should continue to upgrade Dist 4 and 5 recreational needs. As usual, adequate funding will always present problems but the possibility of attracting corporate spon-

sors to fund projects is more feasible if the Park District and Unity work together.



Dominic Egizio
Park District

Unity CDC To Hire CEO



Unity Community Development Corporation and a consulting team consisting of the Center for Neighborhood Technology and the Metropolitan Planning Council have entered into a memorandum of understanding to assist it in performing three basic tasks, which are summarized as follows:

1. Hiring a CEO,
2. Fund raising,
3. Creating an Implementation Plan.

Tasks 1 and 2 should proceed immediately. Task 3

should not proceed until a CEO is hired and can participate in creating the implementation plan.



Joanna Trotter & Dave Chandler, Consultants
Charles Jones, President

The initial period of ap-

proximately three months begins in February and ends in April 2008. After the initial period a determination will be made if further consulting will be needed.

President Charles Jones indicated that the consulting team, a part of the initial Quality of life Task Force Team, will help jump start Unity in its initial stages of operation. The team is familiar with the Plan and also familiar with the community development arena.

January Board Meeting Held (Con't from Page 1)



next three years in the city budget to address recommendations of the Quality of Life Plan. He also indicated that the City has agreed to provide up to \$50,000 in direct support to the CDC. Other funding sources are being explored.

Board President Jones in-

troduced the current board officers. President – Charles E. Jones, First vice-president – Dave Evans, Second vice-president Alma Martinez, Secretary – Kathy Kaiser, Treasurer – Tom Sutter. He indicated that the terms of office for these officers are one year.

Larry Crawford, Neighborhood Council representative, gave an overview of the Neighborhood Council meetings that were being held. The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.



CDC What is it?

What the Unity CDC Should Be and Do

A community development corporation (CDC) is a common type of not-for-profit organization that exists to generate commercial business, housing, or job development in a community, in the interests of that community. CDCs commonly play an integrative role – they bring together local government support, funding from a number of public and philanthropic sources, private business investment, and the vision and local knowledge of community residents to make projects happen. The projects might be new businesses, homes, or services (such as job training or transportation) that are needed in the community. What makes a project happen might be the CDC's work in identify-



ing a funding source and writing a successful grant application; or the CDC becoming an equity partner in a development deal; or the CDC becoming a counselor to small businesses or home buyers in a targeted community. As organizations created for the good of the community, CDCs also sometimes

organize or support community initiatives on issues that are generally not viewed as directly related to development such as programs for neighborhood racial integration, the care of the elderly, and the training of youth in practical skills.

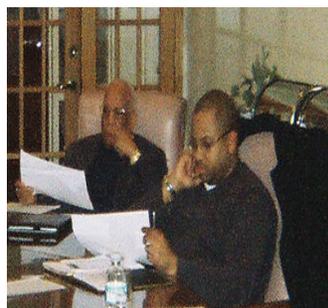
General CDC Support and Funding:

Most CDCs are supported by a combination of contributions from residents and stakeholders in the community, fees for service or other earned income, funding from local or higher levels of government (sometimes in the form of contracts to perform specific services), and philanthropic grants. Younger CDCs tend to be more heavily dependent on philanthropic grants and general support from local government. More mature organizations tend to derive more of their revenue from earned income.

General CDC Mission and Functions:

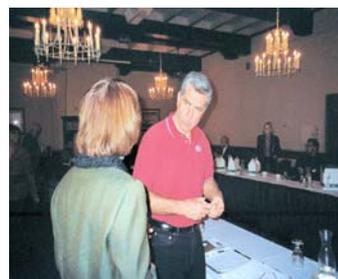
CDCs share a general mission of achieving economic redevelopment for the benefit of their communities, but the specific functions and tasks they take on vary according to local needs and opportunities. In virtually all cases, partnerships and influence are critical, and the value that CDCs bring to their communities lies less in what they do or

spend directly than in what they leverage. CDCs work with their partners in government, business, and civic institutions, and they generally perform the tasks that will enable a partner to invest more in the community, or they fill a gap in what the other partners can do so that the community's development plan is implemented.



