

A New Day

Volume 1, Issue 4

Newsletter Date
9/1/2008

Special points of history:

2008 Board Meetings

2008 E Clinton Suite 3
Joliet IL
11:30 AM to 1:00 PM
Monday, September 8
Monday, December 8

Neighborhood Council

2008 E Clinton Suite 3
5:30 PM to 6:30 PM
Monday, September 8

Grand Opening

2008 E Clinton Suite 3
4 PM to 7 PM
Thursday, October 9

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It's time to Take off!!!!

New New New
Executive *Unity* *Day*
Director *Office*



Stan Smith



205 E
Clinton
Suite 3



Spirit of Cooperation



John Hooker

ComEd helped to turn the lights on at the new Unity CDC headquarters. A request was sent to John Hooker, ComEd Senior Vice President, to request help in outfitting the new Unity CDC office. The ComEd Joliet Headquarter is located in District 5, one of Unity's target districts, so there is a direct relationship between Unity CDC and ComEd. Also many ComEd employees and retired employees live in the target area. John Hooker and Jim Sykora deserve special thanks from Unity CDC. John Hooker recognized the need to help Unity CDC and Jim Sykora made the exchange possible. Ron Pullman, Community Development Director, Will County Land Department, Jim Roof, President First Midwest Bank, and Henry Morris, Executive Director Joliet Housing Authority, also deserve special thanks for being great corporate neighbors. Westmoreland Construction Company, Meade Accounting & Wealth Management and Digital Dynamics Corporation deserve thanks for their efforts to make the new office a reality. The combined effort of everyone has made it possible for the **Grand Opening of Unity CDC to happen Thursday, October 9, 2008 4PM to**

A New Community Development Process is Unfurling

- ⇒ **In 2006:** At the request of community leaders, led by the City Council representatives of Districts 4 and 5, the City of Joliet funded a comprehensive study of ways to improve residents' quality of life in the older parts of the city.
- ⇒ **In 2007:** With inputs from City and County government; educational, business and social service institutions; and more than 600 residents the consulting team framed Joliet's Quality of Life (QOL) Action Plan http://www.unitycdc.org/resources/full_text.pdf. The Joliet Plan presents 75 inter-related proposals to:
 - ⇒ Build new housing and retail corridors in under-developed parts of the city,
 - ⇒ Make jobs, training, and recreation more accessible to all Joliet residents,
 - ⇒ Raise awareness of successful programs in education and human services.The Joliet QOL Plan also recommended the creation of a new community development corporation, a 501c3 organization through which residents could work directly with local government to achieve the planned objectives. Joliet's City Council adopted the QOL Plan unanimously.
- ⇒ **In 2008:** City government and community leadership are taking strong steps to implement the Joliet QOL Plan:
 - ⇒ Community leaders have formed the Unity Community Development Corporation (CDC), the 501c3 organization that will work as the City's partner in implementing the QOL Plan. The Unity CDC's Board of Directors represents the major civic, business, and educational institutions of the Joliet area, as well as the neighborhoods of City Council Districts 4 & 5
<http://www.unitycdc.org/board.html>
 - ⇒ The City Council has authorized an aggressive QOL Plan implementation program to be carried out by City departments as well as a \$150,000 first year contribution to the programs of the Unity CDC.
 - ⇒ Unity CDC has launched initial recreation and civic pride projects in District 4 and 5 neighborhoods, conducted a regional search for an Executive Director who will lead Unity's development programs, and initiated meetings with regional foundations and public agencies that are potential supporters of Unity's work.
 - ⇒ An Executive Director is hired

Who is Stan Smith?

