ORDINANCE 11-68  Passed December 12, 2011

AMENDING THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF
THE CITY OF DEKALB, ILLINOIS,
CHAPTER 30,
"OFFICIAL
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN," SECTION 30.01,
"ADOPTION," BY ADOPTING THE
ELLWOOD HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES PLAN.

WHEREAS, Ordinance 05-12 authorized a 2005 Update to the elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of DeKalb; and,

WHEREAS, the City, in cooperation with the residents and property owners of the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood have developed the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood Implementation Strategies Plan; and,

WHEREAS, the DeKalb Plan Commission held a public hearing for the purpose of receiving input on the proposed Ellwood Historic Neighborhood Implementation Strategies Plan on November 16, 2011; and,

WHEREAS, the DeKalb Plan Commission recommended approval of the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood Implementation Strategies Plan Element by a unanimous vote of 5 aye (2 absent); and,

WHEREAS, the City Council has chosen to amend the DeKalb Comprehensive Plan by including the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood Plan Element; and,

WHEREAS, that Ellwood Historic Neighborhood Implementation Strategies Plan Element shall provide direction for the implementation of strategies to improve the appearance, livability and sustainability of the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood; now,

THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL of the City of DeKalb, Illinois, as follows:

Section One. That the Municipal Code of the City of DeKalb, Chapter 30, "Official Comprehensive Plan", Section 30.01 "Adoption", be amended by inserting a new subsection q), as shown following:

q) Ellwood Historic Neighborhood Implementation Strategies Plan Element of the Comprehensive Plan as adopted by City Council on the 12th day of December, 2011; a copy of the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood Implementation Strategies Plan Element shall be kept and made available to the public in the City Clerk’s office.
Section Two. General Provisions

REPEALER: All ordinances or portions thereof in conflict with this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

SEVERABILITY: Should any provision of this Ordinance be declared invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions will remain in full force and effect the same as if the invalid provision had not been a part of this Ordinance.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect on and after its passage, as provided by law.


ATTEST:

STEVE KAPITAN, City Clerk

KIRS POVLSEN, Mayor
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Report prepared by the Center for Governmental Studies at the request of the City of DeKalb.
Background and Accomplishments

On December 22, 1986 the DeKalb City Council adopted ordinances approving a Redevelopment Plan and Project for a location designated as the Central Redevelopment Project Area and included tax increment financing for this area. From time to time area boundaries have been amended, including adding and removing certain properties from the project area (see Appendix A for an Overlay Map of the Ellwood Historic Planning Area).

In January 2008, the City extended the term of the plan by up to 12 years. Along with the extension was the proposed 2008 Amendment to the TIF Redevelopment Plan and Project for the Central Area Redevelopment Project Area which expanded the boundaries of the project area to include portions of the North 5th Ward Neighborhood, some of which were already included in the project area.

In 1997, the City of DeKalb designated the North Fifth Ward as one of the City’s two historic neighborhoods. This designation recognized the unique historic and architectural character of the neighborhood’s structures, and was included in a publication for the City’s Historic Walking Tours.

In November 2003, the original North 5th Ward Neighborhood Plan was led by the residents and property owners of the North 5th Ward with the intent to call attention to needed neighborhood improvements and to reaffirm commitment to the neighborhood by residents, landowners, the City of DeKalb and other interested parties. Five facilitated meetings took place beginning on December 19, 2001 and generated a list of “likes” and “dislikes” raised by more than 30 residents and property owners. This list had three areas of main concern: 1) Traffic and Parking; 2) Property Appearance and Maintenance; and 3) Land Use, Zoning and Historic Character. Eventually the group generated a list of recommended strategies to address the issues raised.

On May 25, 2010, 17 community members, including 2 Alderman, 2 DeKalb financial institution representatives and 2 city officials participated in an informational meeting to discuss the progress of the 2003 North 5th Ward Neighborhood Plan. The meeting was facilitated by the Center for Governmental Studies (CGS) at Northern Illinois University (NIU) on behalf of the City.