Mission of the Unity CDC

The mission of Unity CDC is to achieve implementation of the Quality of Life Plan for Joliet Council Districts 4 and 5. Unity CDC will share direct responsibility for implementing most of the proposals of the Plan, and its members will track progress on those proposals for which the Unity CDC will not have direct implementation responsibility. Unity CDC will have a range of functions and many specific tasks, but its core mission will be to serve as the organization that has the trust of the community and the backing of the City to see that the multifaceted QOL Plan is carried out.



Neighborhood Council Charge



- ⇒ Provide identity signs, public art, banners, landscaping, lighting, and other streetscape improvements to each neighborhood (similar to the streetscape design for the Cathedral, St. Pat's, and St. Mary's Neighborhoods)
- ⇒ Continue to support the various collaborations and consortiums of service providers working in the planning Area of Joliet and encourage new opportunities to connect with residents.
- ⇒ Explore initiatives to engage community residents in providing and supporting locally based recreation programs, including building playgrounds, community gardens and park clean-up days.
- ⇒ Increase capacity building assistance to local nonprofits including community and faith-based organizations
- ⇒ Increase efforts to expand youth leadership programs specifically targeting youth residing in the Planning Area of Joliet
- ⇒ Support local youth serving organizations and collaboratives, including a survey to determine program needs from a youth perspective and capacity level needs.
- ⇒ Explore the feasibility of modifying existing programs or establishing a new program to develop the technical and life skills of out-of-school young adults interested in securing living wage employment



Neighborhood Council Advisors

Carol Gavin-Eastside
 Joyce Holmes East Side
 Eurydice McGaughy East Side
 Lee Carruthers Forest Park
 Vicente Paramo Mt Carmel
 Wayne Horne Near Westside
 Martha Johnson New Lenox Road
 Mattie Hargrow Nowell Park
 Willie Love Nowell
 Larry Crawford Parkwood
 Archie Gavin-Parkwood

Debra McDonald-Parkwood
 Rev. Kenneth Colman-Preston Heights
 Linda Weatherspoon Preston Heights
 Ruby Williams South Side
 Mac Willis South Side
 Teresa Davis St Marys
 Serena Magosky-White St Pats
 Jerry Lakota St Pats
 Todd Gilkerson St Pats
 Dorothy Caldwell Sugar Creek
 Board Liaison Bettye Gavin Parkwood



Unity Board meets with Obama Staff

A meeting initiated by State Senator AJ Wilhelmi was held at the Will County Building with Senator Barack Obama Illinois State Director Ken Bennett and his staff. Included in the meeting were Will County Executive Larry Walsh, City of Joliet Jim Shapard, Councilwoman Susie Barber, State Rep Jack McGuire, County Board Primary winner Rev Herbert Brooks, Unity CDC Chair Charles Jones, Unity CDC Board members Kathy Kaiser and Dave Evans, and JACOB Board member Jan Gehrig. One of the major topics of discussions was how Senator Obama could help Unity CDC to find resources to fund the implementation of the recom-

mendations specified in the Quality of Life Plan. Obama staff members were assigned to follow-up with Unity board members. Ridgewood problems, Interstate 55 & 80 interchange, funds for public education, funds for a sexual assault transitional house and voter registration were also discussed. Ken Bennett indicated that this was the first of many meetings that will be held.



A J Wilhelmi
 State Senator



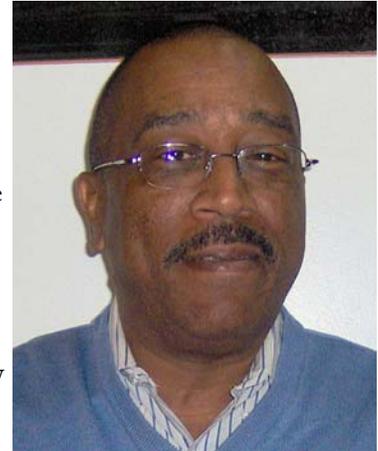
Mac Willis Jr. New Board Member

Mac Willis Jr. has been selected to replace Teresa Davis on the Unity CDC Board of Directors. Willis will complete the one year term held by Ms. Davis. She is resigning because of a job related requirement. Davis will remain as a member of the Neighborhood Council representing the St. Mary Area.

