

# Outreach Team Meeting Agenda and Notes

January 12, 2021 6:00 –7:30 PM

## ZOOM Meeting

### 1. Welcome & Introductions

14 members of the OT were present.

### 2. Draft goals/objectives so far – how we've gotten here

Staff gave a brief overview of work to date creating Goals and Objectives for the plan. This is the final group of objectives for the Comprehensive Plan to begin getting community input on.

### 3. Draft goals/objectives so far – OT Break Out Group Discussion

Break Out Room Questions:

1. What do we think about these objectives?
2. Do these objectives seem to reflect resident input? Why or why not?
3. Is there anything that didn't seem right to you or that you think we should change?
4. Is it possible to envision how these goals would be applied to our community?

Group 1 Themes: (1) Innovative and Accessible Schools; (2) Safe, Supportive, and Nurturing Schools; (3) Equitable investment in Schools; (4) Accessible, Affordable, and Supported Training Opportunities; (5) Equitable and Affordable Health and Wellness

*Overall comments*

- I like the objectives
- I don't see things about neighborhood schools. There needs to be a lot more citizen buy-in. There is a tremendous amount of school property that is not being used – it could be used for so many other things like teacher housing. These objectives involve a lot of needed community support. We need targeted funding to help achieve these objectives.
- All of the school-related objectives look good here. I am trying to learn and absorb what I can during this discussion. How can we equitably improve things for people in Durham? More privileged community members can help improve conditions for others.
  - Podcast Recommendation: Nice White Parents

*Innovative and Accessible Schools*

- The first paragraph should be bolded, not just the last sentence in the paragraph.
- Why is there an emphasis on school properties instead of just schools?

- Merritt Moore has a community garden – is this a trend in the community and is this allowed at other Durham schools?
- As someone who works in disability services, I appreciate the inclusion of students with disabilities in these objectives
- The objectives seem to summarize most of the overarching themes related to resident input on schools.

#### *Safe, Supportive, and Nurturing Schools*

- I would like to further discuss the school to prison pipeline. The curriculum does not allow school children to go out and play enough and there are not school counselors who are able to check in with students. A lot of children have emotional issues and oftentimes, these kids get labeled as “problems”. You never know what is happening at home that can create or cause issues at school. School is no place for police officers. Students are learning and being trained to be a prisoner at schools. I don’t see this happening in charter or private schools. Children at different schools are not being given equal opportunities to succeed. There needs to be more emotional support and athletic activities. Students need to be in a positive environment, not a negative one where there are police officers and they can be arrested. Teachers are not being paid enough and this leads to lack of passion for teaching students. Children need a positive learning environment with teachers who want to teach. How can we get parents to care about their own kids? Does Durham have schools that have dual-language programs?
- Glenn Elementary school was grossly underfunded and underrepresented. The way they shuffle the kids in and out so much harms its students. You can eliminate a lot of children acting out and violently if there were more extracurriculars available. With more available extracurriculars, after school transportation will be needed for kids to participate. As children, we walked to school from elementary school through high school. Parents used to be more engaged, but now schools are not community schools – they are too far to walk and students need to take the bus. Schools put kids who did not speak English with the kids who did – this needs to be changed. It is not fair to the children or teachers who need to learn and relay information to work in these conditions. If you can’t communicate with someone, how can you learn?

#### *Equitable investment in Schools*

- Equity. Durham schools need equal funding and students’ parents need to be more engaged to help improve funding for schools. Specifically, Glenn Elementary is a lower-income school compared to other schools like EK Poe and others which need better funding.

#### *Accessible, Affordable, and Supported Training Opportunities*

- We have many of these pieces in place already, but we need clarification on what exactly needs to be done. If someone has insight to share about how we can get folks more involved or how we can ensure the community shows up - please share! The objective says “we need more programs, etc” - but there already are a lot of programs out there. We need clarification on what needs to be done. Is it getting people more aware of the programs?
- If people don’t know about something, they can’t access it. There needs to be a concerted effort to make things more accessible in Durham. I would separate out the word innovative from

accessible. When I think of innovative I think of technology, design, etc., and when I think of accessible I think of walkability, accessible for people with disabilities, accessible via transportation etc. These terms need to be better clarified in this objective. In terms of accessibility, we need to go to the community instead of having the community come to us.

#### *Equitable and Affordable Health and Wellness*

- Health disparities are a real thing across the board and in Durham. We need to make decisions which consider these disparities and that help everyone in our community. Everyone needs access to healthcare.
- The third line in the objective seems like it is not talking about innovative so much as it is about being equitable. This is done all over the world already, so we need better will, instead of innovation, to bring things to all parts of the community.
- This objective needs to do a better job clarifying what it means by the word innovative, specifically if it is referring to land use innovations.
- This objective needs to better center around people with disabilities. This discussion can be added to the last sentence in first paragraph. Information on health disparities should be included in the background paragraph showing a snapshot of how different groups are impacted by health decisions.