Stan Smith comes to Unity CDC with extensive Community Development Corporation and corporate management expertise. Stan was a Vice President of a \$1.6 billion dollar corporation with teams all over the United States. Stan's church has had its own CDC program since 1995 and he has been the Board Chairman. In that time the CDC had many major accomplishments. The CDC funded (\$4.5 Million) and built a 60 unit Senior Home at 8005 S. Racine. This unit is operational and has a rating of 98% from HUD. Secondly, the CDC has a contract for funding through New Homes for Chicago, where HUD and the city has given the CDC land to built 14 two story homes on scattered lots throughout the city. This project is supported by \$3.5 million dollars from HUD and the City of Chicago. The CDC is in the final stages of securing \$13 million form HUD for additional senior housing at 80th and Halsted, Chicago. Stan is very familiar with the processes of obtaining funds from government, political sources, and private funding. Stan has extensive experience working through the bureaucracy of these programs.



Stan is a self starter, committed, and brings a wide range of experience. He is an experienced manager and has been able to jump into new fields using his research and management experience to build needed partnerships. Stan was asked why he was interested in the Unity Executive Director position and he said "I am currently working on improving the lives of my community by offering decent affordable housing options. I understand the challenges on Joliet's East side. I've done well for myself and retired early and this is another way to give back.

When asked about his management style Stan related, "You have to manage people very differently. My management style is flexible. I train and give employees opportunity to get good at things and I work to bring their skill sets to where they need to be before I evaluate them. I've had a lot of management training and know the four management personality and management styles. You have to be able to adapt to those personalities." Even though Stan will have a small staff, his management experience will bode him well with working with those who will be working with Unity CDC.

When asked how he would go about building relationships in Joliet he said' "I would get a good handle on the CDC's objectives. I would do research on who could help. I would then research their goals and approach them from that standpoint. I would speak their language and see how I can help them meet their goals".

Stan comes to Unity CDC from LaBryan Realty LLC where he was President since October 2000. LaBryan Realty LLC is a startup real estate investment company. LaBryan Realty LLC progressed to a level that comprised 20 rental properties and had revenue that exceeds \$500,000 annually by buying and selling single family homes. LaBryan Realty LLC has over 2 million in assets. Prior to 2000 Stan held several positions; Midwest Director of Business Development at Staffmark,, Services Regional Vice-President, Kelly Services, and Divisional Vice President for Norrell Services,

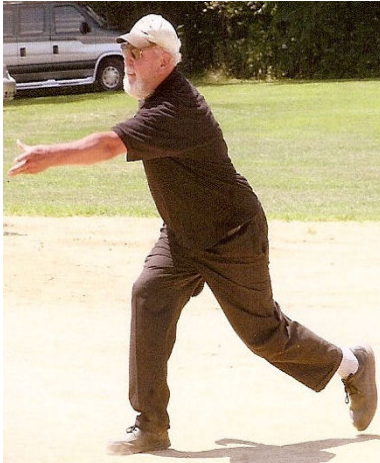


Stan and his wife Rutherine reside in Tinley Park. Stan has 2 children, one daughter Latrese, one son Bryan and 1 grand child. Stan is the son of the pastor of New Pisgah Church at 81st and Racine on Chicago's South Side.

Stan has a B.A .in English/Education from Chicago State University and attended Darden Graduate School at University of Virginia

Stan started has started out running, not walking, by tackling a short list of people to meet and get their vision for the east side of Joliet. Stan and Unity CDC are off to a great start

Varnado "Field of Dreams" Comes to Life



Unity Board Member and Recreation Chair Father Ray Lescher, Pastor Sacred Heart Church had a vision one cold winter night. The next spring after many meetings, cooperation and funding from the Joliet Park District, Housing Authority of Joliet, First Community Bank of Joliet, First Midwest Bank, Founders Bank, Harris Bank, and People First Bank, Varnado Park (just south of McDonough Street Bridge) "Field of Dreams" became a reality. On a very hot Saturday, July 26, 2008, a ribbon cutting ceremony for a softball diamond for young boys and girls including dugouts and fencing was held. Representing Joliet Park District Dominic Egizio and Bill Tatro; City of Joliet and Housing Authority of Joliet Susie Barber; Unity CDC Father Ray Lescher, Charles Jones, Dave Evans, Bettye Gavin, and Serena Magosky-White. Teams from Warren Sharp Community and Sacred Heart played the first game. The first hit was a home run. Other Notables present were Frank Stewart, Will County Board, Jim Roof, First Midwest Bank, Frank Quigley, Empress Casino Joliet, Will County Judge Jeff Allen and Unity Neighborhood Council Member Wayne Horne. Hot-dogs and water were provided and everyone had a great time. Bill Williams volunteered to umpire the game. On to Forest Park in 2009.



