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## Mayor: Let's fix up Sheridan Park

By **Bob Petrie**

*Sheboygan Press staff*

The beleaguered Sheridan Park neighborhood would get a community makeover under a plan announced Monday night by Sheboygan Mayor Juan Perez.

Perez said several municipal departments, community groups and businesses would combine with the residents to fix up the sparsely-equipped park as well as clean up the surrounding neighborhood.

"The area definitely needs attention, and we're going to get that attention there," Perez said following the Common Council meeting.

The council voted last week to reverse its earlier decision to build the city's new police station at the park.

Several business leaders have pledged to donate money for new playground equipment, picnic tables and barbecue grills to improve the park at South 14th Street and New Jersey Avenue, Perez said.

\*I was told, "Let us know what you need," said Perez, who did not identify the potential donors. "If it takes \$10,000 or \$20,000, I would imagine they would be amen-able to that."

Police would improve patrols in the area, where neighbors have complained of drug dealers and high crime, and possibly add a security camera at the park. Lighting and signs would also be improved at the park by the Public Works Department, and the wattage of lights on area streets increased. City inspectors would get involved to address blighted properties and trashed areas.

"We have a large number of people who are ready and willing to work together," Perez said.

Paulette Enders, city director of planning and development, said federal Block Grant money could be made available to help with lighting and home repairs in the area, which she said is part of the next phase of the Harbor Centre redevelopment plan, along the Sheboygan River.

"I think this probably takes that (redevelopment) to the next level," Enders said.

Gina Steinhardt, a Sheridan Park neighbor who strongly supported having the police station placed at the park, said she would like to be involved in the plan to improve the area. Perez encouraged Steinhardt and other neighbors to be part of the community meetings.

Steinhardt said the neighborhood has long been neglected, and is taking a "wait and see" approach to see if the plan works.

"Hopefully that's true and it'll get done well," Steinhardt said.

Mayline Co., which has a plant to the east of Sheridan Park, pledged to help improve fencing and

clean up garbage on their property that neighbors have complained about in recent months, Perez said.

Also, Partners for Community Development, a Sheboygan organization that assists families with home repairs, has agreed to get involved in the Sheridan Park neighborhood fix-up plans, Perez said.

Aid. Vicky Meyer, a member of Friends of Sheboygan's Parks, said the group would hold a meeting next week at Sheridan Elementary School to outline some of the plans for the community and park upgrades.

"I would like to see organizations come in and community service groups come in and work on the neighborhood and help the homeowners," Meyer said. "I think we can do this all over the city, not just the Sheridan Park area, but that's a good place to start."

Reach Bob Petrie at [bpetrie@Sheboygan.gannett.com](mailto:bpetrie@Sheboygan.gannett.com) and 453-5143.

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