Group 2 Themes: (1) Public Spaces: Equitable and Safe Access, (2) Affordable and Intentional Activities and Events, (3) Welcoming, Inclusive, and Celebratory Public Spaces and Events, (4) Inclusive and Intentional Seniors Opportunities, and (5) Intentional and Supported Youth Opportunities

#### *Overall comments*

- Interested to see how some of the objectives that are less land use related will be incorporated; noted that these five objectives are really inter-related - seniors and youth don't have as many spaces to go
- Like that the objectives are laid out with clear vision with what we want, like that it includes quotes from residents; a big part of the physical environment is rethinking the way residents interact with City and County staff, wondering why the relationship of residents to police force only brought up once in the schools objectives
- The Comp plan is looking way into the future, maybe this can help us think forward about the future instead of looking back at the past

#### *Related to Schools*

- schools, well written captured the situation from the schools, overcrowding was missing, relates directly to planning and community planning
- reimagine school property at public property; are residents allowed to be on playground on schools that they don't attend? If they can be used by the neighborhood
- years ago stopped making school property available public because of liability

- usually not allowed to use a school unless the principal is there; see a lot of effort around the schools, it's hard to talk about when kids aren't in person until next year at least, how do we plan for the next pandemic, learn from this experience and be more prepared for the next one

#### *Related to Health/Wellness*

- disappointed in Durham in responsiveness in giving out vaccines, behind other counties, more investment in our public health infrastructure
- saw reference to City of Medicine, a lot of conversation in the world about health instead of medicine and care – what if we were the City of Health instead

#### *Public Spaces: Equitable and Safe Access*

- In talking about public spaces and vulnerable groups, law enforcement is really important; police need to have the pulse on the neighborhood, UPS and post person have a real pulse on the neighborhood these days; it used to be that multigeneration families would know our neighborhoods like this
- The transportation connections to public space is really, really important; very unhealthy that there are not enough sidewalks, if you don't have a car you can't get places safely, but non-car transportation needs to be prioritized, want to be able to walk through neighborhood and have public spaces to get to know neighbors, Savannah has public park every 3 blocks or so – connectivity with public spaces really important
- We have goat paths right next to street rather than sidewalks in my neighborhood, elderly folks getting off the bus having to cross the street to try and access sidewalks, need to make sure sidewalks actually connect

#### *Affordable and Intentional Activities and Events*

- The time youth are missing in in-person education during COVID is really concerning; what kind of activities can young people go to in order to make up for lost instruction/education, can we use public spaces to do some of this?

#### *Welcoming, Inclusive, and Celebratory Public Spaces and Events*

- If we're not using these spaces now because of COVID how can we use them creatively or save money in not using them? How do we put these to good public use? What can we do for folks already here to help them use these spaces before everyone comes in from outside and buys them up; focus on residents here now

#### *Inclusive and Intentional Seniors Opportunities*

- Wondering if we are thinking about the new normal post-COVID, and have we thought specifically about public spaces for age 55 and older residents
- There are many new housing communities that are restricted to 55+; Would like to mixed types of housing instead
- A regional report from TJCOG Durham among the highest number of seniors moving in, really interesting thought to connect youth and seniors;
- connecting youth up with seniors for reading or math buddies, have a lot to offer and share,

- We could look at innovative models for combined elder and child care (check out this example) <https://www.edenalt.org/about-the-eden-alternative/>

#### *Intentional and Supported Youth Opportunities*

- increasing internet access for everyone is really important now; also consider connecting youth up with seniors for reading or math buddies, have a lot to offer and share, but seniors may be scared to be around other people now and parents don't want kids around other folks (in COVID), need to think outside the box for at least this next year; what can be done in spaces that can't be used right now, for instance hot spot buses?

#### **4. Draft goals/objectives so far – Full Group Discussion**

##### *First break out group*

- The school to prison pipeline is a huge problem – children do not have activities to burn off steam or counselors for emotional support. Parents often don't want their kids to be labeled, causing them to not receive needed help and leading some to act out. There are also language barriers in schools separating children. Students are being treated as prisoners - being trained to be prisoners in public schools and low-income neighborhoods. Kids are made to feel like they are nothing and they have no futures. Kids, especially if they get involved with a gang don't think they'll make it past 20 years old. They have extremely vulnerable minds which are being shaped – they are being told and treated like they are worthless and not like they have value or can achieve their goals. Money needs to be spent on school counselors, and on teachers (who are not receiving enough pay and are losing passion about teaching).
- I heard that teachers will not be getting retiree health benefits moving forward.
- Prisons are a money maker – clothes/shoes/sheets made by prisoners. Prison systems are making money on prisoners. Prisoners can't get jobs and go back into the system. Its like a new plantation. If children, despite race/ethnicity are treated this way, they will end up in the system.
- These discussions tonight have been very enlightening. As we continue to have these conversations with one another, many topics and objectives seem like common sense. We need to acknowledge the intentionality behind why these things are the way they are.
- We need to better utilize public property owned by schools. Without activities, nothing is going on at these schools after hours. People had more ownership of their schools because they used to be in their own neighborhoods.

##### *Second break out group*

- Durham is the City of Medicine, but what would Durham look like if it lead with prioritizing health and wellness opposed to just medical treatment?
- Our group focused on public space, youth and seniors. One inspiring thing coming out of this discussion was the idea of seniors working with youth in different types of environments - like at schools.

## 5. Finishing up

- Notes from this discussion will be posted on the EngageDurham website as well as included in a meeting follow-up email
- These objectives will be added to Social Pinpoint platform this week. Please help us share the SPP opportunity to comment on objectives and share images of your vision for Durham! Staff will share the links out in the follow up email.
- Engagement Ambassadors are currently seeking input about all objectives other than housing/neighborhoods (do we have any summary info we can share from EA work on housing)
- We received feedback from 175 residents through EA sessions around housing objectives in November/December.
- Ashley shared some COVID safety information conveyed through Duke – transmission is happening in many cases when people are eating together; are reinforcing the recommendation to only eat with people in your household
- Our team will be giving a Comprehensive Plan update to JCCPC on Wednesday February 3
- This is our last objectives review meeting – as we pivot to what’s next – please share feedback/suggestions on how we can improve our communication with you all and facilitation of meetings.
- Thank you!