

Outreach Team Meeting Agenda and Notes
September 29, 2020 6:00 –7:30 PM
ZOOM Meeting

1. Welcome & Introductions

15 members of the Outreach Team 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 a first chunk of work to start having conversations with community around goals and objectives.

Questions from the Outreach Team:

Is there an order to objectives?

- Not random, but not prioritized. The first one, Intentional, Informed, and Involved, seems to emerge as an overarching theme and seems to be the most talked about and important theme.

Are the quotes from residents exactly the way residents they wrote them?

- Yes, they are as recorded. They may not be direct quotes but direct reflections of what was written in the listening and learning sessions.

Instead of people of color, can we say explicitly Black people and Latinx people? Also, use the term residents as more appropriate than citizens of Durham.

- Yes, we will make those changes. We also had a focus group discussion with providers working with and organizing Hispanic/Latinx residents. We are working to incorporate more specificity based on their concerns as well.

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

Group 1 - Themes: Healthy, Safe, Dignified and Welcoming Housing; Rooted and Connected Communities; Honoring and Celebrating Culture and Community

- What do we think about these objectives?
 - I like how we are all combining the themes. It seems like people are unhappy with not being recognized across all themes. There is a disparity in how people are being welcomed in Durham.
 - Black people are not at the table and are not able to be a part of community conversations. The City needs to work more with the residents instead of the developers. Will email a presentation which talks about Durham's past and affordable housing.

- They felt very connected / heart-felt. I am new to Durham, so some of the past references did not resonate. How can we take the concerns of the residents and merge new and old residents in future meetings?
 - We need to have something in there about holding the developers accountable for schools, water treatment plants, fire infrastructure etc.
 - How do we incentivize new development to instill all of these values into new development? It seems like people are not happy with where they currently live – how can we make it a community priority to pay for improvements? Look at making existing neighborhoods better.
- Is there anything that didn't seem right to you or that you think we should change?
 - In addition to sidewalks and street trees, we need greenspace and parks.
 - 2nd sentence in “Rooted and Connected Communities” Have more information on those taxes. How can I as a resident impact taxes and where they get spent? In terms of racial labels, using the appropriate title – African American vs Black, Latino. Expand this and determine the most appropriate title to make people feel the most welcomed.
 - Residents are paying money to the City and County – that money needs to come back to my community in the form of improvements.
 - Word usage: I do not have a frame of reference of what is correct or not, but I think it needs to be more intentional.
- Is it possible to envision how these goals would be applied to our community?
 - Do Comprehensive Plans have an appendix? Is there a communications plan that we can include in the appendix to ensure we are being efficient and effective in communication with residents and build community trust?
 - I think there is a lack of signage showing people's history would help. The community needs more visual reminders opposed to paper handouts.
 - This is going to take money and resources. We need to shift our resources or make an additional monetary investment to accomplish these objectives. How do we come up with these resources?
 - Live next to Stagville and a descendent of slaves. A lot of slaves migrated from one place to another. I don't mind seeing the monuments or statues, but reparations need to be done so we can be equal. As long as you have communities that are not invested in, you will continue to see disparities. All those things are good, but more concerned about black people having money to live.

Themes: Accessible Housing and Neighborhoods: Designing for Everyone, Accessible Housing and Neighborhoods: Resources for Thriving Lives, and Affordable Housing

- What did you think about the objectives?
 - It seems like these are the most important
- Do these objectives seem to reflect resident input? Why or why not?
 - Yes, sees quotes reflected in the sessions they held.
 - Honoring and Celebrating is good