Mac Willis Jr. is a native of Joliet. Willis retired from Commonwealth Edison Company after 35 years, his last position a Customer Service Manager. Willis attended Joliet West High School and earned a Bachelors Degree

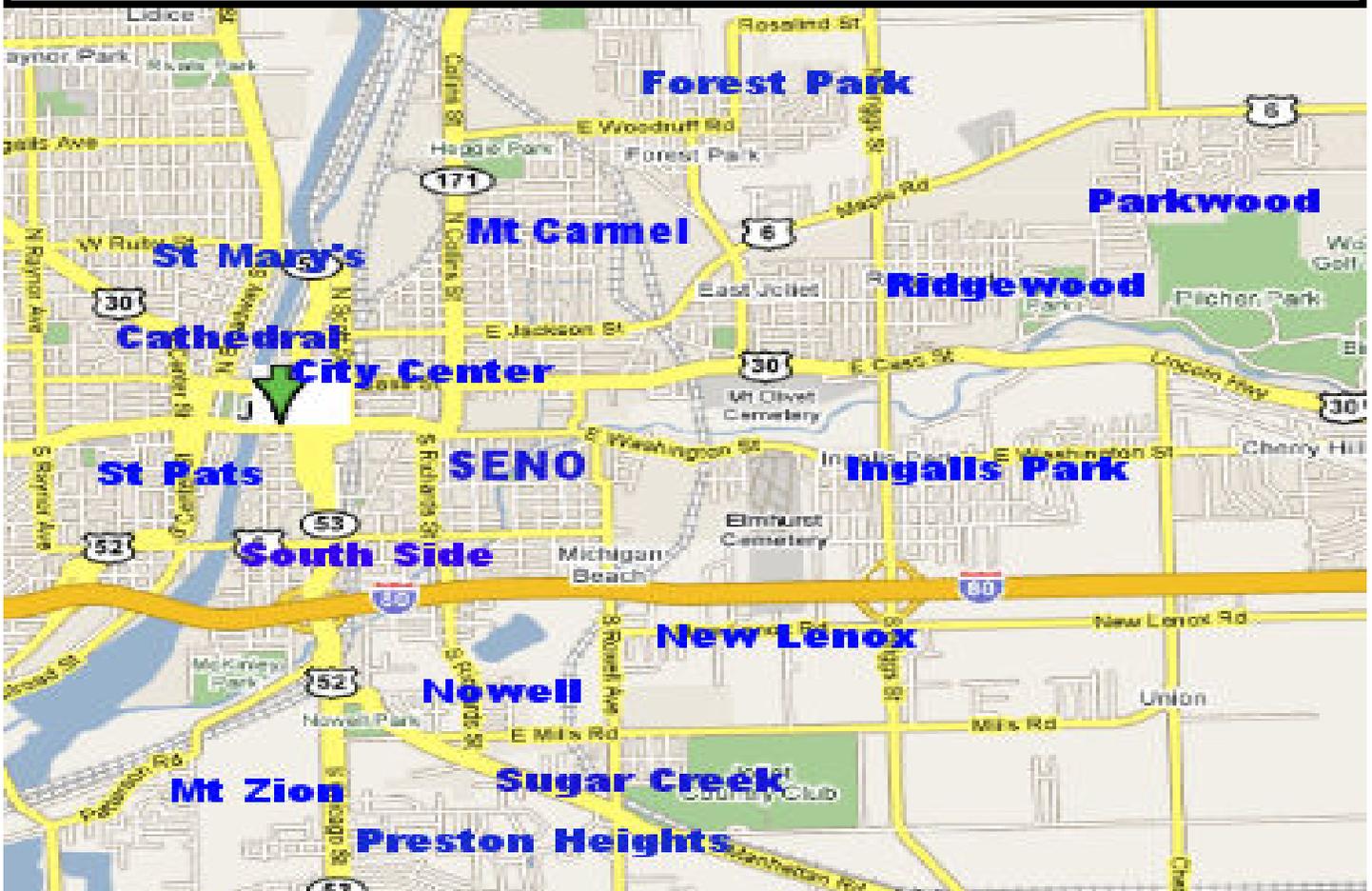
in Business at Roosevelt University. He is a member of Second Baptist Church in Joliet.

