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Steering Committee Meeting
Thursday, September 24, 2009 at 11:00 am -1:00 pm
Wealthy St. Theatre Annex
1130 Wealthy St. S.E. 49506

Voting Steering Committee Members Present

1. Sgt Elliott Bargas - Grand Rapids Police Department
2. Captain Eric Payne - Grand Rapids Police Department
3. Ray Tromp - Baxter Neighborhood Association: Resident
4. Pamela Benjamin - Eastown Community Association: Resident
5. Marian Barrera-Young - Baxter Neighborhood Association
6. Kathy Lett – City of Grand Rapids (alternate for Haris Alibasic)
7. Sandra Latham - Southeast East End Neighborhood Association
8. Stacy Stout - Baxter Neighborhood Association, Resident
9. Johannah Jelks – East Hills Council of Neighbors (alternate – Kathryn Caliendo)
10. Daniel Snyder – DEA (alternate for Mike)

Voting Members Absent:

1. Scott Vogel - Madison Avenue Neighborhood Association: Bus. Rep.
2. Tim Doyle - Kent County Prosecutor's Office
3. Mike Yasenachak - Drug Enforcement Administration (sent alternate – Daniel Snyder)
4. Haris Alibasic - City of Grand Rapids (sent alternate – Kathy Lett)
5. Kaye Hooker - U.S. Attorney's Office
6. Kathryn Caliendo - East Hills Council of Neighbors (sent alternate – Johannah Jelks)

Non-Voting Regular Attendees and Guests Present

1. Kristine Jaros - Central City Weed and Seed Site Director
2. Aaron Stevens - Grand Rapids Police Department Community Officer
3. Erica Hooser - Lighthouse Communities
4. Rashid Akbar – Omega Life Alternatives / Baxter Resident
5. Eddie Grover - STRONG
6. Georgia Taylor – Baxter Community Center
7. Essie Millbrooks – East Hills Resident
8. Jill Myer – Kent County Health Department
9. Justin Beene – Bethany / Urban Family Ministries
10. Takara Taylor – Lighthouse Communities
11. Josh Hansen – Wedgwood
12. Gwen Bailey - Bethany

I. Call To Order/Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 am by Chairperson Pamela Benjamin. Members introduced themselves. A quorum was present.

II. Approval of August 20, 2009 Minutes.

A motion to approve the minutes of August 20, 2009 was made by Marian Barrera-Young, and seconded by Sgt. Elliott Bargas. The motion to approve the minutes was passed.

III. Approval of Agenda

Stacy Stout made a motion to pass the agenda and Sgt Elliott Bargas made a second. The motion was passed and the agenda was approved.

IV. Introductory Ice-breaker with Stacy Stout

Stacy Stout requested that the group stand in a circle. An object was given to each person. Any homonym of “write/wright/right” was to be followed by passing the object to the person on the right-hand side. Any use of the term “left” would require the object to be moved to the person on the left-hand side. She told a short story progressively increasing the use of the two terms. She asked for an explanation of the exercise. Interpretations included: to increase awareness of listening carefully to the speaker; to acutely listen for actual terms; to focus on paying attention to what is being said; and/or to verify that what you heard was accurate.

V. Discussion : “Our Vision for the Weed and Seed Community” with Lee Nelson Weber

Central City W&S / September 24, 2009 (notes from flip chart sheets)

(Recap) August Meeting

- Agreed to continue effort
- Agreed to work toward a graduated site.
 - > 5 years
 - No money
 - First site in Michigan to graduate?
 - Access to:
 - Brand
 - Logo
 - Training
 - Technical Assistance
 - Boundaries
 - Board
 - Positive impact on other future sites
 -
 - New Fiduciary?

Looks Like –

- Increased stakeholder engagement
- Increased communication / training (communication needs to be both ways between agencies and residents)
- Increased collaboration with agencies

Purpose:

- Weed: GRPD is here (will continue to be).
- Seed: Forum. Are the agencies with us? Expansion?

Build – but why?

