

4/19/12 V1

MILWAUKEE EAST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS PARTNERS WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN FOR COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

The members of the Milwaukee East Side Neighborhood Associations (MENA) welcomes diversity and values city living. Situated within MENA is UWM - recognized as a key contributor to providing the highly educated workforce needed by established and emerging businesses in southeast Wisconsin. MENA's home owners, professionals, students and families are within walking distance of entertainment venues, a major medical complex, shopping, restaurants and recreational and natural resources such as the Olmstead designed Lake Park and Riverside Park, home to the Urban Ecology Center and the Milwaukee River Greenway.

We expect that urban living will have certain challenges as well as myriad rewards. The challenges, sadly, are growing. We NA's are not about to give up on our neighborhood because of these challenges. We would like to engage with the UWM administration to commit to the common goal to improve the quality of life needed to sustain our diverse community.

THE CHALLENGE

STUDENT STRESS AND MILWAUKEE'S EAST SIDE

Today, the East Side is suffering from "urban student stress." The primary cause in many cases is binge drinking which is a national epidemic. Noisy parties, drunken behaviors, threatening demeanor, and disruption all affect the neighborhoods in close proximity to UWM and its satellite dormitories. The Milwaukee Police Department lacks the sufficient resources needed to provide services at a level to match the problem. Certain NA's are especially affected by patrons of the many licensed bars in our area. There is, of course, a clear link between excessive drinking and illegal activity.

There are a number of factors that contribute to and facilitate this behavior:

1] UWM Policy: UWM currently lacks pro-active and effective policies that address student involvement in a wide variety of destructive conduct. Municipal ordinance violations and disrespect toward members of the community are common. The failure of current policy is easily measured in police statistics for the neighborhood

that show patterns that clearly correspond to the calendar of student life at the university.

2] ABSENTEE OWNERS: Over a decade of increases in the size of UWM's student population has led to a rise in absentee owned properties in adjacent neighborhoods. In some cases absentee landlords turn a blind eye to over-occupancy and illegal use of attics and basements as living space. These conditions are stressful for the neighborhood and represent serious threats of injury or death to students living in these conditions. The large number of absentee rental properties represent an early warning indicator of neighborhood blight. Neglected properties enable and reinforce a climate of occupant misconduct and unsafe conditions. The loss of quality housing is a factor that discourages the diversity of residents that is needed to sustain a vibrant community.

3] ENTERTAINMENT VENUES: Some proprietors of the entertainment venues along North and Oakland avenues facilitate disruptive behavior by marketing cheap drink specials and over serving their clientele.

Taken as a whole, these stresses represent an assault on quality of life, deteriorating property, and illegal behavior spanning a range from noise disruptions and litter to violent crime.

ADDITIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

MENA recognizes that solutions rely absolutely on intelligent aggressive actions and collaborative working relationships. We believe that UWM and MENA may lack all the appropriate resources and expertise needed to resolve our community's student related issues. The following stakeholders with their possible role, expertise and potential resources includes but is not limited to the following:

1] City of Milwaukee: We feel that the recent pro-active efforts of the MPD, DNS, and our city officials have had some positive impact. We anticipate and expect that the innovative coordination of the following city agencies can be an effective tool at achieving our desired outcomes.

- **MPD:** The MPD does act to deal with those who are engaged in disruptive acts. We appreciate the flexibility and tactical efforts of MPD. We also understand that this task is a significant burden on the budget and personnel of the First District. MPD does an excellent job of coordinating with DNS to address property-related noise and other behavior problems.
- **Department of Neighborhood Services:** The City of Milwaukee should affirm and educate both internally and to UWM Neighborhood property owners and residents its power and desire to enforce zoning codes. DNS should move aggressively as possible to warn, fine and prosecute landlords with multiple violations of housing codes and/or nuisance activities.
- **Milwaukee Fire Department:** The City of Milwaukee should affirm and educate both internally and to UWM Neighborhood property owners and

residents its power and desire to enforce Milwaukee Fire codes for both residential and commercial structures.

- **City Attorney:** The City of Milwaukee should work with stakeholders to identify and develop prosecution guidelines and ordinances that effect the desired behavior changes.
- **Department of City Development:** DCD needs to balance the needs of business and residential community members in a proactive manner. The DCD and other City departments must act to preserve housing quality, value, and the safety and quality of life on the East Side.

2] Landlords: Identify programs that reward quality property owners and discourage landlords who neglect their properties or fail to take responsibility for their tenants.

3] Businesses: Local businesses typically fall into one of two categories. There are those whose operations enhance the quality of life in a vibrant community and there are those whose operations diminish the quality of life and community safety. In our community the latter are usually bars that focus on low prices high volume and engage in events intended to concentrate large numbers of people in pub crawls. Local business need to work with community members to reduce disruptive behavior and set operation expectations for their members that promotes a safe and welcoming environment.

4] University of Wisconsin Board of Regents: The Board of Regents needs to support the policies required by UWM to effectively collaborate with community stakeholders to ensure civil and responsible student behavior in the communities in which they reside.

FRAMEWORK FOR TACKLING THE PROBLEM

1] FORMAL COMMUNICATION: Community stakeholders must communicate, within some effective structure, to solve problems and NAs must be part of the process. They must be included in all discussions that impact the quality of life of their communities. When necessary meetings will be scheduled with NAs as needed to discuss problems and solutions, tactics, and determining how we can help each other achieve our goals. In those cases where MENA or NA membership stakeholder attendance is desired meetings will be scheduled at a time which is conducive to the work schedules of volunteer based organizations.

2] METHODOLOGY: A proven methodology should be used to identify to all stakeholders the roadmap that will be used to identify, develop, deploy and monitor program to reach a desired goal. A suggested approach is SMART Goal approach. (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely) but other process that have the discipline capable of setting and achieving goals could also be considered.

3] ACCOUNTABILITY: Stakeholders need to establish, coordinate and keep current a continuing flow of up-to-date, complete information to all residents. Once

a program has been deployed it will be the responsibility of the program sponsors to provide program progress review meetings on regular schedule basis which is basic to understanding and action. Without it community stakeholders do not have a chance to participate in plans that will affect their neighborhoods. Such information must be formalized and coordinated among the various stakeholders for easy, understandable access.

4] BEST PRACTICES: The resources and expertise of UWM and/or City of Milwaukee should be used to assess and identify and recommend candidate approaches to reach desired outcomes. Best practices research should be conducted before a program is developed and deployed. We believe that this approach will be more productive and lead to a higher probability of reaching desired outcomes.

FORWARD!

The neighborhood associations of Milwaukee's East Side desire a good, productive working relationship with UWM and all other city stakeholders. Solving the quality of life concerns outlined above is vitally important to the community's and the city's long term stability. Our diverse community membership is comprised of homeowners, renters, students, working professional, retirees, and families. We look forward to discussions of how UW-Milwaukee, City officials and its East Side neighborhood associations will collaborate. We expect the City of Milwaukee and UW-Milwaukee can and will take leadership positions and use their resources and energy to produce positive outcomes.

We, the undersigned NA and UWM representatives, recognize the importance of being joint stakeholders in improving the quality of life in neighborhoods surrounding UWM. We jointly commit to collaboratively address these issues, identifying measurable goals and assuming accountability for achieving those goals.



Cambridge Woods

UWM Chancellor

Greg Baran

Michael Lovell

Greenwich

UWM – Dean of Students

Michael Maierle

Michael Laliberte

Historic Water Tower Park
Neighborhood-

Lloyd Dickinson

Mariner

Bill Werner



Murray Hill

Steve Klebar

Riverside Park

Terri Kinis