

Neighborhoods Revitalization Implementation Plan
Project Management Team Meeting
March 18, 2009 Minutes

The project management team meeting for the City of Anderson's Neighborhood Revitalization Plan was held in the Anderson Room of the Municipal Business Center on Wednesday, March 18, 2009 at 12 Noon.

Housing Task Force Executive Committee members present: Becky Holmes and Robert Mecke

Housing Task Force Executive Committee member absent: Eddie Kinsey, Erick Bradshaw and Jason Craddock

Asset Property Disposition Staff present: Jesse Wiles and Ava Hill

Clemson University staff and graduate students (working with APD) absent (Spring Break): Mary Beth McCubbin, Megan Childers, Alex Ramsay, and Leigh Wood

City Staff present: Willie Day, Maurice McKenzie, Erica Craft, and Erin Hall

Jesse Wiles of Asset Property Disposition welcomed everyone to the meeting. He thanked those that attended the Westside Community meeting on Tuesday night. He thought the meeting went well. He said the purpose for the meeting was to go through the additional layers that have been added to the focus area neighborhoods. He explained that his staff has now overlaid the focus area neighborhoods with housing conditions and occupancy, zoning and land use, and crime. He said at this point, they are analyzing current zoning and land use, but as potential projects are introduced, they will include possible amendments for future use. He stressed the importance of analyzing existing conditions data. For example, crime plays a key role for future redevelopment. He said a crime reduction element must be included in order to attract new people back into neighborhoods. After some discussion, it was decided to invite other division/department heads (Police, Fire, Street, Sanitation, etc.) to the April Project Management Team (PMT) Meeting. The group felt that by including them on the front end of the planning process, they would all be aware of what would be planned for the future, which would help facilitate the process.

Mr. Wiles brought up the topic of the public meetings for discussion. He said the current format did not lend itself for actual public input. Rather, it is structured in two parts – an overview of the planning process and the introduction to capacity building, which is done in an hour and a half. He said the disadvantage is that there is no feedback from the group at the conclusion of the meeting. He said a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) would help come away from a meeting with a lot of input. After some discussion, it was decided to change the format of the public meeting to include a shorter introduction of the planning process and the SWOT analysis to gather public input, which will ultimately aid in stakeholder buy-in by engaging citizens from each community. Willie Day brought up the fact that citizen's participation was an important part of this process. It was also discussed to have forms for citizens to fill out if they did not want to express their opinions in an open meeting setting. Erin Hall also asked for opinions on a press release for the remaining three public input meetings to raise awareness and get as many attendees as possible. The group decided that would be a good idea to maximize the input at the meetings.

The next part of the meeting focused on the summaries of key stakeholder interviews. Twelve community stakeholders were given personal interviews by APD staff. Below are highlights from Mr. Wiles presentation outlining the summaries.

Stakeholder Interview Summaries

- **What are stakeholders' position on the process?**
 - 100% supportive
 - Some reservation regarding broken promises from City regarding improvements and more affordable housing development
 - Need to see some immediate, short-term results

- **What do stakeholders see as assets and possible resources?**
 - Primarily community-based organizations and neighborhood associations
 - Willingness of many residents to work together when presented with concrete opportunity

- **Which stakeholders might form alliances?**
 - Neighborhood associations working together (i.e. East Anderson Alliance and Eastside Concerned Citizens)
 - AIM, Housing Authority already work together, could form partnerships with some of the neighborhood associations
 - UW/ToxAway, Alphabet Streets working to get more churches involved in respective neighborhoods. ToxAway also working to bring in Sleepy Hollow, more affluent community bordering their community
 - Reed St. wants their own identity separate from Westside

- **Suggested Ways to Build Community/Sense of Pride in the Community:**
 - More affordable housing, remove dilapidated housing (100%)
 - Youth – get them involved productively; youth activities with paid staff; training for teens; improve afterschool programs; schools to be more active in communities; Reed St School as focal point
 - Neighborhood cleanup- neighborhood mills, abandoned schools torn down/rebuilt for community use; help seniors with repairs
 - More community policing/remove youth's negative perception of law enforcement-reduction of crime; increase neighborhood watch groups
 - Bring businesses back into neighborhood-grocery stores, hire residents, easier access for residents

- **Top Three Priority Concerns/Focus Needs Identified**
 - 1. Affordable housing to rent, purchase-more expressed desire to see mixed income and mixed use developments
 - 2. Incentives for redevelopment-renovate old buildings, cleanup/redevelop mill sites, create park in old football field at W. Reed and S. Towers
 - 3. Bring in new business/business development-grocery stores

- Other notable concerns – youth programs, high quality schools, more senior programs, safe environment in which to live, work, play
- **Biggest Problems in Community:**
 - 1. Crime (80%) - focus on presence of gangs in all sectors, drug trade 2nd most cited problem
 - 2. Other (80%) – Areas where kids have no adult support; distrust in government; apathy of neighborhood citizens; lack of leadership and organization; neighborhoods largely ignored; Anderson Mill hazard to neighborhood
 - 3. Social/Cultural (70%) – kids raising kids
 - Education-related (70%) – too many dropouts, need training for teens, youth living environments terrible Economy-related (70%) – no grocery stores; absentee landlords
 - 4. Environment/safety (40%) – unofficial dump site (Sector #7)

Mr. Wiles introduced the next planning phase, which will include development scenarios, land use and zoning framework, as well as preliminary project sites. Mr. Day brought up the issue of funding sources and suggested bringing back the entire Task Force and Housing Council Committee at some point in the future to discuss resources, as well as projects that will lend themselves to short-term success.

Ms. Hall reminded the group of upcoming public meetings and the next PMT meeting:

March 24th at 6 pm – Eastside Anderson Alliance Task Force/Sleepy Hollow Neighborhood Group/Eastside Concerned Citizens (at Alternative School)

April 14th at 6:30 pm – Alphabet Streets Community Group (at Taylor Memorial Pentecostal Church)

April 15th at 12 Noon – Project Management Team Meeting (Municipal Business Center)

April 16th at 6 pm – Southeast Anderson Community Task Force (at Hanna-Westside Extension Campus)

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Erin Hall
Business Development and Neighborhood Manager