- Agrees that some of the stuff they're doing bringing people from out of state instead of utilizing people in the city
 - How can we make sure that we get affordable housing? These objectives sound good but how can we make it happen? Very concerned about maintaining housing. Working with homeless population and help teach them how to maintain housing...can people afford to pay taxes? Can't just put stuff on paper and make it look good. Referenced this article <https://www.wral.com/a-look-inside-a-roach-infested-durham-housing-authority-apartment/19305442/>
 - Need to have the right people in place; people in our neighborhood are talking about how we can have our property to be passed on to our children so property won't be taken by developers
 - What would you change about them?
 - Notes about specificity in POC and expounding on safety to include environmental justice
 - Doesn't see something about there has to be a re-establishment or building of trust with the city and residents. People don't trust what they're told. Like with MacDougald Terrace—residents believe that this is strategic to get them out of there and build up other properties for other levels of income. So much broken trust and people aren't going to believe that it's not true. Consistently look around and see communities uprooted and displaced. Out of state people are moving in and investing. People living their entire lives can't afford to live there anymore. Broken trust and people in office operate under the same white supremacist perspective and give contracts to people out of state with no interest in what's happened.
 - Can you envision these goals being realized in our community?
 - Yes. Some people, long standing residents, that at some point in time they felt safer and more connected in their communities than they do now
 - With rapid growth there's going to be trouble with competing forces of sprawl and greenfield development. Some of the building is not going to be transit accessible. With density there's other cost problems and gentrification pushing people out and building high rises and I'm hopeful that we can provide housing and push growth to be more sustainable with how people want to live.
 - Honoring Obj: Who was the Durham 150 celebration marketed to? Seemed like a fancy party and the people who built this city were not invited, not reflected in the audience, makes the culture for consumption and not appreciation. If the people you're talking about can't even come to the place to see the city's bicentennial celebration that says a lot. Durham has a progressive façade and doesn't do anything to try to help people. All these artists in the city and we pay people from outside the country to paint a mural. Paid thousands to bring a moon downtown. The quotes are well reflected in Honoring Objective.
 - What are we going to look back in 50 years as the next Hwy 147 and destruction of culture and neighborhoods—what do we need to put in this plan to prevent that?
 - Opportunity at Fayetteville St Projects

- NCCU is contributing to the gentrification problem too.
 - Moved 4 times because developers buying up property and worried about lower income properties with this bond coming in. When there's money thrown at a situation, a lot of people are shuffled around and fall through the cracks because there's no accountability.
- What kinds of actionable policies could emerge in the comprehensive plan from these objectives?
 - How this could work? Are there things that can be made to policy?
 - Reference of language around Police Station example when council asked about make-up of staff, living wage, community benefits etc.
 - Is this going to be shared with City Council and County Commissioners so we can get a move on these? Some of these are immediate needs.
 - Should we watch CC and PC meetings to get to know the process better? Group said yes! You'll notice the loudest people in the room.
- Miscellaneous
 - Noticing buzzwords (in other places) that sugar coat what is happening with gentrification, like mixed use, and being disguised as affordable housing when really it's just a percentage and the rest being targeted towards a certain income bracket.
 - How much housing is being taken by Duke students because of COVID and financial decisions in duke's best interest. And there are people still struggling with places to live.

Group 3 – Themes: Intentional, Informed and Involved Development, Integrated Housing, and Innovative Housing

- What stands out – lots of decisions around affordable housing, displacement, start encouraging conservation development for affordable housing especially, lots of development happening in rural areas, City can't force developer to do affordable housing, consideration of a path out of poverty through home ownership, programs through HUD or builders programs, folks get in public housing and then can't get out
- Is it true that requiring affordable housing be provided in development is not allowed by the state in NC now (yes)
- Is this a place we would want to say – there are some rules we don't like, but there have to be rules, if we say Durham wants to require more affordability in every project, can we add to legislative agenda?
- All 3 of our objectives really pertain between race and diversity of neighborhoods, integrated, in this city your income determines where you'll be able to live, lots of affordable housing is not actually affordable to folks, diversity is a big thing for bringing neighborhoods together separated by class and in the schools – segregated, bringing more neighborhoods together, unified situations for each neighborhood
- Thinks largely by choice, lots of people don't want affordable housing in their neighborhoods as it's associated in peoples' mind with crime, Durham has a high crime reputation, Durham has always been a more cultural City that they have in Wake

County, great to have diverse neighborhoods, but may naturally evolve based around income levels, affordable housing