The meeting had four main purposes:

1. Update the community on the progress of the original North 5th Ward Revitalization Plan adopted in 2003;
2. Determine if uncompleted tasks are still relevant and important;
3. Identify boundaries of the 5th Ward North, the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood, and the Ellwood TIF District; and
4. Identify current issues facing the neighborhood and actions to address them. A report on the meeting results was distributed to residents and posted on the City’s web site (www.cityofdekalb.com).

After the meeting on May 25, 2010, residents and the City prepared a list of recommended next steps. The following table contains the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended Tasks from Meeting</th>
<th>Completion level as of October 1, 2010</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Prepare and distribute a draft report summarizing the informational meeting</td>
<td>✓ May 25, 2010 draft report of informational meeting completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encourage the formation of a neighborhood association if the group decides</td>
<td>✓ Association/Task Force Meetings were held on May 26, June 16, 30, and August 11, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Place signage at entrances to Ellwood Historic Neighborhood</td>
<td>✓ Companies and costs were researched by the City, and discussions on the look of the signage took place at the meeting on September 28, 2010</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Provide a Painting Assistance Program</td>
<td>✓ On-going as funding is available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide community service volunteers coordinated by the City to help with improvements</td>
<td>✓ Volunteers were used in June, July, and August 2010 and will continue as needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Research and create a financial incentive tool box for homeowners</td>
<td>✓ Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Work with residents to create a finance program to help support neighborhood improvements</td>
<td>✓ Financial community met on June 17 and again on August 31, 2010 to accomplish this task. An incentive package is under discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Pursue grant opportunities to stimulate revitalization</td>
<td>✓ Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Research and apply successes from other Neighborhood Revitalization Programs</td>
<td>✓ Ongoing, the City is committed to learning from the successes and failures of other communities who have worked with conversion/revitalization programs</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Much has happened in the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood (EHN) since the meeting on May 25, 2010 and the initial set of recommendations were made (Appendix B for Ellwood Historic Neighborhood Update Newsletter). The City, and most importantly the residents, have worked together for positive changes. Throughout the process the City and residents have used multiple contact methods to ensure that residents, neighbors, and community members had an opportunity for input including mail, email, phone calls, door-to-door, Facebook, City of DeKalb web site,
press releases, newsletter, etc. To continue the momentum of the May meeting, a Neighborhood Task Force met on June 16, 2010, and again on June 30th, where residents discussed concerns with finances, zoning, safety, noise ordinances and other issues.

The financial community was also active. On June 17th 2010, local bankers, Re:New DeKalb, and the City discussed how private capital and TIF money might be used to redevelop houses when they were for sale in the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood. They met again on August 31, 2010 to discuss additional ideas and how best to develop them.

Forming a neighborhood association/watch was important to residents and on July 5, 2010, a representative from DeKalb Police Department, Angel Reyes, discussed the components of an effective Neighborhood Watch. He stressed the need to clearly understand boundaries in establishing an effective and cohesive Neighborhood Watch. Participants decided that the boundaries for the Neighborhood Watch would be the Fifth Ward north of Lincoln Highway to the Kishwaukee River, including Rolfe Rd., Miller, Miller Ct., Thornbrook, Woodley, etc. as well as what is called the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood. The eastern boundary will be First Street and the western boundary is the University.

On August 11th and 30th, second and third Neighborhood Watch/Task Force meetings occurred. Significant concerns included the decrease in the number of owner-occupied homes, increasing crime, and safety of children due to speeding. The list of property owners was expanded to add all property in the northern most part of the Fifth Ward and it identified home owner-occupied properties and landlord-owned properties. Renters and landlords were included in the Neighborhood Task Force. These meetings helped shape a draft of implementation strategies and CGS completed the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood Implementation Strategies Draft at the end of September.

