

Neighbors United  
Meeting Summary  
08-26-2010

**Attending**

1. Joe Berg, *Community Meals Kitchen Coordinator*
2. Rev. Howard Dotson, *Westminster Presbyterian Church*
3. Gay Endicott, *First Baptist Church*
4. Shawna Foster, *First Unitarian Church; NU Intern*
5. Kay Lynn Goldner, *First Unitarian Church*
6. Christian Gray, *inCOMMON Community Development*
7. Brittany Hanson, *inCOMMON Community Development*
8. Louise Jeffrey, *First Unitarian Church, CM Scheduling Coordinator*
9. Rev. Scott Jones, *First Central Congregational Church*
10. Lois Knutzen, *First Lutheran Church*
11. Kevin Marik, *MCC-Omaha*
12. Benjamin Martinez, *First Baptist Church*
13. Pr. Judith Rainforth, *First Lutheran Church*
14. Rev. Kate Rohde, *First Unitarian Church*
15. Rev. Jon Sloan, *First Presbyterian Church*
16. Rev. Melissa Smithee, *MCC-Omaha*
17. Calvin Smothers, *inCOMMON Community Development*
18. Jaimee Trobough, *United Methodist Ministries (MO River District)*
19. Doug Walters, *First Presbyterian Church*
20. Gina, *MCC-Omaha*

**Start Point**

- A Reading from Meg Wheatley's *Perseverance*.
- "This is how the world always changes. Everyday people not waiting for someone else to fix things or come to their rescue, but simply stepping forward, working together, figuring out how to make things better."

**Introductions & Announcements (15 minutes)**

*Introductions*

- Participants gathered and sat in an open circle; lunch was provided by First Baptist Church.
- In the center of the circle were reminders (a picture of the Community Meal, signatures of appreciation from neighbors, a copy of the NU Community Covenant) of Neighbors United's common purpose.
- The meeting was hosted by Brittany Hanson; Calvin Smothers was the guardian of the agenda, keeping time to maintain the groups' focus on agenda items.
- Newcomers were welcomed and a round of introductions and announcements was made.

*Announcements*

- Rev. Howard Dotson ([hr\\_dotson@yahoo.com](mailto:hr_dotson@yahoo.com)) will be organizing a Happy Hour at the Crescent Moon to welcome new clergy to the Omaha and Park Avenue communities. Details to come.
- MCC-Omaha will be hosting a Food Give-Away on Sept. 17 at 4:00 PM. Contact Kevin Marik ([bigred1997@hotmail.com](mailto:bigred1997@hotmail.com)) for more information.

**Social Capital Campaign (Community Center) Update (25 minutes)**

*Pancake Breakfast Success!*

*Neighbors United, bringing the area inter-faith community together in service to the local neighborhood*



- Over \$1100 were raised
- A very special THANK YOU to our organizer, Kevin Marik!
- Additional THANK YOUs to First Baptist Church, First Unitarian Church, MCC-Omaha, inCOMMON, Louise Jeffrey, KayLynn Goldner, Modesto Olivo, and all the other volunteers who made this event such a success.

#### 2010 Building Healthy Communities

- The Home Depot Foundation awarded the Community Center \$1500 as a 2010 Building Healthy Communities grant recipient!
- inCOMMON's Andrew Tonnie applied for this grant in early 2010.

#### Funding Benchmarks

- This month Neighbors United/inCOMMON met the \$23,000 challenge amount needed to take advantage of the \$10,000 Peter Kiewit Foundation grant!
- In light of this achievement our friends and neighbors in the Park Avenue neighborhood could have a new Community Center as early as late winter or early spring.
- As we pause to celebrate this collaborative success, we recognize additional and ongoing fundraising remains a need.
- Questions? Contact Christian Gray ([Christian@inCOMMONcd.org](mailto:Christian@inCOMMONcd.org); 402-933-6672)

#### Task Force

- NEXT MEETING:            ALL ARE WELCOME!  
Wednesday, Sept. 15  
3:45 PM – 5:00 PM  
Caffeine Dreams (4524 Farnam St.)

#### Leadership Transition (60 minutes)

##### Check In

- Meeting participants completed a round of Check-Ins answering the following question: *Considering all of the recent and upcoming changes (reaching funding benchmarks, Brittany's Nov. departure, etc.), how do you come to this meeting?*
- Check-In Responses included:  
"I've been impressed with our cooperation so far."  
"We're on the right track; I think we are ready."  
"I hope we have time to do all of this [getting the Community Center in order]."  
"We are in a critical stage in our development; I hope we can stay humble and take charge in Brittany's absence – but taking charge doesn't sound like the right words."  
"I feel a tension between excitement/celebration & loss/grief".  
"I'm feeling anxiety: Can we really do this? Can we really hold this together?"  
"Love and humility will keep us on the right track."  
"Unbridled optimism and some hesitancy. I hope we don't break down into sides; we can't get bogged down into politicizing."  
"I know I'm in good company."  
"I'm willing to be supportive in whatever ways I can."  
"We have something amazing and the challenge is to keep that; we've got multitudes of people behind us and we need to tap into that."

*Rotating Leadership, Shared Responsibility & Basic Circle Structure*

- Considering Brittany's November departure from the NU organizing role, there are a number of NU Leadership Functions that will need to be addressed [see attachment].
- The [PeerSpirit Circle Process](#) may be one accessible way to self govern monthly NU meetings [see attachment].
- Questions? Contact Brittany Hanson ([Brittany@inCOMMONcd.org](mailto:Brittany@inCOMMONcd.org); 402-933-6672)

**NU Moving Forward**

We will use the Circle Process again in September, focusing on two main areas:

- Core Team Development
- Board of Servants Development

**REMINDERS**

- Community Meal – Every Saturday, 11:30-1:00, First Baptist Church
- NEXT Neighbors United Meeting: Sept. 23, 11:00-1:00 – MCC-Omaha