

# NPU-T Executive Committee 2009 Leadership Retreat Notes

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## **Melanie Opening:**

Melanie offers thanks to Bonner Scholars and Spelman for hosting. Also thanks members of the executive committee and Kwabena.

## **Kwabena Opening:**

Discusses the challenges and fundamentals of creating healthy neighborhoods, and connected these goals to NPU-T. "The basics are not enough."

What can we do to imagine the possibilities of our community?

- Build cohesion and determination among the group over time
- Retain passion and vigor toward community affairs
- Look at other examples. What are communities around the country doing to advance their goals?

Need to elect new Vice-Chair to replace Edmund

- Interim chair will be selected and elections for position will be held in May

Continue to work on policy agenda for the New Year.

## **Dr. China**

Spelman hires community liaison coordinator to specifically work with community groups such as NPU-T

Eager to ask how Bonner Scholars can be more involved in the local community instead of dispersed throughout metro Atlanta

## **Cliff Albright Team building exercise:**

How can we learn from each other through our individual and collective strengths and weaknesses?

Remember to consider everyone's individual perspectives, strengths, and weaknesses

Name	Strength	Weakness
Laurisa	Single Parent	Procrastination
Baba Ojiji	Still waiting to find out	Impulsive and compulsive
Lamont (Morehouse Intern)	Self-motivated	Takes on too much
Patrick	Graphic design	Impatient
Nia	Personable	Taking on too much
Lev	Open and direct	Too direct

Wanda	Gives voice to self and others	Takes on too much
Oluyemi (Spelman Bonner Scholar)	Diligence	Big heart
Stephanie	Determination	Get stuck in details
Melanie	Collective/collaborative	Quick temper
Brittany (Spelman Bonner Scholar)	Desire to help others	Caught up in the affairs of others
Scott	Organization	Sarcastic, judging
Eric	Bringing people together	Concentrates too much on bringing people together
Danielle	Understanding other people	Attention to detail
Bill	Coordinating and meeting people	Lack of tolerance
Tyler	Analyzing	Fear of public speaking
Kwabena	Tries to bring out others strengths	Paranoid, unforgiving
John	Helping people	Helping people too much
John P.	Sparking debate	Time management
Mark	Passion	impatience

2/28/2009

## **Policy Agenda update for 2009**

### **Goals:**

Articulate the wants and actions of the community

Identify and ratify certain items

Invite elected officials to partner with us (Khatim El, Vincent Fort)

### **What is a policy agenda?**

A mission statement granted by the city, sets the problems and subjects government will address

NPU-T is a legal entity with certain powers granted to it by the City of Atlanta

Set of proactive guidelines to preserve community

### **Agenda Items**

#### **Resident Driven Public safety**

Westview Forum on Public Safety

Chen Chang and Vice Squad – building trust through collaboration

Government is not the final answer – residents must learn to do the groundwork and collaborate with government to advance goals

#### **Housing Stock remediation**

Neighborhood Stabilization Program – Progress on the program. Where are the funds going?

Work with Pete Hayley and UCDC

Start community walks, tours, and block parties to increase interest in property

### **Community Benefits Agreements**

Used to hold develops accountable for social impact of new development

Challenge to NPU-T: What can we legally and ethically ask of developers?

### **Asset Based Community Development**

Capacity Survey – create a survey of public spaces, schools, museums, historical sites, etc...

Help from Spelman Bonner Scholars

### **Urban Agriculture**

Current have 3 urban farms and a CVC, popular summit held in the past

Is this still a pressing concern for NPU-T?

### **Cultural Affirmation**

Malcolm X festival – creation of Malcolm X week.

Is the NPU adequately representing all cultures?

### **What's next for the policy agenda?**

Survey of Community Spaces: Public Spaces and Large Neighborhood Centers (The Shrine, Hammond's House, Boys and Girls Club, Universities, performing arts center)

Are we utilizing the community's public spaces to the full extent?

What opportunities do we have to develop new public spaces?

Youth Programs should include opportunities for learning and involvement for children and parents

Developing small spaces and "pocket parks" for recreation: Think Rose Circle Garden

The Grounds coffeehouse as potential community center

### **Sustainability**

Redevelopment Planning and continuation of NPU-T development plan

How do we coordinate plans of the community with those of the Beltline, City of Atlanta, GDOT, etc ... and promote equitable planning practice

## **Economic Development:**

What can we do to get the services and amenities of other Atlanta communities, like Buckhead? What services and amenities do we get for what we pay? Does our neighborhood promote equity, environment, and economy? How do we persist in getting the attention of the City of Atlanta? What's better, local level, or city wide planning?

Area has been redlined by major retailers, how do we make up the difference

NPU-T is weak on economic power, strong on people power. How can we use that strength to make up the difference?