On Sept. 28, 2010, a public meeting was held at First Methodist Church and was facilitated by the CGS in coordination with the City of DeKalb and the EHN residents. The main purposes of meeting were to distribute the Implementation Strategies Draft that had been created based entirely on input obtained at the meetings held up until that point and to discuss how to finalize, and implement, the strategies. The consensus was that another meeting was necessary in order to give residents time to consider options. On October 12, 2010 another public meeting was held in City Council Chambers to discuss the implementation draft. There were 23 people in attendance, and the residents again decided they needed more discussion about issues in the draft.

The neighbors met on Oct. 19 and December 6, with Jamie Smirz and Chief of Police Feithen, to discuss the TIF Neighborhood, TIF boundaries, safety issues, and the implementation draft. At this meeting the discussions included boundary maps (see Appendix A for an Overlay Map of the Ellwood Historic Planning Area) and the exact location and improvements for which TIF monies can be spent. This is discussed in more detail in the next section, Scope and Objectives. On April 19, 2011, a public meeting of the EHN was held at the Ellwood House Visitor’s Center, with panelists Myron Myers, Norman Walzer, Mark Biernacki, Jamie Smirz and Steve Kapitan,
to review the process and rationale that went into creating four documents that have been, or are currently, focusing on the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood:

1. Historic Status granted in 1997;
2. The 2003 Neighborhood Plan unanimously passed by City Council;
3. The 2008 TIF Plan—status granted; and

After much discussion, on May 4, 2011 the final public meeting to decide on the Implementation Strategies Draft took place at First Congregational United Church of Christ. The purpose of the meeting was to vote on initiatives about which there was a consensus. With 38 people in attendance, the meeting had a majority rule voting system. From this meeting a list of physical and policy improvements for FY 2011 and FY 2012 were decided upon and are discussed later in this report. The CGS was asked to make the revisions suggested by the EHN residents and create a final draft in July 2011.

Scope and Objectives

The Ellwood Historic Neighborhood’s future prosperity and identity are intertwined with the values that define the community. Through several informational meetings, City planning efforts, and university collaborations, the EHN took the initiative to make the neighborhood, and the City of DeKalb, a better place to live, work and play.

The Ellwood Historic Neighborhood Implementation Strategies represent the collective efforts and insights of stakeholders from across the community who generously dedicated their time and expertise to create the framework upon which this action plan has been created. The strategies recognize that a strong sense of community, in conjunction with a motivated private sector, will generate the resources needed to bring them to fruition.

The Ellwood Historic Neighborhood residents have defined their values, goals, priorities, and subsequent strategies for this action plan since 2003. They have also defined the boundaries of the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood and where the different types of implementation strategies, physical or policy, can be used. As the diagram shows, the largest boundary is the entire North 5th Ward; within this boundary is the entire Ellwood Historic Neighborhood, and within the EHN is the Ellwood TIF District (See Appendix A for Overlay Map of Ellwood Historic Neighborhood Planning Area). As mentioned, the
implementation strategies address both suggested policy and physical improvements. Important to note is that the policy improvements apply to the entire Ellwood Historic Neighborhood as they can be put into action without financial assistance (i.e., Neighborhood Watch formation, enforcement of parking violations, etc.). However, the physical improvements suggested will use TIF funds generated by the Ellwood TIF District; therefore, physical improvements involving financial assistance from TIF funding can occur only in the Ellwood Historic District. Any and all improvements will benefit to the entire neighborhood; however the distinction between non-funded and funded implementation strategies is important to make.

The implementation strategies are not intended to be a comprehensive plan; the actions needed may change from year to year as the neighborhood and economic circumstances change. The strategies will be re-evaluated annually to identify tasks that have been completed, tasks not yet completed and why, as well as looking towards the next years’ strategic actions and whether they are still feasible or necessary. While these strategies establish a prioritized order of actions requiring immediate and future attention, specific action items will be developed, refined and executed as needed.