Willis is an active Youth Coach and Website Administrator for The First Tee of Joliet, a junior golf program designed to teach life skills through the game of golf. Currently, Willis is the Southside Advisor and the Chairman of Unity CDC Neighborhood Council.



Neighborhood Council Map

What is the name of your Neighborhood?
Let's accentuate our Neighborhoods Pride!
"Yes We Can"



Unity CDC Board of Directors



Charles Jones
President
Lewis University



Dave Evans
1st Vice President
PUSH



Alma Martinez
2nd Vice President
Latino Business
Association



Tom Sutter
Treasurer
YMCA



Kathy Kaiser
Secretary
JACOB



Pete Saunders
Ex-Officio
City of Joliet



Bettye Gavin
Neighborhood
Council Advisor
National Hookup
of Black Women



**Councilwoman
Susie Barber**
District 4



Raymond Bolden
Retired Judge



**Councilman
Warren Dorris**
District 5



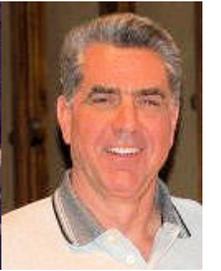
Rev Hector Edwards
Mt Olive Church



**Brother James
Gaffney**
Lewis University



Charles Hanus
Will & Grundy Cen-
tral Trade AFL-CIO



Greg Hill
Indicom Electric
Company



Barbara Ladner
Pace



Father Ray Lescher
Sacred Heart
Church



Bishop JE Moore
Christ Temple
Church



Henry Morris
Housing Authority
of Joliet



Paul Pawlak
Silver Cross
Hospital



Maria Pedraza
Mt Carmel Church



Eugenia Proulx
Joliet Junior College



Steve Randich
Harris Bank



Nate Romeo
NAACP



JD Ross
Will - Grundy
Medical Clinic



Matt Ryan
Will County
Executive Office



Russ Slinkard
Joliet Chamber of
Commerce &
Industry



Michael Vinciguerra
University of
St Francis



Mac Willis
Neighborhood
Council

Message From Board Member Raymond Bolden



THE UNITY CORPORATION

Unity Corporation is a community development corporation which came into being as a result of the Quality of Life Taskforce funded by the City of Joliet.

Specifically, the two council persons from the east side of Joliet, Warren Dorris of the Fifth District and Susie Barber of the Forth District, put together the idea along with others in an effort to uplift, upgrade, and redevelop Joliet's Eastside. It presents an opportunity and a challenge for people on the Eastside of Joliet to redo and recreate their community, if they choose to. It is an opportunity for people who are interested and care to shape their own destiny in education, employment, training, recreation, and housing---whatever touches you in your life.

C.D.C. gives us a voice that we never had before.

No longer will we need to breakdown the walls of political indifference, or struggle with the power structure to bring change to the community.

With the C.D.C. the door has been opened and public participation and activity is invited.

Through the neighborhood councils, people who are interested and care are encouraged to come and be heard and their ideas can be transformed into reality, if they work for it.

This is a challenge for people who care. They can no longer sit around and blame somebody else for what is wrong with their community.

Now if you see, and know, and want something for your community, you have the means to do something about it.

The C.D.C. belongs to the community. It is their voice, if they want it to be. But there are skeptics.

There are those who look back in anger and know how it used to be, and believe they will be disappointed yet again.

To those I say only we can assure that it does not happen. Yes I am filled with the audacity of hope. The Eastside of Joliet can be transformed into a model city, if we want it to be and are willing to put in the time and energy to get the job done.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Raymond A. Bolden".

Raymond A. Bolden
Board Member
Program Chairman

**Unity Community
Development Council, NFP**

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Fax: 815-836-5931
E-mail: unitycdc@acninc.net

Place Label here

We're on the Web!
www.unitycdc.org

Energy comes from Unity

Tear off and send back to UNITY, PO Box 1213, Joliet IL 60434

*Join us to help
shape a New Day!!!*



UNITY
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION

- If you live in Joliet District 4 or 5, you can become a voting member.

MEMBERSHIP CARD

PLEASE PRINT

- If you live outside Joliet District 4 or 5, you can become an associate member.

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Hm Ph _____

Work Ph _____