

Neighborhood Building Blocks Fund - Public Input Sessions

Georgetown, September 13, 2016

Overview/Presentation:

Matt Lintner:

- Offered summary of Fund followed by introductions of NBBF board and staff members present.
- Explained role of agencies that comprise NBBF board of directors.
- How can the agencies and programs work together with more collaboration with reference to community development, particularly as it relates to crime prevention?
- These public input sessions offer opportunity to talk about issues and opportunities in an effort to bring people together and better address crime in our hardest hit communities statewide.
- Provided overview of purpose of the fund: Strengthen neighborhoods and prevent crime; improved crime prevention and citizen empowerment

Kathleen Jennings:

- Background on establishment of NBBF, including law, economic development, housing, planning. "Anything that reduces crime is our job."
- Many things affect crime: Streetlights, cameras, playgrounds, activities, presence of people, vacant lots replaces with urban gardens, farmers markets, parks and greenspace, often with opportunities for nutrition counseling. Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED). Changes in the physical landscape (broken windows, boarding up and securing vacant houses, removing vacant buildings) can reduce crime.
- Beyond changing the physical environment, ensure that youth have something to do. Keep teenagers and school children active in productive ways, especially after school (3-7 p.m.) I.e.; sports, mentoring, creative arts and giving them a safe haven. Higher graduation rates = lower crime.
- The board is seeking ways to reduce crime that are not typical.
- The NBBF is meant to work in conjunction with DDD's and other programs/activities.

Connie Holland:

- Very involved in local jurisdictions statewide. Much of State funding goes into infrastructure and zoning; comprehensive plans for local jurisdictions have been developed in all jurisdictions statewide. People are empowered through public meetings and being able to provide input in the planning process. People are interested in healthy living: availability of dentists and healthcare providers, etc. We need healthy, safe communities.
 - World Health Organization definition of "healthy communities". See **ATTACHMENT A**.
- What would you like to see in your community?
- How can we best coalesce efforts between agencies/activities/programs?

- We are seeking many decision-makers on the opportunity at hand with NBBF and seeking to have healthy neighborhoods.

Marlena Gibson:

- Provided overview of housing activities such as rehabilitation, new housing, etc. programs, but housing alone is not enough. Considering now the synergies of housing, projects, activities, needs, etc. can better address needs.
 - Strong Neighborhoods Funds: Demolition, acquisition, rehabilitation; vacant and abandoned properties often by non-profit housing developers
 - DDD-spur private investment in designated downtowns and neighborhoods; rebate program for real property investments.

Bernice Whaley:

- Economic development derived from small business and downtowns spurs opportunity.

Diane Laird:

- Provided overview of Downtown Delaware, DEDO's resource center on downtown revitalization that facilitates work of designated Main Street communities, commercial district affiliates, and small business owners through technical services and training.

Matt Lintner:

- Provided overview of priority types of proposals, per NBBF regulations. (See Power Point slide 11)
 - address unmet needs of high crime areas statewide
 - improve resources and opportunities for at-risk juveniles and adolescents
 - increase the use of planning that incorporates crime prevention strategies
 - complement projects funded by DSHA's Strong Neighborhoods Revolving Housing Fund
 - support revitalization strategies in and around Delaware's Downtown Development Districts
 - support community planning consistent with OSPC Healthy Communities principles
 - support communities in DEDO's Main Street Program
- For Regulations: <http://regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/title1/400/479.pdf>

Public input from attendees:

Lee Ann Walling (Principal, Cedar Creek Consultants):

- Representing the "newly minted DDD" of Laurel, she would like the board to consider implementation of DDD's plans, such as actually writing ordinances (to affect issues resulting from vacant landowners, for instance, and ensuring that domestic calls are not limited to a certain number per home), creating design standards, zoning, etc.
- Would like to better understand how NBBF can complement DSHA's Strong Communities program. (Lighting, sidewalks in NBBF potential proposal to complement SC program.)

- Would like to see a strategy to give a place for youth to go, possibly like getting a community center started in a historic school that is closing in the Town of Laurel, or maybe retrofit it into a community policing center.
- Address vacant properties issues.
- Nature-based playground in Laurel is under consideration; funds may support such a project.

Gene Dvornick (Town Manager of Georgetown):

- Town of Georgetown is leveraging dollars from many sources: Lighting has been installed, as well as trees for beautification, downtown design standards are now in place, as is a façade improvement program (several façade, signage projects on East Market Street in Georgetown have been completed to date and have improved the face of the street.)
- Town does not have sufficient staff resources.
- After dark, people do not feel safe.
- Circle to park to little league fields for broad band access, now security cameras.
- Large number of condemned properties in Ward 1, town now cutting grass; some houses have been torn down and playground completed.
- Boys and Girls Club is seeking a “home” in Georgetown.
- Funds for consultants are necessary.
- Pictures of properties could be amassed with resources (intern project?)
- Incentivize people to invest in properties.
- Trace properties to their source and deal with them.
- GIS would help. (Connie)
- Several other related questions:
 - Would GIS help?
 - Are there opportunities from UD Institute for Public Administration?
 - How about a Circuit Rider to work with Office of State Planning and Coordination?

