

February 26th, 2010

City of Rapid City
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Lemmon Ave “Neighborhood of Choice Project” background:

The Lemmon Avenue property was a vacant and blighted house located in North Rapid City. Using Neighborhood Stabilization funds from the government stimulus program NeighborWorks[®] Dakota Home Resources has demolished the structure and plans to landscape the property into green space for the purpose of a community garden for the neighborhood.

NeighborWorks[®] Dakota Home Resources has been working with the residents of Lemmon Avenue to establish a Neighborhood of Choice over the past ten months. Originally asked by the Rapid City Police Department to bring our services to this neighborhood, we have partnered with the City of Rapid City, its officials, and other corporations and nonprofits to make the revitalization of Lemmon Avenue a reality. The newly organized block club is quickly addressing the needs of their neighborhood. The block club recruited volunteers and painted a house on Lemmon Avenue for the first “Paint the Town” Rapid City. Currently, the residents are working on many important concepts that will make this neighborhood stronger and more united. The residents are also working hard to come up with new idea’s to decrease crime including improved lighting and fencing options. NeighborWorks[®] Dakota Home Resources has also partnered with Black Hills Power for a winterization project where each year we help three deserving homeowners winterize their homes. For example, we help insulate windows, doors, and water heaters to conserve on the heating costs for the residents.

NeighborWorks[®] Dakota Home Resources selected to create a “Neighborhood of Choice” in the Lemmon Avenue neighborhood to help lower crime by helping establish community involvement and community pride. We plan to help the residents transform this neighborhood from its current state, into a neighborhood that workforce families **choose** to live in. At the present time, the neighborhood has had many problems with crime and gang related activity. The purpose of the Neighborhood of Choice is to create opportunities for the residents. NeighborWorks[®] Dakota Home Resources provides access to resources including the Neighborhood Stabilization Program to help in building a more sustainable neighborhood safe for families to live in.

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Rapid City Growth
Management Department

Description of Request:

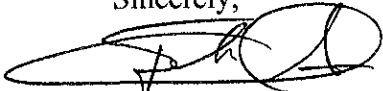
NeighborWorks® Dakota Home Resources is respectfully requesting the City of Rapid City to accept the deed for the land on 706 Lemmon Ave for public use as a community garden. The City of Rapid City would be agreeing to comply with the Neighborhood Stabilization Program restrictions not to rebuild a home on 706 Lemmon Ave for the fifteen year restriction timeframe. NeighborWorks® Dakota Home Resources plans to be involved with every aspect of the resident's community garden. We will be using successful model projects from Portland Or., and other regions around that country. NeighborWorks DHR is also requesting that the City of Rapid City incurs the cost watering the community garden. NWDHR plans to use a sprinkler system on the community garden grounds that would dramatically control the cost of the watering. There will need to be a lease agreement between NeighborWorks DHR, the residents, and the City of Rapid City for public use.

The plan for the community garden is to break the lot up into ten foot wide by twelve foot long plots. These plot sizes may be changed due to interest in the garden, space availability, and what the residents deem an appropriate size. There will also be a couple of plots that will be made special sizes for disabled residents that want a plot. The plots will also be handicap accessible.

In the beginning, NeighborWorks® Dakota Home Resources will manage the garden, helping to assign plots, make sure the garden is being cared for, and organizing aspects of the garden. As time progresses, the residents would take over these duties and it would be a totally resident run garden. The residents will also be asked to create a set of bylaws about the garden, for example what can and can not be grown there and when the garden must be winterized. Plots will be assigned on a first come, first serve basis.

There are also plans being made to get donations of supplies (such as seeds, gardening tools, etc.) from local businesses. The idea is to have a shed on the property where residents can borrow tools to use in the garden, sort of a garden tool library. Donations of lighting will also be sought out so the garden will be lit at night.

Sincerely,



Josh Christiansen
Deputy Executive Director
NeighborWorks® Dakota Home Resources
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