**Purpose of Implementation Strategies and Desired Outcomes**

The aim of the implementation strategies is to present a viable list of actions needed to restore and preserve the integrity and historic nature of the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood, while also positioning this area for future growth, development and economic connectedness. The strategies recognize the neighborhood’s character and livability, while acknowledging its unique challenges, diversity, and needs for improvement as part of the university community. The recommendations include residential quality of life, safety, economic vitality and connectedness, and attractiveness as a place to live and possibly work.

**Issues and Actions Identified**

The strategies are based on five overarching issue areas identified by residents during informational and action planning meetings, as well as follow-up neighborhood meetings held from May 2010 to October 2010. These meetings stemmed from the original “North 5th Ward Neighborhood Plan” adopted in 2003. The outcomes of the initial informational, action plan and neighborhood meetings were a comprehensive list of issues and action items identified by participants. This list became the first draft of implementation strategies based on a four-year action plan presented to the EHN in the Implementation Strategies draft in September 2010.

_The issues, and the subsequent actions, from the initial meetings are shown in the following categories:_
1. **Sense of Community and Safety**
   When participants described their “best neighborhood”, a majority described a place with a sense of community and an underlying need for safety and respect. This theme was emphasized again when the group looked to what the neighborhood could be in 2015. A main priority was bringing the neighborhood together for events such as picnics, clean-up days, block parties, etc. Participants felt this would increase feelings of safety, unity and community pride. Accepting a diverse community and embracing cultural and economic opportunities including creating an “art-friendly” community were also discussed. These topics are important to the group because they relate back directly to their established “vision” and can be completed by neighborhood residents. This ownership in neighborhood improvement supports the actions that can be undertaken by the City.

✓ **Participant Examples of Sense of Community and Safety**
   - Have police officers on bike patrols so they know students, neighbors and landlords
   - Hold monthly community activities (block party, dinners, etc.) hosted by neighbors
   - Create an arts/artist friendly neighborhood to attract residents

2. **Beautification and Greenspace Initiatives**
   Great neighborhoods not only must be livable, they must also “look” the part. Beautification, whether property maintenance or green “communal” space, was identified as an important neighborhood objective. Creation of park space or community gardens was mentioned. While properties along the river are obvious candidates for open space depending on flooding considerations, properties internal to the neighborhood could also be used as a shared garden.

✓ **Participant Examples of Beautification and Greenspace**
   - Clean and paint your properties and neighbors will be more likely to do the same
   - Improve public physical amenities, i.e., sidewalks, lighting, drainage, streets, etc.
   - Create a landscaping program
   - Position dumpsters behind houses with lids closed

3. **Maintain Housing Characteristics**
   The historic character of the neighborhood is unique and appreciated by participants. Although that character still exists, the changing landscape of the neighborhood has disguised or removed some of the charm. The deconversion of rooming houses and multi-family dwelling units to single family units is clearly important to residents and would be considered a positive use of TIF funds by local officials.

✓ **Participant Examples of Housing Characteristics**
• Adequately maintain boarding houses with inhabitants respectful of neighbors (e.g., loud parties)
• Have a vast majority of owner-occupied houses (80%, as mandated by the original 2003 North Fifth Ward Plan)
• Designate homes as historic landmarks
• Create tool lending facilities for people making home repairs
• Provide volunteers to assist landowners to upgrade housing and structures
• Offer training to residents in maintaining and upgrading neighborhood structures

4. Property Maintenance Code Enforcement and City Initiatives (including deconversion and/or acquisition of “problem properties”)

It was important to residents that building inspections and other regulatory actions are used to effectively maintain the neighborhood properties. Also, substantial interest was expressed in working with the City to design incentives for property owners to rehabilitate or remodel their properties, especially when these actions reduce the density of the neighborhood while retaining the historic character of the structures. This discussion also involved actions that the City administration has underway including a subsidized paint program and volunteers who will be in the neighborhood during the summer to help with improvements. Neighborhood residents want to interact with this group and assist in the revitalization efforts.