## **Youth**

Promote more youth inclusive activities within the NPU

Improve relationships with high schools and local youth organizations

Reach out to principals and after school programs

**OPERATION: TAKE BACK**, presented by Atlanta Police Department, Fulton County District Attorney's Office

Strategies to reduce crime

Schedule officer patrols at staggered times

Create covert operations in high crime areas

Partnerships with community and other groups

Community involvement: getting yourself and your neighbors involved

42% rise in burglaries for Zone 4, about 1/3 of offenders arrested

GOAL: reduce crime rates by 10-15% by the end of the year

Citizens taking action video: examples of burglaries and citizen action in Home Park, robberies of businesses in Sandtown

Off reported burglaries in zone 4 for 2006, 20% of offenders are juveniles

**Presentation by Ronald Jones, Jr.** (juveniles crimes ADA, Fulton Co.)

Courts look toward best interest of the child and rehabilitation

Process: Complaint/Arrest -> Intake -> Charge -> Placement on Calendar -> Arrest -> Prosecution

Juvenile courts and law tend to favor release and rehabilitation

After detainment, DA has 10 days to try the case

As cases become more complex, difficult to prosecute under limited time and resources

Juveniles are more organized, train each other, and create informal networks

Punishment for burglary is from 30-90 days up to 2 years or short term placement in boot camp and or group home

Designated felony acts: up to five until juvenile receives a conviction on record

- Burglaries don't qualify, but defendants sent to Superior Court are treated as adults

Need to find ways to expedite the process

Restorative Board: citizen member review board that calls in parents and child to negotiate deal to remove petition for charges under certain conditions

No method of communication between DA and restorative board, need more collaboration

Quote from Restorative Board member Gwen England: "It's not the kids, it is the parents."

**Points System: DAI**, where Street officers give points to juveniles

Based on offenses, offender is booked after receiving 12 points

### **Future Ideas**

Prosecute Repeat Offenders

Officers provide weekly reports on repeat offenders, Biannual reports on targeted crimes, Banishment from community

Commercial Drug Market

Receive Suspect Addresses, Monthly report on drug houses, Work closely with zone 4 suppression and narcotics units, Closures within 2-6 months, Create a burglary task force

New Programs: Project Turn Around, Offender Re-entry and Neighborhood Fresh Start

### **William Kennebrew of the MLK, and H.H. area (Chalet and Peyton Forest)**

Community group created in 1864

Started from the need for sense of belonging and family in the area

Created a telephone directory of all residents in the area

Started an annual block party

Initiated committees on public safety and citizens police academy

Newsletter and other avenues of marketing

### **Chen Chang of Beecher-Donnelly**

Main points: Persistence and technology

Community has issues of abandoned homes, drugs, squatters, and burglaries

Drug houses threaten the positive aspects of the community

Public services are not always available or expedient

Chen used 2 prong approach: Contact landlords and police. Self-initiated all courses of action. Set up cameras to record activity at suspected drug house (Ourwatch.net provides free surveillance options online)

Find the best approach and start the line of communication

Work with neighbors to defray the costs and check the price of technology

### **Brent Sobol**

Fix quality-of-life crime

Hiring off-duty officers

Business owners created Non-profit organizations and collected contributions

4 hr. staggered patrol times by hired off-duty officers

14 arrests made in 2 weeks

Connect for direct connect with dispatch

### **Take back plans**

EDUCATE, WALK THE COMMUNITY, CREATE A COMMUNITY PLAN

Get to know your neighbors

Find out what the community needs during the walk

You must have commitment, organization, extensive training, and follow-up

### **Lunch with Spelman President Dr. Beverly Tatum**

Leverage capacity of students and community

HBCU's have suffered due to the bad economy due to vulnerability of student population

3 sources of income for colleges: tuition & fees, investments, and fundraising - all negatively affected by downturn in economy

Presidents are committed to strategic planning and cooperation with community

Spelman community services activities are spread, goal is to concentrate activities in the immediate community for the future

Example of town-gown relationship: UPENN and Drexel in West Philadelphia

Focus of HBCU's are the education and welfare of the students, with growing concern over public safety

NPU-T wants to have increased involvement and collaboration with the AUC schools

- More conversation with students and administrations

- Utilize school resources, especially meeting room facilities, students volunteers, and faculty, ex. Revive of West End newsletter using AUC facilities

- Connect to larger community through the ARCHE (Atlanta Regional Council for Higher Education)

- Repeat the UPENN example here: Is it feasible? What are the catalysts for development?

Collaboration on master planning processes on each campus (end the "operating in silos" effect)

Youth and Education

- Address the missing generation of students and address adult literacy

- Bridge the gap between Harris Homes/Collegetown and AUC

- Partnerships between schools and community to benefit students through civic engagement and expose younger students to university environment

### **Village Habitat Design, Atlanta-based Urban Design Firm**

Previous Atlanta projects included East Lake Commons (winner of UN Habitat Award, Chattahoochee Hill Country, and Lake Claire neighborhood)

Works with communities to conserve and build resources

Planning is only as good as interaction at the neighborhood level (human element) vs. traditional top-down planning, Focus on human relationships and interaction (single use through zoning and land use vs. village system)

**Focus points:** Organic Agriculture, Passive Solar Architecture, Pedestrian Urbanism, and the Human Element (Sharing, Caring, Understanding)

**Ecological and Community Integration** through urban growth strategy: Land Exchange, Offset Density Development, Private Land Conservation Easements, and Incorporation of Community Land Trusts to reduce development impact

**Urban Agriculture:** Safety, Community celebrations & markets, Fresh & healthy produce, education and work opportunities, private and community gardens, Lands in community used in commons, long term leases, community invests in materials and housing for farmer

**Water Quality, Collection, and Reuse:** Neighborhood Constructed Wetlands, Irrigation Ponds, Stream Daylighting, Reduction of storm surge waters, bioretention

How can you keep soils and water clean for produce and residents?

