

Stapleton: a year in review

Contributed by Mike Johnson, SUN President
Monday, 24 December 2007
Last Updated Monday, 24 December 2007

SUN's purpose is to promote community among Stapleton residents and represent the neighborhood in dealings with the folks who make decisions about Stapleton at the City, Forest City and City-sponsored organizations such as the Stapleton Development Corporation (SDC) and the Stapleton Citizens Advisory Board (CAB). SUN has done a great job promoting community through its annual early summer neighborhood-wide block parties and fall kickball tournament, by reaching out to residents through the block captain communication network and by organizing community forums that provide information on hot topics. SUN also has acquitted itself well in facilitating solutions to a variety of specific issues with the folks who make decisions about Stapleton. Until recently, however, SUN's work on neighborhood issues has been case-by-case based on concerns raised by individual residents in reaction to decisions that have already been made by decision-makers or projects have already been constructed. After many frustrating attempts to change decisions that have already been made or to modify development that has already occurred, in 2007 SUN focused on getting SUN and Stapleton residents involved at the front end of the decision-making process so that resident concerns can be taken into account before decisions are made and before projects are constructed.

SUN/CAB Communications Committee

One of the impediments to influencing the decision-making process at Stapleton is figuring out who makes the decisions and how. Thanks to the Herculean efforts of Mike King, SUN's immediate past-President, Bev Haddon and the Stapleton Foundation, Dick Anderson and SDC, Tom Gleason and Forest City and all around good neighbor Jake Calabrese, a new joint SUN/CAB Communications Committee will soon publish a series of flow charts that will explain the who and how of decision-making at Stapleton in manner that we can all understand.

CAB Committees

SUN members are now attending and providing neighborhood input at the regular monthly meetings of CAB committees and then reporting back to SUN at SUN's regular monthly meetings. (CAB committees advise CAB. CAB advises SDC. SDC administers the master development agreement with Forest City.) These CAB committees include the Zoning and Planning Committee, which reviews all development plans; the Parks Advisory Group, which reviews development plans for and deals with the operations of parks and open space; and the Housing Diversity Committee, which reviews plans for and advocates for affordable housing.

Transportation

The SUN Transportation Committee and the Stapleton Transportation Management Association (which is part of the Stapleton Foundation) have coordinated their efforts by attending each other's meetings, working on transportation issues and projects together and reporting to CAB and SDC jointly.

Design Review Board

A SUN board member sits on and provides neighborhood input at the regular monthly meetings of and reports back to SUN regarding the actions of the Design Review Board, which reviews and must approve all buildings at Stapleton and the street layout and other design features of tracts larger than 10 acres.

Challenges for 2008

SUN's biggest challenge for 2008 is finding more volunteers who are willing to help us with our good works. SUN is a 100% volunteer organization. Many of our current volunteers have contributed hundreds of hours to SUN activities. They have families and work demands just like you do. We need your help. Please join us at one of our regular board meetings on the fourth Thursday of January through October (and the fifth Thursday in November) at 6:30 p.m. at the Master Community Association community room at 2823 Roslyn Street or visit our website at www.stapletonunitedneighbors.com.

SUN Needs Your Help:

Two Board Members, President Michael Johnson and Bernard Douthit, have announced their resignation from the SUN Board, leaving two vacancies to fill. If you would like to jump right in and help build this development into the community you hoped it would be when you moved here, please email us at StapletonUnitedNeighbors@gmail.com with a brief statement of interest.

Both of these seats will be up for election, along with 5 other, in May. If you are interested in running for one of those seats (which are two year terms) you will need to submit a letter of interest by mid-March, which will then be published in the April SUN Spot, in advance of SUN's May Annual Meeting and Elections. Once again, a letter of interest should be emailed to StapletonUnitedNeighbors@gmail.com. Exact dates and deadline for the May SUN Election and Annual Meeting will be announced at a later date, and posted on SUN's website at www.StapletonUnitedNeighbors.org, SUN will form a recruitment committee soon to manage the election process, and recruit a slate of interested candidates.