



New Bern Housing Authority and the City of New Bern

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

**Economic Development Working Group**

Tuesday, July 7, 2015 at 4:00 pm

Stanley White Rec Center, 901 Chapman Street

**Meeting Minutes**

**Attendees:** Roger Bellamy, Cindy Blot, Bill Brennan, Melvin Cooper, Ron Cox, Deedra Durocher, Vernon Guion, Joe Mansfield, Bruce Simmon, Jamara Wallace, Michael Rose Watson

**Handouts:** Meeting Agenda, Minutes from meeting of June 23, 2015, updated New Bern Choice Neighborhoods Economic Development Strategy Matrix, Five Points/Duffy Field Mark/Brand Research paper by Roger Bellamy

1. Meeting was called to order by Cindy Blot at 4:05 pm.

2. Minutes of last meeting on June 23 were reviewed and approved by those present.

**3. Discussion on Matrix handout:** A question was raised regarding use of a “% change” in the Metrics section for median income and employment rate and whether this was limited to Trent Court vs. the full CNI area. It was agreed the entire Choice Neighborhoods area must be included in any of our Metric and Strategies sections; it was further agreed to eliminate any percentage (%) goal and indicate a basic goal to “increase” median income and employment rate.

**4. Discussion on time frame of final CNI report to HUD:** C. Blot explained that the deadline for submission of the report from the City of New Bern has been extended; all CNI sub-committees need to submit their matrix and strategies to the consultants by August so they can prepare the final proposal to HUD for the new November deadline. There are still a lot of steps to get through and as stated often, there’s no guarantee New Bern will get approved with an implementation grant.

Five CNI programs have been accepted by HUD and they can be reviewed by the public online at “[CHOICENewBern.com/Resources/Sample Implementation Grants](http://CHOICENewBern.com/Resources/SampleImplementationGrants)”. C. Blot noted that it is interesting to see what HUD has funded for Implementation Grants and although New Bern does seem to be in line with much of what has been approved, there are other ideas we might want to consider. Smaller cities, like New Bern, may have a better chance of being approved since the overall funding for these grants has been reduced making the larger grants to larger cities unlikely.

**5. Discussion on Key Partners:** As a result of our last meeting, there was discussion on including new partners in our Economic Development strategies. Dawn Baldwin-Gibson sent C. Blot information on Genesis 457 and the work they are doing in the community (Joseph Community Farmer’s Market, Jobs for Life, and as site for NC Benefits Bank). There was additional discussion on what viable Community Development Corporations are still in the area and it was agreed there are far fewer than in past years.

There is a real void here, although it is hoped the new Accelerator may create one that will help with venture capital. It was suggested that the Uptown Business & Professional Association needs to be added as a partner. There was a question as to whether a partner exists who works with the previously incarcerated population and although there is a new group being formed, the contact information was not available.

**6. Discussion on housing components of the CNI proposal:** It is proposed that all of the current low income housing units need to be replaced and new units will be mixed with market rate units. There is understandable concern that gentrification will change the Duffyfield and Five Points neighborhoods, especially since only 27% of the properties in the area are owned by African-Americans.

**7. Discussion on Marketing/Branding proposal:** C. Blot had sent the proposal prepared by R. Bellamy by email to the committee prior to the meeting. She also mentioned she had found other funded projects for marketing and branding communities, although there was nothing specific for an African-American community. R. Bellamy shared his thoughts on the research he had done and said a Mission/Vision statement has to be strong and established from the beginning. J. Wallace noted that with 22 distinct neighborhoods in the CNI area, and the history of the passion folks have for their specific neighborhood, trying to get unity on a common image/brand will be extremely difficult. The Duffyfield Council developed a Strategic Plan a few years ago and found that neighborhoods are traditional, fiercely territorial, and don't see themselves as connected. An attempt in the past to have one common "umbrella" for the area was not successful and perhaps speaking with Bernard ? and Sue?, who were directly involved with the land, zoning, and community development would be helpful to see why these previous efforts failed.

R. Bellamy and R. Cox have been talking to folks about perceptions out there about Five Points/Duffy field. Establishing a 501c-3 organization would help gain funding, partners, and a working relationship with the City. J. Wallace mentioned that the Duffyfield Council already has the 501c-3 status designation and would be a logical partner to work with on this.

**8. Next Action:** R. Bellamy and others will continue to talk with residents and schedule a meeting to move this dialogue along and to work on defining the Vision/Mission for this project.

**9. Next meeting:** Tuesday, July 21, 2015 at 4:00 pm at the Stanley White Rec Center.

**10.** Meeting adjourned at 5:15 pm