

## **HEART OF PEORIA URBAN DESIGN FORUM DESIGN CHARRETTE MAY 19<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>**

The following comments provided by charrette participants express their vision for the Heart of Peoria Neighborhoods, Sheridan-Loucks, and Prospect Road study areas. Comments were transposed directly from presentations and graphics prepared by each group. The consultant team makes no claim as to their accuracy or validity. These valuable insights will be used to guide the consultants as the team analyzes the issues and develops the community's vision for the study areas.

### **HEART OF PEORIA NEIGHBORHOODS**

#### **TABLE NO. 1**

##### **Spokesperson – Loretta Ricca (South Side)**

- Key good elements: Well-kept older homes; churches; and diverse community with all nationalities; good people still living in the South Side;
- Threats: Crime, drugs, prostitutes, bad code enforcement;
- Needs: Good code enforcement; Gateway to be located in their neighborhood;
- Bad: Share of bad landlords, vacant buildings, broken sidewalks; had grass growing out of gutters;
- Wants: Community Arts Center, trees, farmer's market, outdoor cafes, neighborhood gardens, neighborhood stores, positive attitudes from rest of people living in City of Peoria.

##### **Spokesperson – Lorraine Carter**

- Idea for entire City: Restore train service to Peoria and Chicago, which will bring people to proposed Museum and arts districts. Restore and utilize the existing train station. Money spent would help all the people, including the South Side.

#### **TABLE NO. 2**

##### **Spokeperson – James Hinchee (West Bluff)**

- Key good elements: Good architecture; close proximity to mall and Downtown; nice houses; lots of parks; plenty of places for people to gather, usually in walking distance;
- Trouble spots and Issues: Large amount of litter; lots of rental property (problem with landlords not maintaining their property); crime; need for better code enforcement; empty lots; too many parking lots; suburban infill (Campustown not attractive, but could be remedied with careful attention); unappealing nature of mass transit – need shelters and overcome the disgrace of riding a bus, have fixed bus stops; slow down traffic on Main and MacArthur; need for some degree of routing traffic on south end and northward along University.

#### **TABLE NO. 3**

##### **Spokeperson – Karrie Alms**

- Keep Glen Oak School in the neighborhood;
- Against the Zoo expansion and prefer instead, the money be used for Glen Oak Park to restore some of the park's beauty;
- Develop a mixed-use corridor of retail and residential up to Peoria Heights;
- Develop a pedestrian corridor on the Rock Island Trail;
- Unattractive "board-ups" – change the sign ordinance;
- Develop nature creek trail.

**TABLE NO. 4****Spokeperson – Golda Ewalt (West Bluff)**

- Renaissance Park is great and has much potential for the area;
- Diversity of people and housing;
- Nice parks, homes, and trees;
- Crime and safety issues;
- Landscaping needs to be maintained;
- Good schools, restaurants, and people;
- Bad: Parking issues, traffic, and code enforcement;
- Need more businesses and restaurants with outside dining; wine bar, and more mixed use of buildings, slower traffic, more trees, wider sidewalks;
- More medical development along Knoxville;
- Want a movie theater and upscale grocery store.

**TABLE NO. 5****Spokeperson – Tessie Bucklar (Peoria Heights)**

- Natural resources: River, mature trees, topography, parks;
- Good buildings and housing stock, architecture;
- Small streets – some being well maintained;
- Diversity and long-term residents;
- Good economic base: Businesses, medical, and university;
- Lots of cultural events;
- Some affordable housing;
- Bad urban environment;
- Streets too wide;
- Not enough sidewalks;
- Not pedestrian friendly;
- Need smaller, tree-line streets;
- Need more homeowners;
- Need economic and age diversity;
- High perceived crime rate;
- Educational challenge;
- Traffic not conducive to urban environment – traffic too fast, traffic patterns;
- Well-defined Central Business District;
- Sprawl on north side contributes to urban decay.

**SHERIDAN-LOUCKS****TABLE NO. 1****Spokesperson – Paul Wilkinson**

- Strong corridor business association;
- Improve traffic patterns: Construct roundabout at Loucks and Gift intersection
- Widen sidewalks on Whitey's with trees, benches;
- Parking between Whitey's and Unique Teak;
- Problem with crime;
- Strengthen collaboration between people and businesses;
- Make Loucks two-way;
- Alley behind Sports Page – street;
- Use ornamental lighting – Forrest Hill to Nebraska;
- Eliminate overhead wiring – use underground wiring;
- Use canvass awnings for business district;
- Flower pots, benches;
- Safer sidewalks – lighted from Isabel to the north;
- House on McClure to be demolished – lot would be nice for neighborhood park;
- Need more green space;
- Create neighborhood overlay district;
- Create mixed use – residential above businesses.

**TABLE NO. 2****Spokesperson – Council Member Van Auken**

- She commented on the energy, ideas, and hope, which makes Council Members proud to represent the City. She thanked participants for taking a beautiful Saturday morning to do something for our community.
- Very good middle school – Columbia Middle School;
- Excellent park – Columbia Park;
- Community folks;
- Wonderful branch library – very “kid friendly”;
- Existing landmarks: Aggatucci Pizza on University; Whitey's Tip Top Tap, which has oldest liquor license; Castle's Patio Inn – ships cheese on over the US; and the Health Department;
- Lot of rental property;
- Big Ideas: Streetscape improvements along Sheridan, narrower sidewalks; Focal point of neighborhood – Loucks, Gift, Sheridan intersection – multiple options, such as roundabout, square, buildings to street, turn triangle, parking areas, plaza, and open space, to make an asset;
- Upgrade existing buildings; new buildings, two and three stories, with mixed use;
- Outdoor patios.

**PROSPECT****TABLE NO. 2 (Note: TABLE NO. 1 was not used)****Spokesperson – Mike McAsey (Forrest Hill)**

- Traffic – not pedestrian-friendly; too fast; too close to sidewalks; slow down traffic;
- Needs green space;
- Improve signage and utilities;
- Some undesirable businesses;
- Change streetscape – Add medians, diagonal parking;
- Businesses need to be closer to street;
- Add two-story buildings to add interest to street;
- Add grocery stores, restaurants, coffee shops;
- Add distinctive lighting all the way to Glen Oak Avenue;
- Add something of interest to intersection at War Memorial and Prospect to give interest of place;
- Infill near Walgreens;
- Provide different source of surface at intersection, such as brick for a different appearance and to slow traffic.

**TABLE NO. 3****Spokesperson – Steve Jones**

- Same as Table No. 2;
- Broke Corridor into two pieces, with landmarks on the end of each corridor;
- Widen streets;
- Need for unobstructed sidewalks;
- Provide underground wiring;
- Provide ornamental lighting at each intersection;
- Pocket parking with memorial or style being maintained at each place;
- Idea for War Memorial intersection – provide a roundabout.

**TABLE NO. 4****Spokespersons – Julie Bielfeldt and Jim Matarelli**

- Incredible neighborhoods – want there to be a connection between all communities;
- Would not want to lose existing merchants or “mom and pop” stores;
- Negative factor – Prospect has become a corridor;
- Need to slow the traffic;
- Not like Sheridan – has wider streets;
- Need to find a way to develop green space between street and buildings;
- Need a reorganized traffic pattern;
- Provide underground utilities or behind buildings;
- Improve landscaping;
- Plans to have a business association to develop common elements that identify businesses within the district and work on entry, signage, and landscaping;
- It is a unique street;
- Not pedestrian-friendly sidewalks;
- Unify the area with benches, trees, and lighting; mimic street lamps and green boulevard from side streets onto Prospect Road;
- Street banners with business names/logos.