



New Bern Housing Authority and the City of New Bern

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

Transportation Working Group

Tuesday, April 7 at 3:00 p.m. at Development Services Conference Room

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Maurizia Chapman – lead, Kimberly Maxey, Mickey Miller, Belinda Humphrey, David Herndon, Dee Meadows, Jamara Wallace, Melissa Wallace, Rosemary Stark
Susan Namowicz, Tharesa Lee, Vana Prewitt

Guests: Brad Sceviour – City of New Bern Planning
Kelly Walker – Craven County CARTS

Handouts: CARTS Information (Brochure, Ride Guide, Ridership Numbers)
Area demographic Information
March 24, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Welcome and introductions: Each member introduced themselves.

Review of last meeting minutes: The group was provided meeting minutes from the previous meeting held March 24, 2015. Collectively all verified they accurately reflected the discussion.

Ms. Vana Prewitt requested a clarification to the issue of lighting be reflected today. She reviewed the blue print of the areas in question and it appears there should be sufficient lighting, but questioned how many of the lights work and what lumen area is covered. The map provided by the Housing Authority during the kickoff of the initiative shows there is little to no lighting within Craven Terrace. This was confirmed by the group members who attended the ride-along. Ms. Tharesa Lee pointed out that the lights initially installed are no longer up to code and therefore cannot be used.

Existing Conditions:

- a. **Review accident data – Lt. Linda Godette:** Lt. Godette was unable to attend the meeting today, therefore this information will be postponed for review until the next meeting.
- b. **Review CARTS ridership – Ms. Kelly Walker:** Ms. Walker provided the group with handouts that included a current CARTS brochure, a Ride Guide sheet that is not currently distributed, and ridership numbers for both the Red and Yellow loops. Ms. Walker explained that the loops cover the same locations, but each route travels in the opposite direction than the other. This was done strategically to alleviate the amount of time a rider spends getting to their destination, depending on which direction they are traveling.

The ridership information shows the total numbers of riders that got on or off at a specific stop on the loop, to date. This information has been provided to the consultants that are assisting in the Transportation Development Plan for CARTS. This plan will look mainly at the urbanized area, but also will look at the CARTS system in its entirety. The

urbanized area will be a piece of the plan that is provided through federal funding. The rural area is supplemented by state funds.

Ms. Miller questioned what the numbers mean in terms of capacity. Ms. Walker relayed that at any given time the buses are not to capacity. There are peaks and lulls each day as well as seasonally. The first busses of the morning and the mid-day busses tend to be closer to capacity. During the summer, ridership numbers are lower due to schools being closed.

Each bus can hold 14 individuals and one wheelchair. To increase the size of the vehicles means a different license and different drivers are required. Also concerns in increasing vehicle size are the narrow streets that must be navigated, along with additional regulation requirements that must be met. The busses can have the capacity to hold bicycles on the front of the busses, but they are not currently installed. Installing them requires consideration as it extends the length of the vehicle, riders need to know how to properly mount their bicycle, and there needs to be a plan for those riders who forget they have a bicycle; how do the bicycles get returned to the rider.

With the new urbanized area, the hours of operation will initially remain the same. CARTS feels they need to see how the new process works for riders and funds. The consultants will help watch where to expand and how to get there.

Ms. Walker encouraged additional questions from not only this group, but all citizens. They will hold public meetings during April, dates which will be determined, and she encouraged participants in these meetings.

Ms. Walker also encouraged participation at their Transportation Advisory Meeting, which will be held Wednesday, April 15th, at 10:00 am.

Suggestions were provided by the group to improve signage at stops as well as displaying route information. Suggestions included displaying route information on the side of the buses and adding information to signs at each CARTS stop. One goal all would like to achieve is having bus shelters for each stop. These shelters then could house route information. Ms. Walker advised the bus drivers do have the brochures and route information on the bus, but do not hand out unless asked.

Ms. Walker relayed that with the new urbanized funds, as they begin ordering new vehicles for the fixed route, they will include equipment with an announcement system.

- c. **Review demographic information – Mickey Miller:** Ms. Miller provided handouts with current demographic information included. The data compares Trent Court, Craven Terrace and the City of New Bern. Disability data for the area was not initially included, but the grant area including public housing has a 25% disability rate.

Ms. Chapman relayed the hope of coordinating a citizen focus group to reiterate their wants and hope for the area, and confirm the group is moving in the right direction.

Neighborhood Strategy: Ms. Chapman introduced Ms. Prewitt, advising her hope is we can create one goal with multiple strategies. We need to have a goal and a standard of measure prior to engaging the citizens in the area.

Ms. Prewitt posed the consideration that our categories are too broad. When asking the group what they envision for this area, responses included:

- ~ Connected / Interaction
 - ~Easy Transitions
 - ~Psychologically connected / welcoming
 - ~Citywide access to resources
 - ~More facilities & resources within community (ex: health, grocery)
 - ~Engagement from outside

Ms. Prewitt mentioned the number of empty lots and abandoned homes in this area. She feels this adds to the feeling of decay and abandonment for the residents. How do we rectify this to assist residents in feeling they live in a thriving community? Ms. Namowicz suggested the City of New Bern representative respond. Mr. Sceviour advised the City does purchase lots as often as possible and has a vision and plan for the areas. Ms. Miller reiterated stating she knows certain developers are considering these vacant lots for potential developments in the area. Jamara noted that part of the issue lies with the number of privately owned properties in these areas.

Next Steps: Follow up information will be sent to the group on dates and times for the upcoming CARTS Transportation Advisory Board meeting, as well as upcoming Public Involvement meetings that CARTS will hold in April.

Goal for the April 21st meeting will be to begin working on strategies.

Discussion and authorization on potential CARTS ride-along and whether we can gather data from CARTS passengers as they ride.

Group member list will be emailed to the entire group.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 21
3:30 p.m.
City of New Bern Development Services, 303 First Street