



New Bern Housing Authority and the City of New Bern

CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS PLANNING GRANT **Trent Court/Craven Terrace/Greater Five Points Neighborhood**

Housing Development Task Force

Wednesday, March 25 at 1:00 pm at Trent Court

Meeting Minutes

- 1. Attendees:** There were 54 attendees at the Housing Task Force meeting: 11 Trent Court residents, 22 Craven Terrace residents, 13 residents/citizens at large, 8 representing organizations/agencies.
- 2. Welcome:** Attendees were welcomed, thanked for being part of the Choice Neighborhood initiative, and reminded that CNI is a community-driven planning process and that they have an important voice in writing the plan.
- 3. Introductions:** The co-facilitators were introduced – Katherine Adolph and Cheryl Reed. Both are retired educators with great communication and group-development skills who volunteered to take on this role. Ms. Reed is the Trent Court Resident Council President.
- 4. Ground Rules for Meeting:** Attendees were asked to follow these ground rules:
 - We will begin and end on time.
 - Stay on subject and follow the agenda.
 - One person speaks at a time.
 - Listen to understand, not to contradict.
 - Respect the views of others.
 - Check your understanding by asking questions (in the meeting, not later.)
 - Constructive, honest debate is desirable.
 - Silence is agreement.
 - It's OK to attack problems – but not people.
 - Remember, “You can't always get what you want, but if you try sometimes you just might find you get what you need.”
- 5. Review Minutes of Last Meeting:** Attendees took a few minutes to read minutes. There were no questions about the minutes.
- 6. Opening Remarks:** *Where are we? Where are we headed?*
Ms. Adolph: this is beginning of a conversation; here to imagine, create consensus, as a diverse group, to come together to put forward collective vision for future housing. First have to build knowledge base, understanding of each other, and trust.
- 7. Team-Building Exercise:** The group was reorganized into teams at six tables. Each team had a mix of PH residents and others. Each person was given two minutes to talk about themselves while the others listened. At the end the teams knew a lot more about

each other and why they were there. One person from each team reported out what they learned about their team as a whole. Examples include: “how much we all love New Bern,” “our love of the Lord,” “New Bern has so many great resources,” “we have such great memories of this city,” “we residents are a tight-knit group.”

8. Previous Meeting / Review Data: *What do we know? On what do we agree as a group?* The group was asked to brainstorm what they already knew about Choice Neighborhoods:

- It's a HUD program
- It's like HOPE VI but different. How? Building houses isn't enough.
- It's a holistic program
- 1 for 1 replacement
- De-densify poverty – scattered PH sites
- Promotes home-ownership
- About improving the neighborhood, too
- About community participation – that's why we're here
- It's about listening to the people
- So we can compete for implementation grant \$\$
- So we can attract private investment
- Discussion about PEOPLE, NEIGHBORHOODS, and HOUSING.

9. Group Development Exercise: Teams were asked to write their HOPES for the future of public housing on blank sticky notes and attach them to large colored poster paper. A representative from each team reported out their hopes to the entire group. I HOPE:

- To get a housing plan with options that residents are happy with, that will help improve the neighborhood.
- To bring more business back in the Five Points area such as: grocery stores, shopping centers, playgrounds, and public transportation to better our community.
- To find a way to improve housing, community, green space, and safe neighborhoods for people to live. A nice home is a great place to raise well-rounded children. Children are our future.
- That the next generation can take pride in their city.
- To see more love spread around the neighborhood, by getting a better understanding of each other and the things around us.
- More job opportunities and better housing experiences for the community.
- To get better housing for the elderly and disabled residents.
- Availability of shopping and medical centers for the neighborhood.
- Sense of community that comes from a multi-racial, mixed income, community-minded, small business oriented area.
- That when it's all said and done, and the community is finished revitalizing, that my taxes won't be as high so I won't have to live in the house that has been passed down from generation to generation.
- That we can come together to help all the communities around us. That we can listen to the needs of the residents and their families.
- That everyone listens to each other's opinion and comes to an agreement that everyone (including residents) needs to participate in this planning process to help improve our community.