Discussions focused on the City’s ability to license multi-family dwelling units in a manner similar to rooming houses. The community must show grassroots support for such a measure. The concept of a pilot program in the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood to address local licensing issues is one option.

✓ Participant Examples of Property Maintenance Code Enforcement and City Initiatives

• Study and analyze strategies that have worked in similar areas
• Enforce building and fire codes strictly with fines for absentee owners
• Prohibit vehicles on front lawns
• Enforce appearance code requirements
• Provide regular updates to the EHN on progress made and planned actions

5. Reinforce Connection to Downtown and NIU

The EHN is strategically located between the NIU campus and the downtown. Better linkages among the three entities would be beneficial and the proximity to the downtown could encourage residents to invest in downtown stores and otherwise be part of Re:New DeKalb.

✓ Participant Examples of Reinforcing the Connection to Downtown and NIU
• Encourage the return of NIU faculty into the neighborhood
• Continue to revitalize downtown, which makes proximity an attractive quality of the neighborhood
• Provide financing arrangements to encourage various groups to buy in the neighborhood

Beautification and Greenspace Initiatives

Property Maintenance Code Enforcement and City Initiatives

Reinforce Connection to Downtown and NIU

Sense of Community and Safety

Maintain Housing Characteristics
Residents discussed the suggested strategies and initial 4-year action plan in a series of meetings held after the September 2010 draft was distributed as described above. On May 4, 2011 the neighbors voted on by consensus the new implementation strategies for current and future TIF spending and overall EHN improvements for FY 2011 and 2012, with the option to review each year as needed. The categories of Policy Improvements for FY 2012, as well as Collaboration with Financial Institutions, were not voted on by the neighborhood but were consolidated from the September 2010 draft.

The strategies are broken into three categories: Physical Improvements, Policy Improvements and Collaboration with Financial Institutions. Again, physical improvements involving TIF financing can only be undertaken in the Ellwood TIF District, while policy improvements and other non-TIF funded projects can take place throughout the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood. The suggestions are described in the following table.

### Ellwood Historic Neighborhood Implementation Strategies

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Schedule</th>
<th>Program Activities 2011-2012</th>
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<tr>
<td>FY 2011</td>
<td>Physical Improvements</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Place signs at selected intersections to point out entrances to the Ellwood TIF District.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Install stop signs at selected intersections to reduce the flow of traffic and produce calming effects in the Ellwood TIF District.</td>
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<td>• Purchase plants and other landscaping enhancement materials for designated areas of the District, utilizing volunteers to plant and maintain enhancements.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Identify and hire contractors to initiate the process of designing, planning and installing neighborhood relevant street lighting.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Create historic markers for selected homes.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Utilize Ellwood TIF District money for City-assisted painting programs for select eligible properties within the Ellwood Historic District.</td>
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<tr>
<td>FY 2011</td>
<td>Policy Improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Coordinate with community volunteers on various neighborhood-wide beautification projects.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Work with City officials to ensure noise ordinances are enforced neighborhood-wide.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Increase awareness of proper rehabilitation programs and work with city, state, and federal sources that may provide financial assistance to rehabilitate historic structures.</td>
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<td>• Encourage City enforcement of parking ordinances in the neighborhood.</td>
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<td>• Increase police patrols to curb drug selling activity within the neighborhood.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Work with Mayor’s Task Force on Safe and Quality Housing to support the enforcement of existing city codes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schedule</td>
<td>Program Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Physical Improvements</strong></td>
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</table>
| FY 2012  | • Continuation of Ellwood TIF District beautification programs initiated in 2011.  
           | • Continuation of street light program with the goal of having lights physically installed by the end of calendar year 2012 in selected areas.  
           | • Investigate program to bury utility cables throughout the Ellwood TIF District. |
| FY 2012  | **Policy Improvements**¹ |
|          | • Develop and establish a City-recognized Neighborhood Residents’ Association that can apply for grants from federal and state agencies and act in an advisory role.  
           | • Identify additional areas of improvement for the common good of the Neighborhood.  
           | • Research, discuss and establish criteria for owner-occupied live/work spaces on an individual basis within the Ellwood Historic Neighborhood. |
| FY 2012  | **Collaboration with Financial Institutions**² |
|          | • Explore and create a program to provide incentives for property buyers and owners to convert multi-family units to single-family homes.  
           | • Identify and create a program to provide incentives for property owners to reduce density in selected properties.  
           | • Collaborate with local financial institutions to identify and provide matching funds for eligible Ellwood TIF District projects. |

