



Northeastern Neighborhood Network (NNN)

Monday, March 2, 2015

6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Meeting Summary

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

President Hahs began the meeting at 6:35 p.m. by welcoming NNN members and asking them to introduce themselves.

The following members were in attendance: Thomas Applegate (North River Commission), Shylo Bisnett (Albany Park Neighbors), Vicki Byard (faculty member and neighborhood resident), Carmen Rodriguez and Laura Donaghy (Hollywood-North Park Community Association), Janita Tucker (Peterson Pulaski Industry Business Council), Jack Smith (North Park Village Nature Center), Lucia Carnet (Northside Learning Center), and Amy Nelson and Michael Golub (Peterson Elementary School).

Representing the University were President Sharon Hahs, Mike Dizon (Chief Communications Officer), University Police Lt. Paul Kruszynski, Matt Specht (AVP of Student Affairs), Kris Pierre (Senior Director of Community and Civic Engagement) and Mike Hines (Director of Public Relations).

Those member organizations that were absent included: 17th District Police, 39th Ward Alderman's Office, Telshe Yeshiva, Albany Park Chamber of Commerce, Albany Park Neighborhood Council, Chicago Korean Chamber of Commerce, Volta Elementary School, Von Steuben High School, Northside College Prep and Bohemian National Cemetery.

UPDATES FROM THE PRESIDENT

President Hahs provided a few updates from the University.

- **Student Housing:** Construction will begin this spring on the University's first residence hall to be located on the west side of the Main Campus just south of the Parking Facility. It is scheduled to open Fall 2016. NEIU continues to pursue the 3400 block of Bryn Mawr for a second phase of this project.
- **Education Building:** Design and planning is underway for the new structure, which would be the first academic building built on campus since 1988.
- **Strategic Plan:** The University spent the fall on refreshing its strategic plan.
- **Pedroso Center:** Construction will take place in March through August on a small addition to the Center, so it can make room of the women's and LGBTQA resource centers.

UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

Chief Communications Officer Mike Dizon reintroduced Carmen Rodriguez, the new president of the Hollywood North Park Community Association, and Laura Donaghy, the new secretary of HNPCA who is also a nearby neighbor of NEIU's Main Campus. Moving forward, HNPCA will be represented by two members – one of whom would also be a nearby neighbor.

Dizon then presented a new website created to serve the information needs of the community and neighbors at www.neiu.edu/neighbors. He mentioned that a new newsletter would be launched and distributed on the day following the meeting to provide NEIU-neighborhood news to those who subscribe. A printed version would also be distributed to nearby residents as well.

COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS

The group discussed the need for a public forum to discuss a variety of community issues, including student housing and eminent domain. President Hahs expressed a willingness to address questions and provide project updates, and she solicited ideas from the group regarding date, format and logistics. Some of the feedback shared by the group included: provide an updated map and project timeline, provide a brief history of what has been done so far, provide forum ground rules to ensure a "level of civility," allow an opportunity for attendees to express their concerns in an "open mic" fashion, ask for questions to be submitted in advance and managed by NNN, include a variety of experts on the panel, host the forum in a large space preferably on a weeknight, and provide an environment where attendees feel safe to share a variety of viewpoints and not feel intimidated. President Hahs said that any hosted forum would take place during or after April due to her travel schedule.

PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION: TRAFFIC AND PARKING STUDY

Members also offered ideas – both submitted in advance of the meeting and during the meeting – to help with the creation of a traffic and parking study that would assess, among other things, the impact of student housing. During the meeting, the group shared the following feedback: look broadly at the impact that the Main Campus has on traffic and parking in both the North Park and Albany Park communities, investigate new traffic patterns and environmental issues, look into how Foster Avenue construction would affect traffic. President Hahs asked members to provide any additional feedback by mid-May.

NEIGHBORHOOD INFO / OPEN DISCUSSION

- One member asked about a possible Phase 3 of the plans to create student housing. President Hahs explained that Phase 3 is hypothetical and that if the

University proceeded with a third phase, it would be smaller than the first two and would be built on the current 67 acres of campus.

- One member inquired about the number of additional students expected to enroll as a result of new housing opportunities at NEIU. President Hahs said that she is optimistic that the current student body of approximately 10,000 could return to the 12,000 level that it was about five years ago.
- Kris Pierre of NEIU shared details about the University's 3rd Annual Chavez Day of Service, which will take place on Saturday, March 28.
- Matt Specht of NEIU said that infrastructure work on the south end of the Main Campus would begin this summer to prepare for construction of the Education Building.
- The representative of Albany Park Neighbors encouraged members to spread the word about a meeting that will take place on March 12 on how to form a block club to help connect neighbors. It will start at 7 p.m. at the 17th District Police Department building.

The NNN meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.