

Notes for Jamestown candidate forum 2/5/13

Reality: Living close to pockets of low income, minority, and other challenged areas lowers property values, and, having low income properties along highly traveled streets lowers the perceived value of the neighborhood.

My question: how to help folks in those areas improve the condition of their lives and the neighborhood.

Some answers, wearing my Alder hat:

- **Jobs:** Encourage area development that creates jobs for traditionally low income individuals.
- **Job training:** Explore potential availability of job readiness programming within the community (Boys and Girls Club, etc) and on-the-job training programs for low income adults.
- **Education:** Ensure that children are graduating from high school either job ready or prepared for further education. Help adults obtain a GED if needed, or continuing education if desired. Insist on quality education at all levels, including pre-school. Help adults in the community learn the material their children are learning.
- **Housing:** Continue to insist on safe, quality housing. Work with landlords toward continuous care of buildings. Help residents respect and care for the properties where they live. Support developers in building affordable housing options.
- **Community services:** Provide space for needed services to enable low income residents to obtain the help they need to learn about housing, employment, education, and other services available to them.
- **Neighborhood organizations:** Support residents in creating programs that help one another and the community. Allied's "Mother's in the neighborhood" and their Welcomer's program are two good examples.
- **Community gathering spaces:** Whether indoor or out, create places for people to gather for social events, places to host family events, space for meetings and community events, even just places to hang out and visit daily. (African American, Latino and Hmong communities all have very strong family, spiritual, and social structures.)
- **Transportation:** Make it feasible to move around the city, and region, especially to get to jobs, grocery stores, city hall, library, and senior center, parks, etc; including for people that own cars but might prefer options other than driving everywhere.
- **Retail:** Tied with transit, ensure that Fitchburg is able to offer convenient shopping opportunities that people from low income communities would like to have available.
- **Policing:** Strengthen community policing models. Encourage residents to have good rapport with PD and other city officials. Host community education related to drugs, gangs, and crime.

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What we, as residents, can do:

- Get to know the people that live in the extended community!
- Help organize and participate in social events that intentionally include low income and minority residents.
- The Fitchburg library wants to encourage programming in the Jamestown area... offer to host story-time events at the fire station, or in community rooms in area buildings on a regular basis.

Distribute fliers for library programs in low income areas. Library phone: (608) 729-1760

- Encourage renters to participate in area Neighborhood Associations.
- Work with landlords to get permission to help residents learn to do landscaping around buildings (I can help contact landlords), talk about places we can start community or personal gardens and help develop those.
- Help set up neighborhood watch programs and offer to walk the neighborhood with them occasionally.
- Offer to help adults learn computer skills to write resumes and cover letters for job searches, etc.
- Offer to tutor children at the Boys and Girls Club 608-204-9722 (there are even paid positions!) or at local schools.
- Call one of the neighborhood Joining Forces for Families (JFF) offices to ask for suggestions of other ways you can participate in the community (2225 Allied Dr., Ryan Estrella, 273-6342, estrella@countyofdane.com, or 5810 Russett Road, Michael Bruce, 273-6622, bruce@countyofdane.com)
- Contact area churches or faith-based non-profits to ask if they have activities in the area that you can help with.
- Most of all, know that the vast majority of low income people are struggling to create a better life for themselves and their families... much like all of us... just at an even more challenging level.

Other issues I've been following and provide information about:

Verona Road project:

- Recorded DOT presentation to the Committee of the Whole at <http://bit.ly/WieuKr>
- Project page on Fitchburg city website at <http://tinyurl.com/VeronaRoad> (includes link to pdf file mentioned in Committee of the Whole presentation)
- Bike/Ped bridge on PD (to be built in 2013)

Neighborhood studies (lots of interesting places to explore at <http://www.city.fitchburg.wi.us/departments/cityHall/planning/index.php>):

- Arrowhead Study (ThermoFisher campus)
- Arbor Hills / Leopold Neighborhood Study (Madison primary)
- Highway 14 interchange
- Smartcode zoning - Uptown Development

Park projects, summary page on Fitchburg website at <http://tinyurl.com/ParkProjects>

- Jamestown park projects (though Carol is the expert)
- Dawley Bike Hub at Dunn's Marsh
- Splash Pad at McKee Farms Park
- Golf Course or community park in the Leopold / Post Road neighborhood?

Plus:

moving/rebuilding fire stations (currently 2017), Fire service consolidation study (video online at <http://tinyurl.com/FireConsolidation>), Cannonball bike path (<http://www.city.fitchburg.wi.us/departments/cityHall/publicWorks/CannonballPath.php>), Freshmobile, Redistricting, Transit, para transit, Logisticare (not good news!), Communication limitations in Fitchburg, Homeless warming center in Madison and homeless issues in general. County Parks info, and county activities in general.

Likely many more that aren't coming to mind as I write this note! But, enough for now!