DuPree Johnson (Sussex County Action Prevention Coalition - SCAPC)

- Does a lot of work with youth, families since 2012. Has built a sustainable coalition which has five chapters (one in each of five towns). They hold annual youth events that garner 250-300 attendees. Attendees learn a lot and get excited at these events (where they show documentaries, enjoy creative arts, etc.) but there is a lack of ability to follow through on a regular basis. SCAPC is now seeking a “rites of passage” program so the momentum could continue beyond the day event into after school activities. Kids are bored after school. They have offered a program at the prison, pre-release center (pilot program with nine inmates and a 0% recidivism rate.) Woodbridge High School took it on and a two year program yielded a great outcome. Sussex County only has one program, and thus the kids must go to Kent County’s alternative school. The “rites of passage” program covered the need in Sussex County when it was available.
 - Georgetown, Laurel, Lewes, Seaford, Milford are locations of the five chapters.
- “Remove the demand and the user and supply will go away.”
- Drug-free communities grant has never been used in Delaware. *NOTE: It may be this one:*
<http://www.samhsa.gov/grants/grant-announcements/sp-14-002>

- See www.SCAPC100.org (Sussex County Action Prevention Council)
- On Sept. 24th 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.: all coalitions are coming together and Mr. Johnson requested a representative from NBBF.
- Mixed age groups come together. Retirees are a very large population in Sussex county and they have been found to be very willing volunteers, particularly in Lewes.
- Mr. Johnson's organization took nine young ladies to Bailor Prison to meet with prisoners, which offered a life-changing opportunity. On the SCAPC website, there is a documentary that has taken the place of the tours for which funding may have been depleted.

Amy Mendelson (AECOM)

- Smaller towns cannot compare with the larger communities in terms of crime. Yet small towns have a proportionately significant amount crime. Can there be programs for communities with population of 2000 and under?
- Revitalization is just as necessary where crime is prevalent (drugs for instance) and streetscape improvements could go a long way toward affecting the crime issues. Frankfort is improving their park and the community has been making wonderful use of the park for youth (basketball, etc. and fitness trail and many activities). A parking lot to serve the park is essential though unaffordable at this time.
- Resources for the small towns are often minimal. They don't have town planners, for instance, that could provide training and workshops.
 - NOTE: *Training on a statewide basis may help planners regarding SPTED.*
- As a daughter of a home-economics teacher...Amy supported the value of home-economics which is missing in much of today's communities.

Kevin Banks (Church member of Mr. Johnson's church)

- Would like to work for Boys and Girls Club. Sees children with nothing to do after school. Mr. Banks is passionate about young children on the street and those that have come out of prison. They need a basketball court and other places to go and things to do to keep them busy together. Peer pressure. "Let's figure out a way for the cool thing to do, to be the right thing."

Ramona Pickett (SCAPC)

- Taught knitting, crocheting, sewing, and other activities and the males often enjoyed the creative process more than the females. She believes all kinds of local activities...music, skating, arts and creativity in general...would be valued.
- Places are needed at no cost in a supervised setting to provide something different for them to do...different activities...gardening, cooking, grocery shopping, nutrition, health and beauty aids, laundry, mending clothes, "home economics", farm to table, etc.

Receipt of applications is targeted for this fall (later October/November).

Presentation/audio of meeting: <http://dedo.delaware.gov/Small-Business/Downtown-Delaware>

For information: <http://dedo.delaware.gov/Small-Business/Downtown-Delaware> or contact Diane Laird: Diane.Laird@state.de.us or 302-577-8477

Guest Attendees: Kevin Banks, Sussex County Action Prevention Coalition (SCAPC); Lee Ann Walling, Cedar Creek Planners; Amy Mendelson, AECOM; DuPree Johnson, CEO SCAPC and local Pastor (New Genesis Rock of Love Christian Ministries); Gene Dvornick, Town of Georgetown Town Manager; Ramona Pickett, Exec. Secretary of SCAPC/Milford Public Library staff; Midline Estimable, Sussex County Health Coalition (SCHC)

Board members present: Bernice Whaley (NBBF Board Chair), Connie Holland (OSPC), Kathleen Jennings (DOJ Matt Lintner (DOJ), Greg Patterson (DOJ)

Staff present: David Edgell (OSPC), Marlena Gibson (DSHA), Diane Laird (DEDO)

ATTACHMENT A

Definition of a “Healthy Community”

According to the World Health Organization, health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of infirmity. A **healthy community** is one that continuously creates and improves both its physical and social environments, helping people to support one another in aspects of daily life and to develop to their fullest potential. Healthy places are those designed and built to improve the quality of life for all people who live, work, worship, learn, and play within their borders -- where every person is free to make choices amid a variety of healthy, available, accessible, and affordable options.¹

Healthy Communities are based on the following principles²:

- Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being.
- Social, environmental and economic factors are important determinants of human health and are inter-related.
- People cannot achieve their fullest potential unless they are able to take control of those things which determine their well-being.
- All sectors of the community are inter-related; sectors need to share their knowledge, expertise and perspectives and work together to create a healthy community.

Qualities of a Healthy Community include:

- Clean and safe physical environment
- Peace, equity and social justice
- Adequate access to food, water, shelter, income, safety, work and recreation for all
- Adequate access to health care services
- Opportunities for learning and skill development
- Strong, mutually supportive relationships and networks
- Workplaces that are supportive of individual and family well-being
- Wide participation of residents in decision-making
- Strong local cultural and spiritual heritage
- Diverse and vital economy
- Protection of the natural environment
- Responsible use of resources to ensure long term sustainability

¹ Adapted from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/about.htm>

² Adapted from Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition <http://www.ohcc-ccso.ca/en/what-makes-a-healthy-community>