- Rules for developing affordable housing are not as good as for other types of housing if neighborhoods need trees, affordable neighborhoods need trees, first reaction was – will we be allowed to make edits, much softer than what came out of listening and learning, needs to be punched up, share in Google drive for group to make comments
- Easements being promoted, they prevent development, northern Durham county – nothing but small scale farming, govt paid not to farm crops for 10 years, difficult to go back on farm when got paid twice a month and now just once a year, younger people are moving away and not farming, taxes weren't paid when parents passed and now belongs to the state,
- Conditioning provision of affordable housing and development permits, legislative goal, make housing more affordable from income level – boosting minimum wage,
- Have we talked about – for development downtown, things funded by city discussed budget shortfall, for affordable housing – after eviction hard to get housing; find out how bond projects are impacted
- Resident involvement is SO important only the residents know what's going on how it floods, what traffic is like, and the topography, so much developers can learn by partnering with communities rather than shutting them out
- Neighborhood meetings – are they well attended?
- Neighborhoods with some structure tend to be more well attended than those that don't have that organization already; the one at Angier Ave only one local resident against and 3 for, got a delay, second meeting no one from the community showed up, feel hopeless if trying to pull the neighbors together; bringing different people and nationalities together
- Liberty st situation last week, McDougald not up to par still, we probably don't know all the issues these residents are facing, follow up find out what DHA is planning

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

- Themes and objectives are going in the right direction. Definitely things in Durham need to change- laws or legislation- and ideas and thoughts about what is affordable housing and people who are on the lower income spectrum, what they deserve. I don't think it's fair that the city keeps people in a cycle of poverty.
- Reinvest in the residents who live here. Low income folk work really hard and work three or four jobs just to stay afloat. The climate is changing and more middle income folks are going to have to deal with this situation too. Pathway out of poverty and take advantage of HUD programs and really demanding and structuring accountability of developers. A lot of these themes are dead on. But the key part is a pathway out of poverty and pathway to homeownership for low income residents and providing adequate public transportation. People in public housing rely on public transportation but it's segmented and not where it needs to be.
- It's a hardship to have to pay city and county taxes. Part of keeping people in poverty— why do we have to pay both? A reason why a lot of black people stay in poverty. When you're building development in Rural areas, I've been annexed out but paying all these taxes and no money coming back in community. No bus stops—people walking three or four miles to get to the bus stop just to get to work. Developers have to be held accountable- adequate bus stops, sidewalks, Elderly people using wheelchairs, young adults pushing strollers, school buses. Blind spots in some areas. What about the outside infrastructure? Not just downtown. Developers should put 100-150 affordable houses if they're putting in 400 houses.
- Durham City Council needs to be concerned with residents who are already here instead of ultra concerned with who might move to Durham, who might need housing. Have enough apartment complexes that are not full. I think the communities of color are not getting the support that they need rather than putting the emphasis on people who might move to Durham.
- There should be a law set where people cannot predatory buy in low income areas; recommends movie, Residue on Netflix. It has to be a level playing field- white people are always taking from Black people. We haven't thrived, we haven't prospered. We should be in place where everyone is living equal, eat, afford medications, worry about doctors bills—that's the struggle of Black people. Minimum wage isn't enough in Durham. Shouldn't have to be having this conversation we're having on this zoom call.
- As a Lyft driver, 90 percent of riders are heading to work and living out of hotels. Maybe ten or eleven dollars minimum wage and spending seven to take a Lyft. Never can get out of the hole. It's very discouraging watching the City Council meetings and never ending cycle on same old stuff giving developers these contracts who have no investment in Durham.
- New people are moving here because of jobs - companies locate here. Companies are incentivized by developers to move to a specific location and city can incentivize through tax cuts for the company and promising a certain amount of housing employees to live. What's happening is not random. It's a planned thing. A lot of the changes that need to be made are at the state level. And some are federal. We should consider this

as residents—who you vote for and to really make ourselves knowledgeable about the candidates.

- It'll be interesting to see the impact of a native Durham resident on City Council.
- A lot of opportunity in the Triangle. I saw a lot of companies coming here with extremely attractive salaries. Prices a lot of people out—bidding war on any house under 300k. Save more and prices low income and working three jobs out of option of buying a house. Our public housing is terrible and put a lot of people on edge with this pandemic. Wage gap is going to expand.
- Citizens advisory council meetings 4th Monday of the month if anyone's interested in attending
- Share out Braggtown PowerPoint shared at Planning Commission hearing

5. Finishing up

- We'd like to schedule another meeting in about a month to get feedback on another chunk of work – will send Doodle poll by email
- Sharing a version on google drive for the group to provide comments on
- Will be sending out project updates through the ENGAGEDurham email list at the end of the week or early next week - focused on sharing out the Transit Plan survey, starting recruitment of Engagement Ambassadors, and letting folks know we've updated our Comp Plan and Transit Plan websites
- Upcoming JCCPC meeting October 7 at 9:30am - Agenda link:
https://durhamnc.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/_10072020-1557