

Mayor's St. Paul's Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: April 12, 2018

Minutes Prepared By: Susan Perry

1. Purpose of Meeting: To define the purpose and charge of the committee and to define the work ahead.

2. Attendance at Meeting

Councilman Riddick	Councilwoman Williams-Graves	Glenn Porter	Robert Murray
Don Musacchio	Brodie Parker	Lavonne Pledger	Deirde Love
Fr. Jim Curran	Ruth Jones Nichols	Kirk T. Houston	Tara Saunders
Shamika Kirby	Earl Fraley	Michelle Cook – <i>not present</i>	Dr. Melinda Boone – <i>not present</i>
Caz Ferguson – <i>not present</i>			

3. Agenda

- I. Welcoming Remarks – Councilman Riddick and Councilwoman Williams-Graves
 - a. Defining the Work Ahead
- II. Introductions
- III. Committee Goals and Process
- IV. Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI)
- V. Next Steps

4. Meeting Notes, Decisions, Issues

- I. Welcoming Remarks – Co-Chairs
 - a. Councilwoman Graves provided background information on the importance of the St. Paul's transformation to the City and why the members were chosen to serve. She noted that this is long and hard work but that it is important work to our residents.
 - b. Councilman Riddick talked about past urban renewal efforts in Norfolk and how they failed to take care of people. The committee's role is to hold the process and the City and NRHA accountable for ensuring these efforts are different than those of the past. He asked each member to introduce themselves and express what they feel they bring to the table on this important issue.
- II. Introductions
 - a. Committee members introduced themselves and provided a brief synopsis of the history that had brought them to care about the St. Paul's area and want to serve on the Committee. These responses are summarized at the end of these notes.
- III. Committee Goals and Process

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- a. Councilwoman Graves reviewed the charge and process with the group and explained that this group was designed to provide guidance to the City and the Housing Authority on both the physical and importantly, the People First initiative that will provide supportive services to people.
 - b. Establishment: The Advisory Committee was appointed by City Council to provide leadership and work collaboratively with residents, City Council, the City Manager and Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority on the revitalization of the St. Paul's Area.
 - c. Goal: To provide guidance to the Mayor, City Council and other public partners on strategic issues related to the St. Paul's redevelopment initiative. This Advisory Committee will provide the City and NRHA with broad input from the community through the various expertise and perspectives of those who are committed to advancing the lives of residents who live in the St. Paul's area and throughout the city of Norfolk.
 - d. Duties and Responsibilities: Assist in shaping the guiding principles and direction of the redevelopment plan that will serve as a guide for the area's future over the next 20 years; Provide guidance and input on the planning and implementation process to include the following: 1) Supportive services plan, People First; 2) Neighborhood improvement projects and other proposed transformation activities
- IV. Choice Neighborhood Initiative (CNI) Opportunity
- a. City Manager Doug Smith provided an overview of the Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant opportunity. He informed the committee that at this time we have more questions than answers but that in the Federal budget, there was another round of Choice Neighborhoods grants.
 - b. He noted that in the Fall there was a round of grants that we decided not to go after because we didn't feel like we were far enough along in the process to do so – we were still holding community meetings and gathering information from residents.
 - c. In the past the City and Housing Authority received a Choice Neighborhood planning grant which provides considerable context for the implementation grant. He noted that these opportunities tend to come up quickly and don't leave a lot of time to decide. He said that members of the City and NRHA teams spent the afternoon talking through the opportunity and decided that it makes sense for us to submit a joint application between NRHA and the city for the Tidewater Gardens community.
 - d. The CNI grant calls for One for One housing replacement of affordable units in Tidewater Gardens. Some of these units will be onsite and some will be offsite.
 - e. The CNI is an opportunity for the City to receive a \$30 Million grant - hard to pass by, and will payout in the next 30 days.
 - f. The City Manager reminded committee members that as we go through this generational project, there will be times when we will need to pivot and that the opportunity for this funding is one of those times.
 - g. He wanted everyone to know that this is in play and didn't want for it to come as a surprise.
 - h. Based on the information we are receiving, we believe there will be approximately 5 national grants made by HUD with awards happening by December. Applications may be due as early as August – come with a lot of requirements including the development of a plan, the securing of a housing lead, the number and type of housing units to come back and a lot of community engagement.
 - i. We don't yet know the timeline but believe it will be quick – 60-90 days once the application is announced.
 - j. The City Manager also talked about the visit by HUD Secretary, Dr. Ben Carson. While Secretary Carson was in town, the City and NRHA made three specific asks – designation of census tracts in the St. Paul's area as "Opportunity zones" (see attached one pager); favorable review of our CNI application, and maximum flexibility in regulations during implementation.
- V. Questions and Comments

