

Minutes from the Neighborhood Enhancement Stakeholder Meeting 3/10/08

Convened by Robin Henderson.

Police Report:

District Five has used some money from Take Back Our Streets to fund overtime in the CUF area. There have been 216 extra hours of patrol from Feb 1 to Feb 23, 2008. 20 arrests have been made, 4 vice arrests have been made, 82 parking violations, 3 pedestrian violations, 31 moving violations, and 2 gun recoveries.

Central Vice Control had two sweeps into CUF:

1. There has also been a Reverse Prostitution Sting in CUF on 2/15/08. 7 arrests made.
2. A second Reverse Prostitution Sting in CUF on 2/20/08. 10 arrests made

District 5 is conducting a Crime/Blight perception survey. Top 3 blight concerns are: litter, abandoned property/neglected buildings, and dark streets. Top 3 crime concerns were: robbery/mugging, drug use/sales, and theft.

District 5 has also been trying to work with Hughes High School. There have apparently been more problems with the Hughes kids, including crime and vagrancy. The police spoke up about their frustration with the situation and the lack of support from Hughes. Dorothy was mentioned as a contact person for community liaison to Hughes.

District Five will be conducting a Landlord/Tenant Class at the Police Academy from 6 pm to 8 pm on March 26th, 2008. The program is citywide, not just for our area, but it would behoove us to get the word out to the landlords.

There was a lively discussion at this point about the landlords. The police and UC have been working to create a Landlord Accreditation Program and Landlord Registry. The idea is to give an incentive to the landlords (aka free advertising on the UC website for properties that are "accredited."). The problem remains on how to enact this and how to decide what goes into accrediting the landlords; who will pay for following up with them; who will pay for inspections of properties (suggested to be \$30 per location). There is only so much the police and health department can do. What we have not explored is civil action. Sandra had thought about an idea with the landlords filling out a form and having it notarized, attesting to each property and stating what accommodations and codes that have followed (for instance, fire alarms, door locks, heating and air conditioning, off street parking, carbon monoxide tested, dishwasher, etc) We could possibly put health code rules and regulations, as well as a copy of the Landlord/Tenant Law into such a document that state the bare minimums expected from a building.

An interesting comment by the police here was they are as frustrated as we are about some trouble properties, but they have been unable to do much so far. The example was

given that there is one known property where the landlord collects 2200 a month in rent and tells the tenants they will not get the 3000 dollar deposit back, so the tenants take that as free reign to trash the property, have parties, etc, without fear of repercussion from the landlord. It was at this time that we did turn the discussion to what are civil law mechanisms, outside of criminal law mechanisms, for dealing with this. Rob Neel agreed to look into this.

It is clear that the situation with absentee landlords is one of the biggest problems we face. A sign up sheet went around to get people involved, including residents and landlords, to find common ground.

More lively discussion about the police talking to the health department and other agencies about especially troubled houses.

District 5 will be conducting a DUI checkpoint at Clifton and MLK on 4/26/08.

Public Services and Litter Control—Health Department

Bill Jacoby talked about scheduled sweeps for trash violation. The first is scheduled this month but has not happened yet. The last one like this was in August to September when the students moved in/out.

We did ask about changing trash day to Monday. Not sure where we stand on this as Debby was communicating with them for us. We will discuss this on Thursday.

Mr. Charlton was unfortunately not present to discuss new cans for the neighborhood. Robin did talk about the new recycling bins that they have for the neighborhood. And to help people with knowing what can and can't be recycled, they have these awesome stickers that they are putting in all the new ones and Robin has extra so when we go out on the April 4th day event, we will be able to hand them out or do some guerilla recycling bin "stickering."

Fire

Fire Department inspected the 43 properties identified by CHIA:

Calhoun: Arby's and Hardy's, No fire code violations, just weeds.

Calhoun between Hartshorn and Moerlein: parking violations on McMillan

329 Emming: Unfinished west side

339 Emming: No fire code violations, just graffiti

2249 Flora: Structural problems

2354 Flora: Building orders posted on door. Recommended for Nuisance Building Hearings.

2360 Flora: On Nuisance Building Hearing for 2/29/08

6 Fox: Weeds, needs fill

2223 Stratford: Siding is off the building
2227 Stratford: On Nuisance Building Hearing for 2/29/08
2541 Vestry: Porch roof with defects, under construction
2223 Victor: On Nuisance Building Hearing for 2/29/08
143 Warner: Fall hazard for firefighters
161 Warner: Fall hazard for firefighters
168 Warner: Rubbish in the rear of the structure
2301 West Clifton: Dangerous!! Vacant and open structural issues
247 West McMillan: Fire violations, soffits are rotting

I did not hear what the results of the Nuisance hearing were on 2/29/08 or what that means.

