



## NEIGHBORHOOD TASK FORCE

MEETING #10 – March 20, 2018



### MEETING SUMMARY FOR

Tuesday, March 20, 2018

6:00 pm to 8:00 pm

Family Investment Center

600c Ridley Circle

Newport News, VA 23607

### MEETING PURPOSE

To review HUD comments on the neighborhood sections of MRCN Draft Transformation Plan

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Brian Chenault, George Covington, Zach Elder, Donald Greathouse, Robert Lee, Sheila McAllister, Elizabeth McCoury, Christine Mignogna, Garrett Morgan, Joanna Palmeira, Marc Rodgers, and Morgen Tietjens.

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Robert Ally, Lawrence Atkins, Josephine Clark, BJ Fox, Ana Grace, Ephraim Harris, Sheeron Hedgepath-Sanders, Angel Henderson, JoLynn Holcomb, Kenneth Hundley, Felicia Jeter, Kaleah Jones, Tammy Jordan, Kenneth Lay, Michael Poplawski, Vernon Porter, Andy Stein, Shaun Stroble, Ernest Thompson, Rita Twiggs, Tennille Wade, and LaTonya Wallace.

### OTHERS PRESENT

None

—PRESENTATION MATERIALS ARE ATTACHED TO THIS DOCUMENT—

## 1.0 Welcome

Garrett Morgan welcomed task force members outlined the meeting agenda.

- CNI Updates
- Review HUD Comments on Draft
- Next Steps
- Questions

## 2.0 CNI Updates

Garrett Morgan briefed the task force on the progress of the three Early Action Activities: the construction of a new board walk at King-Lincoln Park, the development of a neighborhood branding strategy, and the installation of community art projects including fence art at Marshall Early Learning Center and Achievable

Dream Academy as well as a large mural on the western wall of the Boys and Girls Club location on Hampton Avenue in the choice neighborhood.

### 3.0 Review HUD Comments on Draft Transformation Plan

#### OVERALL COMMENTS

Garrett provided a summary of HUD's comments on the overall plan. Highlights include:

- The plan is well written, and its information is clearly conveyed. The strategies respond directly to many of the target neighborhoods and public housing residents' needs.
- Strong integration of People and Neighborhood strategies because of community influence of projects.
- The community engagement section was well stated and laid out the different entities involved in the planning process, who participated and what their roles were. It clearly states that the task forces came up with goals and strategies, which were reviewed by the steering committee and neighborhood residents. The plan identifies how Ridley Place residents and neighborhood residents were involved and the moving forward section describes how to engage residents moving forward.
- Great community engagement visuals and highlights which substantiates intense and inclusive community engagement.

#### NEIGHBORHOOD SECTION

Garrett led the discussion through the HUD's comments on the neighborhood section of the Transformation Plan. The comments were organized into a matrix by Britta Ayers, Manager of Comprehensive Planning and Project Manager of the CNI Planning grant. The comment matrix is attached below. The task force discussed each comment in depth. A summary of the discussions of each comment is as follows:

**18: "There are some key neighborhood issues that are not addressed in this section, such as (1) residents' concerns about how nearby coal plants affect the neighborhood's air quality, (2) the former Harbour/Dickerson site and how NNRHA will decide how to redevelop it, (3) how to address code violations seen on houses throughout the neighborhood, and the (4) condition of the neighborhood's Section 8 properties and how that might impact the neighborhood's future development"**

- Residents' concerns about environmental and health impacts of coal terminals
  - The task force discussed that the coal yard issues should be addressed from multiple angles in the transformation plan.
  - To acknowledge that the problem exists and that the efforts have been and are being made to mitigate the impact of coal dust on the MRCN, including the demolition of residential units on the former Harbor/Dickerson site.
  - To communicate to the community that the coal terminal is meeting state and federal standards with supporting documentation from engineering departments
  - Third, to reach out to the private companies in the coal yard to attempt to establish a dialogue about ways to work together moving forward.
  - Mr. Covington mentioned that increases in pollution in the area are not specifically from the coal terminal.

- Development of former Harbour/Dickerson site
  - The City ultimately would like the property developed with job generating uses. Both the City and NNRHA have determined that the site is not suitable for residential use.
- Addressing code violations & condition of Section 8 properties
  - Community Maintenance Program
  - NEAT Team Weekly Walks
    - More in-depth than community maintenance team
    - Includes members of Police Department, Codes, Public Works, and City Manager's Office
    - NEAT Team does not conduct assessment on NNRHA properties
  - Rental Inspection Program
    - Will provide summary of programs
  - Privately owned Section 8 properties will be covered by Community Maintenance and NEAT Team scope and discuss the renovations currently occurring at Ivy Towers.

