



Choice Neighborhoods Steering Committee Meeting Notes August 26, 2015



Members Present:

Tiffany Mayers
Terraca Rogers
Sandra Robinson
Denise Smith-Allen (Co-Chair)
Officer Terry Lewis
Housing Commissioner Geraldine Redmond (Co-Chair)

Raynetta Speed
Linda McKnight
Elizabeth Jordan
Rafael Turner
Lauren Chom

Members Not Present:

Captain Leigh Golden
Sondra Severn
Housing Commissioner Willie Duncan
Judith Ledford
Diana Broadway

Art Wenzlaff
Adrian Walker
Chris Frye
Donna Calvin

Staff Present:

Kristin Stevenson
Kevin Schronce
Paul Joice

Adam Slater
Frank Woods

CALL TO ORDER:

Co-Chair Denise Smith-Allen called the meeting to order at 5:50 pm. The meeting was held at the Dort Hwy Neighborhood Service Center, 3600 S. Dort Hwy, Flint, MI.

PUBLIC FORUM:

Co-Chair Denise Smith-Allen stated that this is a working meeting of the Master Plan Steering Committee. Therefore, public comment will be limited to the first ten minutes in order to allow for dialogue between Steering Committee members.

One public comment was made regarding the method of outreach and the focus being on public housing.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Co-Chair Denise Smith-Allen transitioned into the small group discussion and initiated the count-off to create the groups.

In each group, three questions were asked. These questions were:

- What more would you like to know about Choice Neighborhoods?
- In your opinion, what will a successful Choice Transformation Plan look like?
- How can we be sure to be inclusive of the broader community and specifically Atherton East residents?

For the first question, there were several comments. The idea across all 3 groups was that there needs to be an understanding that this is a planning grant that is supposed to lead to the creation of a document that will improve the area to help residents. The groups want to know exactly what the process will look like to reach the end goal, and want to know how we will convince people to make changes. Some questions that were asked included: What defines Choice Neighborhood?; What is the purpose of the Steering Committee?; What are the roles of the stakeholders/partners?; Will residents be moved to scattered sites?; Will another apartment complex be built?; and Who has a deciding voice in the process?

For the second question, the groups had ideas that the successful plan would address youth employment, the need for quality grocery stores, neighborhood patrols, home ownership programs, building community relations across race and class, public housing that anyone would want to live in, and it will reflect the community's priorities.

The consensus on the third question was that there needed to be a creative outreach strategy to be inclusive of everyone in the project area. It is important that the Atherton East Residents feel as if they are a part of the process regardless of their level of understanding. We need to work with those residents to convey the information about the process in a way that they understand it.

Other ideas include: Media blasts through social media, the news, public forums, and going door to door by talking to people and distributing newsletters. A point that was also brought up was that engaging with the community should be coordinated with events that are already going on such as neighborhood meetings, tenant council meetings, or fun community events, especially where the youth are because it is important to capture the voice of the youth. Food and childcare should be provided. There should be more things than meetings such as fun events like movies or strategic doing projects.

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION:

Everyone reconvened in the group and discussed the questions and concerns listed above. Shortly after, Kristin Stevenson then re-introduced Kevin Schronce who will be taking over for Megan Hunter on the Choice Neighborhoods process.

Commissioner Elizabeth Jordan suggested that we try to minimize the drop off in attendance by calling committee members who did not show up saying that we noticed they did not attend and to see if they are indeed still interested.

Finally, the tentative calendar was discussed, confirming the best meeting day the majority of the group selected was Wednesday, and also informing the committee that Camiros plans to be at the next meeting which is Wednesday, September 16th, at 5:30pm in The Atherton East Community Room.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT:

Co-Chair Denise Smith-Allen adjourned the meeting at 7:30pm and thanked everyone for their participation

Submitted by: Adam Slater 9.2.2015