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- a. Ruth Jones Nichols: How much would CNI and Opportunity Zones align with what residents want? In terms of Opportunity Zones, will they be like New market tax credits where we found they were a valuable tool, but around for a while before we know how to use them?
- b. City Manager Smith and NRHA Executive Director John Kownack reiterated that CNI aligns nicely with the People First program proposed by the City and built from resident input from community meetings. The three focus areas are: People (supportive services), Housing and Neighborhoods. For Opportunity Zones, we are talking with local partners like Bank of America who have folks on the national board helping us understand how to use them and how they work. We are still learning and the rules haven't yet been written – however we know that they are designed to bring private investment into the community. The City submitted census tracts to the Governor which prioritized St. Paul's; Governor took extension and will submit the Commonwealth's zones to the Treasury later this month.
- c. Rev. Murray: The City is close to having money through these tools. Concern is that developers or investors coming in with money will build a mall or something that is not what the community desires and people will be displaced. City Manager responded that the CNI is focused on housing. The City believes, based on resident feedback, that the area should also be a job center – with mixed used, mixed income housing and employment opportunities that help residents increase their financial independence. Ms. Graves also reiterated that we need NRHA to submit the demolition application so that we can stop rehousing; go door to door to assess families and create plans that will help families.
- d. LaVonne Pledger: Why is People First date so close to the demolition application? So how are we going to get people ready without a lot of time on the front end? Ms. Graves indicated that at some point we need to indicate that the people living in the community at this point are going to be the ones who are eligible for People First. Therefore, we are closing the door to new residents but not starting demolition right away so that the current residents have time to work with the People First program. Mr. Pledger said this made sense to him now.
- e. Councilwoman Graves said that People First is funded by General Fund dollars through the proposed tax increase. If we get CNI, then that gives us more money for supportive services and housing. She said that in the past, we had a plan but no money. Now, it's a perfect storm with the planning and the money coinciding.
- f. Councilman Riddick posed the following questions to the group - What happens if we don't get any money? What can we do today? He told the group that NRHA and the city own a lot of land and thinks we should find a developer who is willing to take a chance and build new housing. He also challenged the group to think about what we can do today to improve character, literacy, and the lives of young children today. He talked about the many churches in the area and proposed that if they strategically divided the community and mentored and worked with children on life skills and character building and worked with parents on financial literacy and parenting, then we could begin making a difference immediately. If the City covered maintenance and insurance costs, each church could take 30 children. We have capacity to do things if we work together.
- g. Lavonne Pledger - My vision is for funds to be brought back into the community (TMC, TWP, churches). Historic stakeholders, starts with me. Community should truly get a piece of what is going to happen. People should be able to come right around the corner and get services. Peer-led, community-based. Employ them, invest in them.
- h. Deidre Love - Contracts coming in should be required to hire within the community. We should always ask ourselves, does this reduce poverty? That should be our guide or litmus test on everything we do. We should be challenged to do things together. Organizations stop working in silos. We must step up to the challenge.
- i. Councilman Riddick reminded the committee that we are not just building a place for people to live, but improving self-sufficiency.