**19: "It was also not clear whether you want to try to attract additional residents and consumers to the neighborhood and how you would do that"**

- Task force agreed that the purpose of the plan is to try to attract additional residents and consumers to the neighborhood by addressing neighborhood issues head on with clear, actionable strategies.

**20. "Looking ahead to implementation, it would be helpful if you assigned responsible parties to different strategies, such as planning and creating bike trails"**

- Responsibility for different strategies will be determined by the City Manager's Office Implementation team which has been meeting since January 2018 to prepare for implementation. Although some specific tasks have been assigned because of the nature of certain projects.

**21. "Could you enhance connectivity to downtown? Are there streetscape or other improvements you can make to help draw some downtown residents into the MRCN neighborhood?"**

- Connect to Downtown Vision, Garden Bridge, and downtown components of the Housing Plan.
- Language will be inserted into the section that connects the vision with the MRCN.
- Garrett will reach out to Engineering, Development, and NNRHA for additional information.

**22. Beyond complete streets work, could you do anything to improve cross walks on a more extensive basis to improve pedestrian safety?**

- Need to talk up two-lane streets, with on-street parking, and street lights at every intersection as existing traffic calming methods
- Improved signage, Creative solutions to cross walks, and traffic calming measurements.
- Creative solutions to cross walks etc.
- Garrett will follow up with Engineering for additional information.

**23. Who would install bike trails and paths? How would their locations be determined?**

- Garrett will follow up with Engineering for additional information.

**24. What traffic calming measures could you use to prevent speeding on one-way streets?**

- Data does not support perception of speeding and high risk for pedestrians
- Existing traffic calming measures in place
- There are also pedestrian signals at most major intersections and at schools crossings throughout the neighborhood.
- Garrett will follow up with Engineering for additional information.

**25. Do bus stops need to be improved to make them more user friendly?**

- Bus Stop Policy going to City Council for adoption in April 2018.
- Once adopted, bus stops within the MRCN will be addressed
- Garrett will follow up with Engineering and Planning for additional information.

**26. For metrics, tracking traffic accidents and fatalities that would also be useful.**

- Traffic accidents and fatalities being tracked by our engineering department.
- Task force agreed that it may be a good idea to include data in the report.
- The amount of traffic accidents and fatalities in the neighborhood is very low.
- Garrett will follow up with Engineering for additional information.

**27. What could you do to enhance the neighborhood's economic base? Will new Newport News Ship facility increase its market potential? How can you capitalize on its opening and the new workers it will bring to the neighborhood?**

- Garrett will follow up with Development for additional information.

**28. Choice and other housing and neighborhood revitalization activities offer great opportunities to incubate small businesses ran by neighborhood residents. Business could be placed in mixed-use building offer business sustainability support to create a win-win.**

- Garrett will follow up with Development for additional information.

**29. How do you activate Jefferson Avenue? Would temporary pop up shops be a viable strategy?**

- Task force enthusiastic about the idea of pop up shops
- Garrett will follow up with Development for additional information.

**30. Residents have voiced preferences for personal care and general clothing stores. Is it possible for the neighborhood to attract these types of retail establishments? Are there spaces where they could locate?**

- Garrett will follow up with Development for additional information.

**31. Is there a strategy regarding which commercial properties you hope to improve first? How can you incentivize owners to improve their properties?**

- Garrett will follow up with Development for additional information.

**32. Seafood / Farmers Market: Who would take the lead in developing this project? Where would it be? Could residents work here?**

- Development would take the lead developing this project.
- As a CCI, a suggested location was at 14<sup>th</sup> Street and Jefferson Avenue. Potential locations will be determined by land availability and additional feasibility studies conducted by Development.
- Strategies to ensure that residents would have the opportunity to work there are being considered by Development
- Garrett will follow up with Development for additional information.

**33. One goal is to strengthen relationships with existing job training and workforce readiness programs. Do you have a good understanding of why some residents are not currently using these services? What barriers have they faced to using these services and how could those barriers be addressed?**

- The City and its partners will work with peninsula council on workforce development and others to support workforce readiness.
- Garrett will follow up with Development for additional information.

**34. Bates Drive - How will you make sure that this trail remains safe? Could you incorporate CPTED into its design? It could be helpful to include a map showing where Bates Drive is.**

- CPTED is included in the design and reviewed through site-plan review process
- A map of bates drive will be included in the section

**35. Are there any strategies you could employ to improve air quality, since air quality is a concern for many residents?**

- Task force discussed how to balance public concerns with private industry rights.
- Agreed to focus on incremental improvements over the years and into the future to address residents' concerns about blowing coal dust.
- Garrett will follow up with Engineering and environmental services for additional information.