**Pedestrian:** average person walks 5 min radius for daily functions, 10 min to transit, school, work, etc...

How do you create a pedestrian district in the neighborhood? Is walkability being discussed? What is the existing pedestrian infrastructure?

Three levels of pedestrian planning: Urban Pedestrian District, Neighborhood pedestrian district, and community pedestrian district, with shuttle services between different community centers, clear zones and traffic calming along roads to encourage walking?

How and why will the Beltline open new opportunities for pedestrian oriented developments?

How can you change people's attitudes concerning walking and public spaces?

How can the neighborhoods of NPU-T be returned to their previous levels of walkability?

Destinations in the area, walkability for children and seniors, issues around infrastructure and crime

Zero-energy Neighborhoods through investing in alternative energy and establishing neighborhood waste/re-use centers to reduce waste and increase community involvement

Mark's Comments: Observe community issues are the macroscopic level, create a modern plan for NPU-T that incorporate 21<sup>st</sup> century innovative design techniques, facilitate the cooperation and involvement of all the communities

Most Important issue is cost and efficacy of planning

Phase larger goals into smaller, specific projects

Find the problem areas in NPU-T

Determine area levels of walkability and accessibility

Inter-block possibilities and key intersections of pedestrian traffic

Create easements of private property to increase public space

Address the human element

## **LaShawn Hoffman, Pittsburgh Community Improvements**

Pittsburgh completed master plan in 2001, but came across problems in completion

1. Plan was not broad enough to address all of the community issues  
No representation of local businesses and no cross-community interaction
2. No Capacity for Strategy

Plan was too lengthy (400 pgs.); no method of enforcement or government implementation, land was developed contrary to statements in the plan.

Problem was that residents and community organization did not understand their next course of action or how they would enforce the plan

Residents had to be reeducated on the tools of planning and quality-of-life issues in the area

Find ways to start conversation with residents about planning, grow from small conversation to larger impetus

Ask the question: Who are our community's most valued partners?

Blueprints program through the GA conservancy provide a cost-effective means to improve the planning process (Cheaper)

Developers, including Georgia Power and Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership helped to defray costs.

Questions to ask in the development of the plan

How do we deal with old and abandoned properties in the area?

How do we improve schools for more equitable resources?

How do we engage residents in equitable development campaigns?

How can we make community facilities more accessible?

What are safe streets?

Create specific parts of the planning process to attract support i.e. Tree plan to attract support of Trees Atlanta

Pittsburgh community had estimated 25% of resident involvement in the plan, and pushed outreach to elected officials and non-profits

Conduct meetings at neutral locations and conduct break-off sessions to get people talking about what they are most interested and passionate

Increase community support through community walks and think about intentional relationship building

### **Johnathan Kidwell and the Atlanta Tool Bank**

Repairs for seniors and or disabled householders at no cost (open for referrals)

Bad economy has increased both the numbers of skilled volunteers in the program and households needing repairs

### **GA Stand Up, Community Benefits Agreements (CBA's)**

Benefits of CBA's: Economic development does NOT always equal economic opportunity, Promotion of open and transparent development process with community input, Local government promotion of positive social outcomes and mitigation of negative impacts

CBA: legally enforceable contract signed by community interests and developers to increase positive socioeconomic outcomes and reduce negative impact of development

Invite discussion between community and developer on what the outcomes of the project are

CBA may act as a deterrent, but they do promote quality development for the community. Used most often with publicly subsidized projects

If community doesn't support project, do not create CBA

If community accepts a projects that is imperfect, implement a CBA

Challenge: Bridge the gap between residents and neighborhood leadership

CBA's are ineffective if community leadership is not wholly supported by residents and if they do not have their best interests at heart.

It's all about Relationships: Who are we connected to? Do we have the ear of elected officials in government, non-profits, and the residents of the community?

Develop relationships through 1-on-1 contacts: Even with all of the organizing efforts, residents will not get involved if you do not connect with them.

Residents have to personally know and feel invested in NPU-T leadership

Set goals for leaders to talk about why they should care and what their strengths are

Identify those individuals who will be more useful than others

Build a strategic coalition (community work is Bigger than YOU)

Who do you call when you have an issue? Who has expertise in the issues beyond your immediate resources?

Examples of CBA requirements on development

Local source hiring, day-care facilities, preservation of land for public use, affordable housing units, workforce development training.

How do you enforce a CBA? Create a monitoring system, and ask for quarterly reports from developer on project

Think about where to target CBA efforts. Work best for large, dense commercial or major infrastructure development, sell of government buildings, TAD's (think Beltline)

Community CDP would ensure that developers already know the make-up and potential of the area, and community organizing efforts.