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- j. Don Musacchio said there are two different tracks- one is people focused, and one is physically focused. Kirk Houston said there shouldn't be separate tracks and Don agreed that both are important and our job as the committee is to connect the two.
 - k. Ruth Jones Nichols mentioned that the committee needed to understand the background and context of the project. It was said that future meetings will provide this background information.
 - l. Kirk Houston reiterated what Mr. Riddick said and agreed that the faith community must take ownership of the people first aspect. Could be collaborated, blended, modified. Life skills, financial education, empowerment.
 - m. Councilwoman Graves summarized the discussion with three takeaways:
 - i. What can we do now? How can churches collaborate?
 - ii. City must continue to move the big ship forward with the work that must be done to apply for the CNI grant.
 - iii. Guiding Test: Does it reduce poverty and does it improve the lives of people?
- VI. Next Steps
- a. For planning purposes, the next meeting will take place on May 17 from 6 to 7 pm
 - b. A survey will be distributed electronically which will secure an ongoing meeting date and elicit information from committee members on measures of success and immediate next steps.

Introductions: What organization do you represent and what do you bring to the table around this topic?

Tara Saunders- ULI

Native of Norfolk, used to come to St. Paul's on Saturday evenings to go to St. Mary's ULI - best land use project of this size. Development of healthy thriving community of all income levels, walkable community.

Kirk Houston- Gethsemane Fellowship Church

Believe the development of St. Paul's that city is doing is right. The People First program is the right approach. Brings accountability so that all residents can thrive and have high quality of life.

Ruth Jones- Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia

Clear understanding of the need by people; those they serve are making hard decisions between paying bills or choosing food. (Serve over 800 on Fridays, many from the St. Paul's communities). Grew up in subsidized housing, has personal experience.

Deidre Love- Teens with a Purpose

20 years in the community helping teens empower one another through art. Activism in the community. Spends most time in the community, the organization is making a difference through lens of youth.

Pastor Jim Curran, St. Mary's Basilica

Sees people every day, loves them, cares for them. Residents are good people, one disaster away from being on the street. Often misrepresented. People First is key. Will bring integrity and authenticity.

Glenn Porter- Queen Street Baptist

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Church has been a part of Downtown since the 1800s. They have feeding program on Tuesdays; NA group-serves 1,000 a year; Clothes closet, food pantry, tutoring, emergency services. Invested in DT corridor. Excited, but in community and congregations there's fear and concern. He can help articulate.

Rev. Murray- First Baptist, Bute Street

Been around a long time, seen a lot. Can help residents handle change. Help promote truth and trust. No matter what economic status might be, everyone deserves a decent life.

Don Musacchio, NRHA Board Chair

Chair of the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority Board of Commissions. Understands that the solution of the past, is the challenge of today (around housing). Wants to avoid mistakes of the past that cause people to mistrust NRHA. Guiding principles are important and will be front and center in all they do.

Brody Parker, Tidewater Garden resident

Born in Young Terrace, now lives in Tidewater. He looks at kids growing up today and wants better for them. Wants good educational project in this rebuild. Says the community is a wreck today and that parents need help too. Notes that residents have to change too – "You all have been babysitting us too long." Please make a change.

Lavonne Pledger- Young Terrace TMC President

He is an Activist in the community - eats, sleeps, and breathes Young Terrace. Needs to make sure his community is represented. Collecting data of what we want and need to be at the root of this revolution. Happy to be here, going to be at all of the meetings. Last night, someone was shot and killed in the community.

Paul Riddick, City Council member, Co-Chair

Character has been diminished. Norfolk's 3 chances at urban renewal was not good. Norfolk now looking to gentrify all public housing as it did with Ghent. He wants to make sure that all living there now have a safe, sanitary place to live when the dust clears.

Angelia Williams Graves, City Council member, Co-Chair

Integrity, truth, fear, community, vision, purpose, change. All words that are good descriptors of what the community is feeling. Be the truth, your organizations are serving the community. When they come with fear and mistrust, we need you to be the agent of truth. People First is most important part of it. In order to have a beginning, people in the room have a responsibility to be the agents of truth.

Earl Fraley, Chairman of the Planning Commission

Been involved in envisioning of St. Paul's Quadrant since the beginning. Has traveled to several Purpose Built Communities and thinks that nothing approaches the size of what Norfolk is taking on. Understands this is a major undertaking for the city. People First is critical. Believes this is a historic initiative that will make the city and residents proud.

Shameka Kirby, Calvert Square TMC President

Come with a lot of concerns that things being said will actually come to fruition. Accountability.