**36. Some other Choice Neighborhoods have started walking groups to increase physical activity and boost community cohesion. This could be an interesting strategy to explore.**

- Not currently in existence
- Explore ways to add outdoor exercise facilities along Bates Drive
- Work with Ridley Tenant Council
- May link up with Community Maintenance/NEAT team schedule

**37. Which populations are driving the crime and how could they be redirected?**

- Youth and Gang Prevention Task Forces
- Garrett will follow up with NNPD for additional information.

**38. Negative perceptions of the neighborhood's safety are a hindrance to new development. What strategies could you use to improve perceptions of the neighborhoods' safety citywide?**

- Can't change local media's preference to lead with crime and other high impact stories.
- Has to come from the community itself; improved communications of 'good news' can only go so far without resident leadership
- Garrett will follow up with NNPD and Communications for additional information.

**39. Do the police know where the target areas are for violence? Are there problematic properties that need to be cleaned up? Is hot spot policing needed?**

- Yes, police know hot spots
- Problematic properties are known to NNPD and Codes
- Garrett will follow up with NNPD for additional information.

**40. Is there any plan to address the corner stores or work with them to improve safety?**

- Codes policies - can restrict ABC Licenses if don't meet certain standards.
- Garrett will follow up with NNPD and Codes Compliance for additional information.

**41. What would adopt a spot program entail? Are there problematic properties that need to be addressed?**

- Has been used one time in the neighborhood – playground at Newsome house was cleaned by volunteers
- Garrett will follow up with NNPD for additional information.

**42. How would the police coordinate with the planning department to ensure new developments are taking advantage of CPTED?**

- Police are currently involved in the CPTED review during the site review process.
- Police suggest incorporating a mandatory CPTED review into the City Code.
- Garrett will follow up with Planning and Site & Subdivision for additional information.

**43. Statement regarding neighborhood expressing their concerns regarding subsidized housing residents sounds judgmental and one-sided. Recommend restating this activity to show discussion of mutual issues/concerns (Page 79)**

- Not sure what this is referring to
- Task force moved to the next comment

**44. What continuum of safety interventions will be orchestrated to reduce crime and sustain reduction e.g. increase successful reentry into community, prevent serious crimes via early intervention on non-serious, diversion programs for youth/first offenders, police/youth community relations e.g. education, sports, youth police corps.**

- Listed from NNPD for public safety plan
- Contact MaRhonda Echols, Gang and Youth Prevention Specialist
- Garrett will follow up with NNPD, Ms. Echols, and HRCAP for additional information.

**45. NN offers a rich history of arts; however, branding of the footprint and building off legacy of arts and culture noted in the historical section was minimal. Recommend integration into the neighborhood strategies. Strengthen current cultural programming centers. Create a destination e.g. museum – art, shipyard, fish market etc. – with intent on attracting folks to footprint to work, play, and educate.**

- Partner with Downing Gross, Wickham Avenue Alliance, historic centers in the CNI.
- Garrett will follow up with various cultural programming centers for additional information.

**46. What can you do beyond neighborhood clean ups and information campaigns to reduce litter? Does the neighborhood need more trash cans?**

- The neighborhood does not need more trash cans
- Existing facilities need to be serviced more frequently
- The trash just needs to be removed, frequency of service contributing more than any other factor
- Garrett will follow up with Community Maintenance and City Manager's Office for additional information.

**47. How will you highlight the waterfront throughout the neighborhood? Can signage help to point people to the water and increase utilization?**

- Task force agreed that signage is a great idea
- Linked into neighborhood branding
- Garrett will follow up with Engineering and Parks and Rec for additional information.

**48. Do you see the waterfront as a neighborhood amenity or as a larger asset that could help to bring people from other parts of the city to the neighborhood?**

- Task Force believed that the waterfront is both a larger asset that could help to bring people from other parts of the city to the neighborhood as well as an amenity for neighborhood residents.

**49. You want to expand your owner-occupied residential stabilization programs. What, if any, challenge have you faced in getting residents to use these programs in the past and how would you increase the number of residents taking advantage of these programs in the future?**

- NNRHA needs to increase marketing strategies and outreach efforts
- Many residents do not know about the programs or if they qualify

- Can link up with work of the NEAT Team and rental inspection program.
- Garrett will follow up with Community Maintenance, City Manager's Office, Development, NNRHA, and HRCAP for additional information.

**50. What would you do to encourage rental property owners to properly maintain their properties?**

- This comment is addressed in the response to comment 18.

#### **4.0 Next Steps**

Garrett discussed that the Task Force would not be meeting again before the Draft Transformation Plan is approved by City Council and submitted to HUD. He said that in the meantime taskforce members are encouraged to participate in CNI related community building activities.