

★ Roll Call Number

Agenda Item Number

51

Date November 8, 2010

Communication from Coalition of South Side Neighborhood Associations regarding mobile home parks.

Moved by _____ to

COUNCIL ACTION	YEAS	NAYS	PASS	ABSENT
COWNIE				
COLEMAN				
GRIESS				
HENSLEY				
MAHAFFEY				
MEYER				
MOORE				
TOTAL				

CERTIFICATE

I, DIANE RAUH, City Clerk of said City hereby certify that at a meeting of the City Council of said City of Des Moines, held on the above date, among other proceedings the above was adopted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal the day and year first above written.

MOTION CARRIED

APPROVED

Mayor

City Clerk



*Coalition of South Side
Neighborhood Associations*

1603 Pioneer Road, Des Moines, IA 50320

September 22, 2010

Des Moines City Council
400 Robert D. Ray Dr.
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

Council Members:

For many years one of the major detriments to the quality of our neighborhoods on Des Moines' south side has been the many dilapidated mobile home parks and the welfare and safety risk they pose to the people living in them, as well as the negative impact that these run-down parks have on property values and economic development investment on the south side.

South side residents and neighborhood leaders have welcomed recent action by the Council to address some of these parks, including the purchase of a mobile home park at 4315 SE 14th St. to encourage it's redevelopment, as well as City action to terminate a lease for portions of a mobile home park located on public right-of-way at 401 Army Post Rd, and a Zoning Board of Adjustment decision to deny a variance for an illegal expansion of this same mobile home park.

However, more needs to be done through leadership by the City, in order to ensure that unsafe mobile home parks are closed, and that property values in these areas do not further deteriorate.

As an example, at a recent meeting with Fire Chief John Tekippe, CSSNA members were told that Des Moines Fire Department trucks and rescue equipment and personnel could not safely access major fire or emergency needs in many of these parks, as narrow lanes, and lack of maneuvering room would put fire and rescue personnel at risk. We have been told that many of these parks have been 'grandfathered' in, as site planning standards were not in effect at the time they were developed. However, if these basic access and safety problems exist, why would the City allow these parks to continue to operate? Many of these residents may be unaware of the risk they are taking by living in these parks, including many children and elderly. The loss of a life because of such congestion and poor conditions of living quarters would be a tragedy that was more than preventable.

*Columbus/McKinley ✦ Easter Lake ✦ Ewing Woods/Evergreen
✦ Fort Des Moines ✦ Indianola Hills ✦ Magnolia Park ✦ Pioneer Park
✦ River Woods ✦ Somerset ✦ South Park ✦ Southwestern Hills*

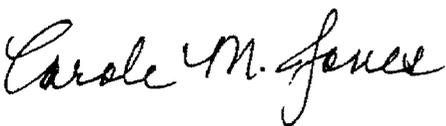
A particular example of this fire and safety risk to residents is the mobile home park at 3140 Indianola Road, which was established in 1939. The lack of safe ingress and egress from this park is obvious, and anyone travelling from downtown to growth areas in newly annexed areas of Des Moines sees this deteriorated park, which creates a negative image for this entire part of the City.

CSSNA asks that the City Council, the City Manager's Office and all City Code Inspectors to diligently work at disassembling mobile home parks where chronic safety and sub-standard living conditions exist, for the safety of our citizens and the welfare of all southsiders. We specifically would like the City to engage in discussions with the owner of the mobile home park at 3140 Indianola Road, to find a way to encourage the transformation of this property into an asset for the community, rather than a liability.

The future viability of Des Moines is dependent on keeping the quality of our housing stock competitive and viable, our neighborhoods stable, and ensuring quality of life and safety for our citizens.

Please contact me at 515-282-4621 or by email at cjones1578@hotmail.com so we can address this issue cooperatively.

Sincerely,



Carole M. Jones
Chairperson
Coalition of South Side Neighborhood Associations