Attendance:
Sandi Brown, Fairfax Neighborhood
Anthony Burke, Sr., Marion County Public Health Department
Rik Fuller, Stringtown
Tim Ingram, Stringtown
Martha Judkins, Fairfax
Tim Koelh, Haughville
Ann Krieker, George Washington High School
David Lurvey, Stringtown
Shanna Martin, MCCOY
Jeff Miller, City-County Council
Mitzi Miner, Fairfax
Nancy Mobley, Haughville Library
Kathy Parker, 500 View
Francetta Peterson, Haughville
Fabian Robledo
Sally Root, Fairfax
Rick Rosales, Humane Society
Phyllis Usher
Phil Votaw, WCDC
Plus three others

Staff:
John Byrnes
Alice Gatewood
Keith Holdsworth
Tom Weber

Summary:
The meeting began with introductions and a brief summary of the planning process to date. Copies of the Work Group’s draft report were passed out.

Keith Holdsworth reminded the participants of the prioritization exercise that was done at the kick-off meeting. He noted that a number of code violations made the list. Mr. Holdsworth then introduced Tom Weber of the Department of Code Enforcement. Mr. Weber answered questions concerning code violations. He explained that DCE has started to do proactive inspections for high weeds and grass, targeting areas that have been problems in the past. This has enabled them to better stay on top of the problem. In regards to illegal signs he noted that there are two main types: signs posted in the right-
of-way such as signs posted on utility poles, and signs on private property that violate the sign ordinance for such things as size, location or lack of a sign permit. He noted that DCE does a weekly sweep of illegal signs in the right-of-way. Mr. Weber was asked about the citation procedure. He explained that typically when an inspector finds a violation on a site, the property owner is sent a letter explaining the violation and giving them 15 days to make correct the violation. If the violation is not corrected, then a citation may be issued. The exception to this is for inoperable vehicles, which are given a citation immediately. A rule-of-thumb definition of “inoperable vehicle” is a vehicle that cannot be legally driven on the streets. Mr. Weber was asked about vehicles parked on sidewalks. He noted that this was illegal and that this type of violation should be called into the non-emergency IMPD number. He concluded by telling the group that the best thing for citizens to do when they saw a violation was to call it into the Mayor’s Action Center. He left his business card in case people had follow-up questions or were having a problem getting violations corrected.

As part of the discussion of code enforcement, Councillor Miller was asked about a possible new ordinance concerning graffiti. He responded that the Council is working to find ways to make property owners more accountable for the prompt removal of graffiti, but without burdening residential owner/occupants.

Shanna Martin of the Marion County Council on Youth spoke briefly about MCCOY’s work on developing a site on the Near West for co-location of services for youth and families in need. The point of the center is not to duplicate existing services, but to provide a combined location for those services that are missing in the neighborhood.

The remainder of the meeting was spent looking at land use for four specific areas. The four areas are those with a high rate of vacant residential lots and vacant houses. As such the long-term viability of these areas for single-family residences is in question. The first area discussed was a rough triangle formed by Michigan Street, the railroad and Concord Street/Arnolda Street. After discussion the consensus seemed to be for a commercial establishment in the eastern point of the triangle with higher density housing in the remainder of the triangle. However, the higher density housing should not be like a 1960s or 70s era housing “project.” While discussing this area, the Work Group noted that the nearby property south of the rail line and fronting on Tibbs Avenue should be converted from industrial to residential use.

The next area to be examined was an area near the White River from 16th Street to just south of 12th Street between Pershing and Sheffield. The consensus of the group was to leave the area south of White River Parkway as single-family housing. The area along the edge of the river should be open space and the land around the Lohrman house should be for multi-family housing.

The third area to be discussed was sandwiched between Sanders Park and 11th Street. Although this area is currently somewhat isolated, improvements to Sanders Park should make the area more agreeable. The consensus was that the first choice for this area would be as an extension to the park. The second choice would be for multi-family
housing. Participants asked that the plans for Sanders Park be brought to an upcoming meeting.

The final area was a group of vacant lots along Belmont Avenue just north of 10th Street. These lots are currently owned by the Mount Vernon Baptist Church. After discussion the consensus seemed to be that Special Use was the first choice for development of the parcel. The second choice was for mixed commercial and residential use along the 10th Street frontage and for multi-family residential use on the remaining lots. Senior housing or student housing were the favored types of housing for the site. It was noted that the intersection of 10th and Belmont is awkward given that Belmont is offset at this intersection. Fixing this offset would make the intersection safer.

The next meeting was scheduled for April 16.