Following a series of criminal incidents at 2328 Melrose Ave., concerned citizens – including Roanoke City Mayor Sherman Lea and Roanoke City Police Captain Rick Morrison – conduct a prayer walk on the property and pray that it might be repurposed in a positive way.

Capt. Morrison shares his concern about property with interested community leaders and organizations, including Goodwill Industries of the Valleys, the Loudon-Melrose Neighborhood Forum (Clarice Walker, Steven Young), the Melrose-Rugby Neighborhood Forum (Norma Wade, Estelle McCadden), Pastor Charles Calloway, Amy Zeigler and others. They enthusiastically support his efforts to see the property repurposed in a way that will benefit the community.

Capt. Morrison approaches Feeding America Southwest Virginia (FASWVA) about purchasing the property and turning it into a “community kitchen.”

FASWVA studies the project and determines that it could be expanded beyond a community kitchen to a “Community Solutions Center.” This would meet several of the food bank’s mid-to-long range strategic goals, including providing better quality food for clients, collaborating with others to provide job training, and helping to improve the quality of life in Northwest Roanoke.

FASWVA develops a sustaining financial model for operating the property, once it has been purchased and re-purposed. Working with architecture and engineering firm Balzer & Associates, FASWVA determines that the cost to acquire, renovate and equip the center would be $850,000. FASWVA’s board insists that those funds be raised before purchasing the property.

Keith Holland, Roanoke City Community Resources Program Administrator, Chris Morrell, Roanoke City Manager, and other city officials agree to re-direct $250,000 of 2016-17 CDBG funds toward the $275,000 acquisition price of the property.

FASWVA holds a meeting at Goodwill Industries of the Valleys to share the Community Solutions Center proposal with the community and hear further input on the project.

Food Lion approves a gift of $350,000 to FASWVA for the project.

The Roanoke CDBG Citizens Committee approves and recommends to City Council the remaining $250,000 needed to complete the proposed renovations on the future Community Solutions Center property.

FASWVA closes purchase of property at 2328 Melrose Ave.

City Council approves FY 17-18 CDBG funding of $250,000 for rehabilitation

FASWVA received $350,000 pledge from Food Lion to complete rehabilitation expenses and breaks ground on Community Solutions Center

TBS Construction awarded construction bid

Construction began

City’s Community Resource Program approves challenge grant of $37,500.