

People Taskforce Meeting Minutes – June 1, 2014

The People Taskforce convened at 1:00 pm at St. Peter's United Church of Christ

Welcome and Introductions were made by Rev. Ferguson and Betty (BJ) Adkins, Co-Leads. Rev. Ferguson provided a historical overview of the church building. The building in which St. Peter's UCC is currently located in was an old grocery store that is a good example of economic development in Russell area.

Taskforce Structure, Roles and Responsibilities

Rhae Parkes, EJP Project Coordinator, presented a breakdown of the taskforce roles and responsibilities. The four taskforces include Housing, Neighborhoods, People and Education. (See power-point presentation, attached)

While there are four primary task forces, each task force can establish smaller, topic-based subgroups if desired. The taskforces will consider the following during the planning process:

- How does downtown affect Russell, vice versa?
- Current Beecher residents will be given preference for new units
- Focus on the numerous amenities Russell has, not just its drawbacks
- Plan appropriately scaled for neighborhood population

Taskforce Responsibilities

- Create successful, long-term outcomes for families
- Determine how often to meet
- Inform others about the Choice Neighborhood Initiative, its planning process and the Russell Transformation Plan
- Cultivate extensive partnership networks
- Implement a community engagement project to garner community input and awareness of the Choice Neighborhood Initiative
- Review data sets to understand the Russell neighborhood's position on community needs and revitalization
- Develop applicable strategies and recommend them as a part of the Transformation Plan

End Goals of all task forces

- Jan. 16, 2016 - transformation plan outline to HUD – few pages, bullet points of main People plan recommended strategies
- July 16, 2016 - draft plan to HUD
- Jan. 16, 2017 - final plan to HUD – clear action/implementation plan

There are four (4) phases of planning work. In Phase 1, the LMHA and Choice Neighborhood Coalition members are gathering data through questionnaires and surveys. The preliminary analysis of this data will be presented on July 21, 2015, to all taskforce and coalition members. New Directions will coordinate the efforts in hiring 5-6 community engagement workers to assist with obtaining the questionnaires and surveys from Russell residents. Phase 2 will begin after July 21st meeting to begin community engagement and development of the transformation plan strategies.

The Transformation Plan

- The plan will be supported by evidence (has a certain idea been done somewhere else? Was it successful? How can it work for Russell?)
- At a minimum, the transformation plan must include a plan for developing individual action plans with each Beecher Terrace family and tracking each family for 5 years (conducted by Louisville Metro Housing Authority)
- The Plan extends to neighborhood residents and addresses the topics of Health and Wellness, Employment and Work, and Education

Data overview

- 78% response rate for Beecher Terrace resident surveys
- Neighborhood surveys will be commencing shortly
- Plan has to be data driven, feasible to implement, fundable and have general community backing

Community Engagement

Community input very important focus. A variety of meeting and event types will be use to gather input. Photo Voice was a recommended strategy for the People Taskforce to use to engage the community and gather input.

People Taskforce Visioning

- Better outcomes for families through human services plan
- Main focus on Beecher residents
- Where are jobs, including jobs in Russell? How do you connect residents with jobs when they are created? Public transportation barriers?
- Crime, health, employment; how do they all intersect?
- Prioritize new jobs created in Russell for Russell residents
- High number of disabled residents, work with them to meet their needs
- Infrastructure a huge barrier for the area; 9th Street barrier
- Plan needs to be flexible, able to grow, have leverage
 - o Start planning with current resources, but don't end there; look for new financing availability elsewhere
- Important to have input from a diverse groups of residents

- Make sure to connect to other task forces to make sure plans aren't in conflict (Rhae will help facilitate this aspect)
 - o Task forces will jointly convene occasionally
 - o Co-leads of task forces are also on coordinating committee, able to hear info and filter up from co-leads from other task forces, and to speak with each other
- Aware of spatial mismatch between transportation and jobs
- Pushing hard on public policy to put focus on West Louisville and Russell

Open discussion:

- Comment about assuring that single person's point of view is considered and not just families.
- Responses to vision exercise on how to make Russell/Louisville a better place to live
 - o Jobs staying in Russell
 - o Businesses that give to community
 - o Better resources like a local place to apply for jobs, jobs with a living wage
- Need for people from recovery or correctional facilities to receive help finding and keeping jobs
 - o Often living in half way house where rent is due each week, job far away that is difficult to reach reliably, lose job, can't afford half-way house, then go into debt trying to stay or go back to crime to support themselves or their family, cycle begins again
 - o Need transitional help
- What are opportunities to grow entrepreneurs in neighborhood (Food Port will need landscaping, etc, can they hire a local Russell business?)
 - o Help getting small businesses registered as section 3 business for preference in government bidding
- Want an economically diverse and connected neighborhood
 - o Russell currently very isolated, even within itself
- Market study: maybe profile current businesses, may be an opportunity for more jobs in current places that were unknown previously
- Bring in mixed-income, without displacing current residents
- Making Russell a destination for Southern Indianan's heading towards downtown, and visa versa
- Traceable expenditures: low-income households do spend money, but is it within or outside of the neighborhood?
 - o Improve available banking services and increase the number of people who are using banks
 - o Mobile banking: 5th/3rd mobile sign up received 75 new accounts within 3 hours
- Connection between People task force and work of Choose Russell (Manfred Reid/New Directions)
 - o Role of residents in governance

- Want to draw in youth: "Photo Voice" - give children cameras and ask them to document what they like about Russell, and what they want to change

Next set meeting – Tuesday, July 21st at 10:00 am tentatively at LCCC with other task forces to discuss the existing conditions report