Empress Casino Joliet hits Jackpot Again



Some said Unity CDC couldn't do it. Some said Unity CDC shouldn't do it but it was done and done successfully. Frank Quigley, General Manager, Empress Casino Joliet, a committed supporter, provided the use of the Empress Suite at the Jackhammer Friday, August 29, 2008 game at Silver Cross Field and Jim Roof, President First Midwest Bank, another committed supporter provided the idea to have a mini fund raiser to generate operating revenue. Through the hard work of Board members Kathy Kaiser, Bettye Gavin and Dave Evans the mini fund raiser was a rousing success. The event would not have been successful if Unity CDC did not have some ardent supporters in the community. Charles and Lorraine Drew deserve special thanks for their generous support. Those in attendance had a great time. The Jackhammers lost the game but Unity CDC was a big winner.

Unity CDC Neighborhood Council Co-Sponsors Picnic

Unity CDC Neighborhood Council initially planned to have a picnic where all Neighborhood councils would come together in September to review the progress made during the year. Mac Willis, Neighborhood Council Coordinator and Unity Board Member Bettye Gavin along with other council members decided that to put on a Picnic in September of this magnitude would be a risky task based upon the time and support needed. A timely request came from a group of organizations, National Hookup of Black Women, Brothers of Soul, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Joliet Titans, Sweet Swingers and Black Pride Inc. to Co Sponsor a Family Picnic as a part of Black Pride Activities September 20th and 21st. The things the Neighborhood Council wanted to achieve could be done at the Black Pride Family Picnic. This is an example of partnering with an existing function and still be able to fulfill the mission without reinventing the wheel. Unity CDC will be doing this type of partnering to get things accomplished whenever possible.

Unity CDC Housing Subcommittee Report

Henry Morris, Chair of the Housing subcommittee reports that the City of Joliet and Unity CDC have agreed that a Master (Housing Action) Plan targeted to Districts 4 and 5 be developed by City of Joliet Planners. A Master (Housing Action) Plan is necessary to coordinate activities and comprehensively initiate development and redevelopment initiatives within both Districts.

The Master (Housing Action) Plan will be inclusive of, but not limited to, the following:

1. Identification of land parcels and/or lots which may be available for the development of newly constructed homes, townhouses, et al targeted to Homeownership and Rental.
2. Identification of substandard housing which may be targeted for substantial/ moderate rehabilitation and/or demolition, then redevelopment.
3. Identification of housing organizations and their goals/objectives within Districts 4 and 5. Organizations such as Will County Habitat for Humanity, City of Joliet, Housing Authority of Joliet, Forest Park Community Center and Community Housing and Development Organizations (CHDOS) will have their goals included in the Master (Housing Action) Plan. Private developers will also be encouraged to have input.



Henry Morris

The goal is to develop a Master (Housing Action) Plan that would have a maximum revitalization impact for neighborhoods in Districts 4 and 5. Consistent with the Quality of Life Plan this strategy includes improving conditions of existing properties, attracting new development and increasing access to homeownership.

The Master (Housing Action) Plan will assist the Housing Subcommittee to more efficiently and effectively implement and accomplish many of the short range (0 – 3 years) and long range (3 + years) housing goals outlined in the Quality of Life Plan..

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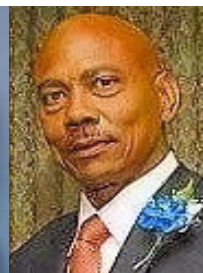
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**Unity Community Development
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*Join us to help
shape a New Day!!!*



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

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