¹ Policy improvements for FY 2012 were consolidated from initiatives identified in the September 2010 draft, but not submitted for a neighborhood vote.

² Collaboration with financial institutions was also consolidated from initiative identified in the September 2010 draft, but not submitted for a neighborhood vote.
Appendices
Appendix A. Overlay Map of Ellwood Historic Neighborhood Planning Area

ELLWOOD HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD (EHN) WITH CENTRAL AREA TIF AND ELLWOOD HISTORIC DISTRICT OVERLAYS

- ELLWOOD HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD
- 5TH WARD NORTH HISTORIC DISTRICT OVERLAY
- CENTRAL AREA TIF DISTRICT OVERLAY

City of DeKalb GIS
Prepared by:
I & T DIVISION
7/25/11 DJE
ELLWOOD HISTORIC NEIGH
North

0 250 500 FT
Hey Neighbor!

You are receiving this newsletter because your house is located within the boundaries of the Ellwood Historic District. The purpose of this newsletter is to let you know about several events that have taken place this year aimed at making this neighborhood a more family-friendly, cozy place to live. We also want to invite you a meeting on September 28, 2010 and to gain your feedback on changes that may be in store for the neighborhood and how those changes may impact you. In order to bring you up to date, below you will find a list of the activities that have taken place this summer.

On May 25, 2010, the Center for Governmental Studies in collaboration with the City of DeKalb, held a meeting for residents in the Ellwood Historic District (EHD), also known as the North Fifth Ward. The meeting was held to inform neighbors about steps that the City of DeKalb is taking to revitalize the Ellwood Historic District and to solicit ideas from neighbors regarding what they would like to see happen here in their neighborhood. Based on the discussions at this meeting, NIU’s Center for Governmental Studies produced a report which was distributed to the residents in attendance and which also can be found on the city’s website: www.cityofdekalb.com.

Since the May 25th meeting, residents and the City of DeKalb have continued to work together to coordinate and schedule events to revitalize the Ellwood Historic District. On May 26, 2010, the Neighborhood Task Force had its first meeting. During this meeting it was decided there was a need for a Neighborhood Task Force and that its membership would include property owners who are also residents in the Ellwood Historic District.

June and July of 2010

Under the direction of Jamie Smirz, the City of DeKalb organized volunteer days during June, July and August. The volunteers were a mixture of locals, out-of-towners and NIU students who came to help residents with landscaping, yard cleanup, trash removal, and other home projects. More volunteer days are in the works.

For their part, residents have also worked with the City of DeKalb to facilitate the revitalization of the Ellwood Historic District. On June 16th, the second meeting of the Neighborhood Task Force took place. At this meeting, multiple areas of concern were identified in the following four areas: restoring homes back to owner-occupied single family homes, zoning and code enforcement for homes which have now become multi-resident rental units, crime, safety and noise ordinances, getting to know our neighbors in the Ellwood Historic District. At this meeting the decision was made to gather information about the demographics of the historic district and to investigate the possibility of establishing a Neighborhood Watch.
September 2010

The Neighborhood Task Force met a third time on June 30, 2010. The first item on the agenda was about the Neighborhood Watch information meeting which was scheduled for July 5, 2010. The second item on the agenda was information the task force members had received about who owned which homes in the historic district and which of those were owner-occupied. What we learned surprised us. In June of 2010, the ratio of owner occupied homes to rental homes was, at the very highest, 35% owner occupied property to 65% rental property. This is a significant change since the middle 1990’s when the ratio was 60% owner occupied to 40% rental. Of the rental properties, the majority are owned by a landlord who owns only one or two properties. Of those, several are landlords who live in another home in the neighborhood. There was also extensive discussion about code enforcement, drug dealing concerns, noise, speeding, traffic, etc.