The Fire Department has been working with the Building Code Inspectors to begin inspections for overcrowding 3/11/08.

The Fire Department will be working with KCB and UC to hand out smoke detectors on 4/5/08 with the Recycling event and Community Clean Up events.

Buildings and Inspections:

468 inspections, 351 buildings have been issued over 1176 individual violations. 82 vacated buildings have been identified for possible demolition or other enforcement. 7 Buildings have been declared public nuisances and are in the demolition program.

Next sweep is for overcrowding.

Transportation and Engineering

Tim Jamison came and presented. Contact information is office 352-5296, and email is tim.jamison@cincinnati-oh.gov.

His department is working on two issues: street size and sidewalks. The CHIA neighborhood walks had identified certain street areas that were troubling as far as width when there was parking on two sides of the street (2 spots on Emming, 1 spot on Klotter, 1 spot on short Stratford, etc.). Hopefully, after they investigate and see the street with cars on both sides and that two cars cannot get past each other, they can get rid of parking on one side of the street or talk about making the street one way only.

We did not get to talk about sidewalks, though.

Keep Cincinnati Beautiful

Robin spoke. Due to Mother Nature's fickle ways, our big event for Saturday 3/8 was cancelled. Ravine Street Clean Up will happen on 3/16/08 at 1 pm and meet at the corners of Warner and Ravine. The University Christian Church/Clifton Community CleanUp, originally planned for 3/8, has been moved to 4/5/08 but I did not catch the time.

The Recycling receptacle hand out and distribution event, as well as the stickers for what is recyclable, has been moved to 4/5/08. I did not catch the time.

Robin has been meeting with representatives from CHIA, CUF, UC, CHBA, and the city agencies to try to coordinate. Goals to increase recycling and to help educate students and residents about trash issues and what can be done are well underway. Robin has mainly been trying to work with the different groups to try and make sure efforts are not duplicated and to help us find ways to communicate even better.

Planning for the Great American Clean Up is under way now. Robin is trying to coordinate with CHIA, CUF, the Block Captain Program, as well as UC and Give Back Cincinnati for that day. Still trying to pick a big target for Give Back Cincinnati, so Laura Kleckner was meeting with Robin to figure out the best targets. Schorr Alley and the carpet company were targets talked about. Laura had been the liaison last time Give Back Cincinnati came here and we are glad to have her working with Robin.

Probation crews are coming with better weather to help us clean, as well.

People Working Cooperatively

Nina Creech presented and got her first list of troubled buildings and will start cross referencing with existing clients. Then they will be trying to reach out to the people not yet already established.

May 10th, 2008 will be the repair affair, where they are trying to get people with carpentry and home repair skills to help people with no money. Like our own little Give Back Cincinnati, except for those in our own neighborhood. She is looking for volunteers.

Duke Energy

Reported repair of 35 lights so far in the area. The reports of the night walk were very helpful.

CHIA

Compiled over 400 neighborhood block reports on individual properties. Individuals walked around on the coldest day of the year, making notes and then submitting them to a database.

Drafting a plan for subsidized garbage cans and will be given money from 5/3 to subsidize these. These are intended for landlords and homeowners and businesses. They will be subsidized at 50% of cost, limit 2 per person or group. They come in different sizes, including a 32 gallon and 96 gallon can. CHIA will be voting and discussing this Thursday to finalize these plans.

Ideas for changing trash day and Debby Herman has started talks for this. Not an immediate change likely to happen, but we are hopeful for the future, as most trash is generated on the weekends.

Completed a Night Walk to identify dark areas and broken/burned out street lights. Duke has already responded to this and reported fixing 35 lights already. Congrats! The CHIA lighting grant is still in place, and people are still welcome to apply for this. Jim Wilson is still the man.

UC

Working on a tiered program for the landlords to help create a system of advertising on Blackboard in return for “good landlord” behavior, whatever that might entail.

UC Police adding additional patrols to overlap with the District 5 police. They have also been trying to help coordinate with CPD and CHIA about lighting grant issues.

They will also be planning to hand out window alarms to students in CUF.

They continue to work with student groups to help educate about ways to increase safety.

Next stakeholder meeting: Monday April 14th at 5:30 pm at the CHCURC Office on Ohio.