- Significant progress – more???
- Add momentum (random acts of kindness)
- Improve appearance / rehab (quiet but deteriorated – participant description of her street (Robey))
- Enable voice
- Facilitate partnerships
- Develop resources \$\$\$
- Information and Referral (mentioned by Stacy as an important function)

How?

- Active forum with communication
- Plan
 - Internal– Vision, Mission, Plan, Budget, Past/Future Statement. Concrete, leadership development, evaluate, accountability, training
 - External – Youth (+++), Domestic Violence (+), Appearance (+)

- Plan / Do / Show
- Mission Statement – know community!!!
- Spend 5 year practicing for graduation status – i.e. get ready for new posture.
- Staff Support
- Space
- \$\$ + In-kind
 - Fundraising campaign (80% - 20%)
 - Large Grants (Drug Free Communities) Suggested by Josh Hanson.

What are we organizing for?????

Vision

- Safe
- Empowered and engaged
- Enhanced quality of life
- “choice” neighborhood
- Diversity – race/income/lifestyle
- Integrity
- Depth
- Large area – term used to describe W&S area since it encompasses more than a single neighborhood, and is not attempting to carve out a “new” neighborhood identify but support existing.

Mission

- Bring people to table
- Voice
- Connections
- Prosperity

Budget

1. FY2009 (calendar year 2010) begins 11/1/2009 = \$142,000
2. FY2007 audit issues in process of being resolved (calendar year 2008)
3. Require Graduation Year 1 plan from recipients

5th Year

- MOUs
- \$\$
- Partners
- Goals
- Data – suggestion by LNW that future, post-grad efforts of W&S be data-driven not only with regard to crime stats but also neighborhood quality/activity measures.

Subgroups

1. Planning
 - a. Vision / mission
 - b. implementation (roles)
 - c. Evaluate / Data
2. Budget
3. Marketing

(If our Central City Weed and Seed becomes a successful graduated site, we will be the first in the State of Michigan to accomplish this achievement.)

VI. Budget

Kristine Jaros included within the meeting packet a summary of the budget from FY 2008 (to be spent in 2008). She explained that GVSU was still working with CCDO to close out FY2007. We have received our 5th and final award for next year in the amount of \$142,000. GVSU is working to have those funds released for our use.

A discussion ensued around changes in the new budget. As we are transitioning into a “graduated site” status, we need to consider whether we will keep the existing budget, or cut some items from the budget in order to use it in preparation for the future as a graduated site. If cuts are to be made, then decisions will have to be made about where the cuts should be implemented. We would need to confer with our partners to learn how vulnerable their programs would be to a proposed cut, as their sustainability would impact proposed cuts. This concept of the implementing the final stage of our federal grant will be on the next agenda of the Steering Committee.

VII. Resident Empowerment Engagement Plan

(Discussion postponed.)

VIII Announcements/Up-Dates/Public Comment

Public Comment from the Steering Committee:

Discussion was renewed related to time and places for future Steering Committee meetings. Night meetings may attract more community participation and more attendance by elected officials. More institutional sites might be available during evening hours. It is also more likely that a rental fee would be imposed for these hours as compared to using space without cost during the day. This discussion will be continued at the next meeting.

Pamela Benjamin asked each person to present an opinion on the discussion with Lee Nelson Weber. The majority of those present said it tended to clarify some issues related to the condition of being a graduated site. Most agreed that when addressing the concerns of neighborhood residents, we should focus on concrete items rather than abstractions. It was stated that a written example of a plan for a graduated site was helpful.

Announcements:

Kristine Jaros stated that she would e-mail members information enabling them to make their selection of membership on one of the following three committees: Planning, Budget, or Marketing.

The next scheduled Steering Committee meeting is on Thursday October 22, 2009 at the Wealthy Theatre Annex at 1130 Wealthy Street S.E. from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Ray Tromp

Next Meeting

Thursday
October 22, 2009

11:00 - 1:00

**Wealthy St. Theatre Annex
1130 Wealthy St. S. E. 49506
and**

THURSDAY

November 19, 2009

(Time and Place as stated above)