Since the May 25, 2010 informational meeting, the financial community has also been active. On June 17, 2010, in a meeting convened by John Campen, local bankers, representatives from Re:New DeKalb, and representatives from the City of DeKalb met to discuss how private capital and TIF money might be used to reclaim/redevelop houses when they come up for sale in the Ellwood Historic District.

On July 5, 2010, residents interested in the possibility of establishing a Neighborhood Watch attended an informational meeting conducted by Detective Angel Reyes of the DeKalb Police Department. Detective Reyes reviewed the components for creating an effective Neighborhood Watch. Among all components, two are key: 1) Identifying and communicating clearly understood boundaries; 2) creating a telephone/email tree made up of the names of as many residents as possible. It was agreed that if we wanted to establish a Neighborhood Watch in which the boundaries were easy to understand, we should expand the Ellwood Historic District to include the entire North Fifth Ward and not just the homes included in the historic district.

August of 2010

On August 11, 2010 the Neighborhood Task Force met for a fourth time. The focus was about taking steps towards creating and operating a Neighborhood Watch Group. Two residents from north of Augusta Ave. came to the meeting and provided names of other residents from north of Augusta Ave. who were very interested in joining an effort to establish a Neighborhood Watch. Prior to this meeting the list of owner-occupied and landlord-owned homes was expanded to include all of the North Fifth Ward. It was agreed that we would schedule the first formal Neighborhood Watch meeting.

And so, on August 30, 2010, the Ellwood Historic District had its first Neighborhood Watch meeting. Detective Angel Reyes, along with Michael Mackey from the Davy Neighborhood Watch group, led the meeting tenants.

The need for spear communication and a telephone/email tree was stressed as were the following needs: neighborhood social events to help neighbors get to know each other; identifying and correcting problems like poor lighting in order to prevent crimes; contacting the police and or another neighbor when your sixth sense tells you that something is wrong; holding landlords accountable for the behavior of their tenants.

The financial community met again on August 31, 2010. The conversation revolved around creating a plan to finance the purchase and redevelopment of homes in the Ellwood Historic District from high density multiple family residences to lower density multiple family residences. Rather than limiting the plan to only one option, the financial group is also considering the following options: 1) restoring multiple family homes back to single family homes; 2) low impact live/work spaces for artists; 3) creating houses to be used by NIU honors students and/or international students.

We hope you now have a good sense of what has been happening in the neighborhood. If you would like more in-depth information and want to know what is being planned for the future, be sure to join us on September 28th, at First United Methodist Church, Dining Hall, 321 Oak St. in DeKalb. City staff, the Center for Governmental Studies, members of the local financial community and the Landmark Commission will all be present to discuss where we are headed. Show up, be heard and be a part of the changing face of the Ellwood Historic District!

Happenings in the Neighborhood

✓ June 1st - Financial Community meeting
✓ June 30th - 3rd Neighborhood Task Force Meeting
✓ July 5th - Neighborhood Watch Meeting
✓ August 11th - 5th Neighborhood Task Force
✓ August 30th - 1st Official Neighborhood Watch Meeting
✓ August 31st - 2nd Financial Community meeting

*** Upcoming Events ***
✓ September 28th - 2nd EHD Action Plan Meeting at First United Methodist Church, Dining Hall, 321 Oak St DeKalb, IL. (815) 756-6301

For more Information contact:
John Campen
johncampen@gmail.com
Phone: 312-543-7884

*Newsletter created by Center for Governmental Studies at NIU