

City of North Vernon Comprehensive Plan

Realtors Focus Group - Meeting Notes

Date: Tuesday, May 19, 2009 @ 1:30 – 2:30 am

Location: North Vernon Education & Training Center

Facilitator: Scott Burgins & Erin Shane, SDG

Participants:

Name	Organization
Jerry Lamb	Coldwell Banker
Glorianna Robbins	Century 21

Question: *What was North Vernon market like before the recent housing crash?*

- There are about 50 realtors in North Vernon; Remax and Coldwell Banker's are larger
- The market has definitely affected us; people have lost confidence; there have been 700 layoffs about 20 miles away
- We have not had a big bubble here, but we have not had a huge crash here
- Some people don't like what we have here – there are 269 homes sold/listed
- Last 18 months – only 2 houses in Jennings County sold for over \$200,000
- You can't sustain a family being a real estate agent these days; you have to diversify to make a living

Question: *Looking ahead - are there signs of the market improving?*

- We look at birth records – that's how we determine what we need for schools
- Obama is saying we need preschool – we may need one or more teachers due to what is coming out of Washington
- The state mandates a lot that they don't pay for
- Muscatatuck Training Center will have an impact – not much yet – but the impact will be greater; they will have a bigger impact on rentals not necessarily home ownership
- There is on large complex in town – 90-95 percent full – Oak Meadow
- What about housing like around schools –rent to own – where can we put them?
- Bypass will have be an issue

Question: *How is the diversity of homes in North Vernon?*

- We don't have many upper end homes - executives live in Columbus
- We have many affordable homes
- Wives pick the house and location – not the men
- Average price of a home last year was about \$60,000 to \$70,000
- Closing on homes right now is really slow now
- Locally, we have the loan officer going on vacation so everything in town stops
- State is coming down w/ new laws for meth, lead paint, etc
- Reps have to look for drug issues

Question: *Why do people move to North Vernon?*

- Some want to be near kids in the summer – they buy \$40k house here and live in Florida
- People came here for jobs – like 2 years ago
- School Corp is a big employer – we sell them a lot of homes
- Some moved here because our prices were lower and its rural; but now our taxes are higher than Seymour's
- Transportation needs to be addressed here – all we have is our cars

Question: *What effects will the proposed bypass have on North Vernon?*

- North State St – very busy
- It may not be good for North Vernon because it will bypass us all
- We need more one way streets to deal with traffic – that would help

Question: *What areas are desirable for housing?*

- South on Route 7
- There are pockets – development near high schools – Persimmon St. – almost full
- Quaker Hills – bad access – but have \$90-110k homes

Question: *What neighborhoods are in trouble?*

- Showers Dr; owners built 3 houses – one is repo, one never sold
- Country Squire –has its own sewer that is failing; there are like 30 listings out there
- if it's not on a permanent foundation – you can't get a loan now
- Many homes on contract – you put down payment and pay the PO until you own it

- Little towns like Butlerville just got sewer and Hayden – they might do ok
- the only traffic issue is around the HS in the am and 3:15

Question: *Is there anything else you would like to address for the comprehensive plan?*

- Have approached builders to do multifamily – but they don't want to be in the business to kick out families when they can't pay
- There are families who move around everywhere – so like when rent is due they move – so we altered the school curriculum to ensure that the kids are not disrupted in education
- From a county perspective – the administrative zoning process is very long – area plan, local approval, etc – so companies want stuff done quick
- City sewer – there are issues in the city limits that need to be addressed
- We have a need for apts, rent to own
- May need to address Patriot Academy in Butlerville.