- For new ideas on the development for the community.
- To develop a realistic view of what housing in the area can be. To dream big and to not look at the least we can do, but the most.
- More housing options provided such as: duplex, triplex, single families, and handicap accessible units.
- Use environmental features that will persuade tourist to visit our neighborhoods.
- An outdoor storage space for residents, community garden, new garbage disposals, and bigger parking lots, would be very helpful around the community.
- For new apartment buildings and to keep our washing machines.
- That the residents are given the same opportunities as other New Bern citizens, such as: housing, jobs, and vision.
- That we can use the input from everyone's point of view and put the plans together in action.
- Realizing that there is a strong need in our city for better affordable houses and making it happen.
- Mixed income neighborhood with unique modern housing design to meet resident needs.
- Comfortable well designed interior and exterior living spaces.
- A performing arts center located on the footprint of the Trent Court housing authority building with underground parking and free tickets for young children.
- That all the residents can benefit from the CNI planning and implementation process- if awarded.
- Home ownership programs
- Beautification of living conditions, a united community, interaction with residents, diversity, respecting each other within the community, and helping to get a better understanding of each other are many ways to help contribute to the process.
- To have afterschool program/daycare for the youth, more privacy for each resident, more transportation options, and more social activities for the community.
- Including senior citizens in the more of the social activities around the community would be greatly appreciated.
- New development environment in economic conditions, better community developing, and coming together as residents to form a family structure will make this plan a success.
- That the lord will bless us to use our resources (money, family, jobs, etc.) To become self-sufficient.
- For our community to develop various outlets using different resources for the youth and the adults who are interested in participating.
- For attractive and good quality homes where we as residents feel comfortable and safe to raise our families in.
- More police security and more apartment buildings for the senior citizens of the community.
- Vibrant neighborhoods connected with sidewalks, bike lanes, tree-lined streets, and more parks/gathering spots where the community can come together and socialize.

Teams were then given time to write their concerns or fears on sticky notes and affix them to the poster paper. A representative from each team reported out the fears to the whole group.

I FEAR:

- That we will remain with the same old, ugly, small apartments, with no space to wash our clothes.
- That there will be no improvements of the housing developments, the living conditions, or the community itself.
- That residents will be displaced or that our needs will not be met or even heard.
- That the waiting process will force people to leave because the changes aren't accommodating the needs of the residents, the funding will be lost, and things will stay the same with no changes.
- Not enough stakeholder investments or the plan failing because of the lack of communication in the community.
- That nothing will be accomplished and things will get worse in the community.
- That at the end of the planning process, nothing will change.
- That residents will be priced out of the new units and forced to move out or that there will be no economic growth.
- That the housing development plan will not happen. We need that large amount of money so the plan can be put in action!
- Of living in a "controlled environment".
- Not staying focused and progressing to change.
- That mistrust and misunderstanding will hamper the communication and collaboration required for success.
- We don't get it right
- No compromise
- That the federal grant is not approved
- No new employment opportunities
- New housing development still doesn't meet the standards of the residents.
- Committee participation decreases
- Another recession
- That the planning process is meaningless and nothing will change within community.
- Failure
- That the plan will not come to reality and no actions will be taken.
- That this will cause increase in rent which is a major issue for families with low/and or fixed incomes.
- That none of the changes will take place. Expectations too high.
- That it will be harder for the senior citizens to find housing and residents will eventually have to find other homes to live in.
- A lot of obstacles and hindrances in the waiting process, and not enough being done.
- The programs will not be affective and the change is not really going to happen because no one really cares, everyone is pretending.

10. Closing comments: We promised to end on time (2 hours). Although we didn't complete everything on the agenda, we made a great start. Everyone was thanked and encouraged to return for the next meeting. We need a bigger venue!

11. Next meeting: Wed., April 8
3:00 pm
Location: Craven Terrace auditorium, 601 Roundtree St.