

Notes from Joint TF and Coordinating Committee Meeting, 4-20-16

Welcome – Tim

Aukram – KCAAH Announcement, Salute to Russell's Renaissance event this weekend

Kathleen – Today's mission is to come to agreement on overarching goals for Transformation Plan (TP). We will also discuss Next Steps process (Rhae Parke). Just submitted quarterly report for Jan – Mar 2016; feedback from HUD was "WOW- great things going on".

Gretchen –Recap of Saturday's Community Conversation on Crime & Safety. Presentation: a compilation of the input and ideas we heard over the last few months. Capturing the past and cultivating the future.

It's important to build upon the many strengths of Russell - Portions of Russell are in historic preservation areas, proximity to downtown, neighborhood schools, activity programs, etc. At the same time, we have to recognize the challenges: crime & safety, vacant properties, there is limited retail, need more amenities and economic opportunities, housing choices, etc.

In process of applying for a federal Byrne grant that focuses on community policing (*Update: application was submitted in May.*)

Neighborhood Strategies/Goals have emerged: reinforcing the historic and cultural identity of the neighborhood, improve safety, increase connectivity, improve and increase parks and open spaces, create new and improve existing housing, increase retail services (see the presentation for more details).

Notes on safety: The city is addressing VAPS (Vacant and Abandoned Properties), focusing on hotspots for criminal activity.

Encouraging natural surveillance - "eyes on the streets" - can help decrease crime. People with dogs tend to be outside more. Gil Holland has started an interesting program in Portland where dog owners have a lower rent because they are on the streets, this helps with surveillance. It's important to have a strong partnership with police and the community.

Beecher specifically – want your feedback. We know it's not meeting the residents' needs in a variety of ways. The site needs to be better connected to Russell; it shouldn't be a neighborhood within a neighborhood. There's currently no east/west connection within the Beecher site to the surrounding neighborhood.

Questions:

1. When are we going to inform Beecher residents of this data? It's our plan to bring this to a meeting at the Baxter Community Center in attempt to get more residents. We didn't have many Beecher residents attend the 4-16-16 Design meeting. (*Update: Designs are on the agenda for the upcoming meeting on 6/6/16 at Baxter Community Center*)
2. What kind of density are we thinking about? Right now there are 758 apartments. Looking at density closer to 1400-1500 on the initial conceptual plans, with a combination of market rate and affordable housing.
3. Comment: A lot of residents in Russell are older, and they need seats at bus stops, not just roofs.
4. We see a lot about Beecher but not a whole lot about the rest of Russell. Why is this? Beecher will be completely transformed. The rest of Russell will include other initiatives and incentives, opportunities to build on its strengths. We will also build upon things that are already happening (i.e. Food Port, Chef Space), and will have specific strategies on neighborhood housing in the Transformation Plan(TP);

including, how to best support existing homeowners, plans for developing new in-fill housing, adaptive rehab of vacant and abandoned properties. Those pieces just aren't a big part of today's presentation.

5. We need jobs – where are the jobs to help us make money to help this grand plan for Russell? Today's focus is on the design piece. There will be construction jobs and jobs related to the TP, but also bringing more retail will bring jobs. The more the community stabilizes and shows the positive things happening in the community, the more companies will want to enter into the community. This is a huge goal in our plan as well.

Kathleen, announcements: Implementation Grant notice was released earlier than expected, the grant application is due June 28th. LMHA and Louisville Metro are examining the grant instructions very closely right now, we have concerns, including financial pieces required to apply with a competitive application. We also hope to hear about the Action Activity Grant in June. There are several meetings we are pinning dates down for, one of which is the resident meeting at Beecher to discuss relocation issues (May 16th), where we are in the Transformation Plan (TP) process, conceptual plans for the site (June 6th), and the draft TP that is due to HUD on July 15th.

Other business - Community Clean-up event this Saturday; The city is working with a group of partners on Byrne Criminal Justice grant.

Rhae: Kathleen handed out a 1-pager; it's our stab at a summary to encompass all the big ideas that have been identified for transformation of Russell. This is for Beecher and Russell as a whole; including, housing, improve crime and safety, design issues with Beecher, employment, improve educational outcomes for children, economic opportunities (business and jobs), health and wellness (physical space and personal health aspects), improve community connectivity. Under these big ideas are many aspects. *Break out to discuss these ideas using the summary list handed out.* We have heard from you and the community and there are lots of things you want to do. The issue is that we cannot do everything at the same time, so we need to prioritize. We are asking you to think about what the priorities should be within each goal area.

Kathleen: This list is the big overarching goals. We will also be getting down to really specific strategies in conjunction with this process, but we probably won't accomplish all of that today. We need your help today with refining the 4 major goals in each category, and let us know if we missed big priorities that aren't in these categories. If you want to tweak any language let us know; for example, "new housing" may need to say "new and rehab housing".

Rhae: Just a reminder of what we are doing (announced each table's category). On each table you have notes in front of you, please write down your recommendations for what the priorities strategies and actions should be in each of these goal areas, and be as specific as possible; an example was given (one specific idea is we will develop a new training program to ensure residents would get first dibs at all the jobs coming to the Food Port. Be specific...if you are talking about crime and safety, what specifically are you recommending such as street lighting, etc.

Groups met for 40 minutes in discussion. A person from each group read what their group came up with; (see summary of flip chart notes from this task at the end of these notes.)

Rhae's closing comments: Next Steps – we are drafting the big ideas for Russell's TP; this is a long roadmap that will take many years for this type of plan. Draft is submitted in July. We will share this plan and goals with the residents and partners. We also need to put a cost envelope around these items; the CHOICE grant is a drop in the bucket for what is needed. This is why we will determine priorities, the timeline, and establish financing with key partners, etc. If you have additional comments and feedback,

contact us or send us a note. We are in the process of scheduling many meetings; we will let you know details ASAP.

NRSA comment – A draft NRSA plan for Russell has been published and there is a public hearing coming up. The April Vision Russell newsletter has an article and link to that draft plan. If you have any comments about the NRSA plan, you can attend the meeting or submit your comments before that meeting date. An NRSA designation would target some CDBG funds to the Russell neighborhood and would give us more flexibility with how those funds can be spent.

Conclusion of meeting

SUMMARY OF FLIP CHART NOTES

A. Reinforce Russell's Identity

- Overarching “Russell Brand”
 - o Acknowledge past within certain pockets of the neighborhood
- Priorities
 - o Restaurant nodes in Beecher Terrace
 - o Building on Russell as a local food destination
 - o Arts, culture and food (“triangulation”)

B. Educational Strategies

- Parents taught skills to stimulate children’s learning and help with assessing developmental milestones; early detection of learning issues and support for parents who are addressing these issues
- Begin literacy initiatives at birth
- Connecting health agencies with literacy; encourage early reading, giving books out at pediatric offices
- Inform community and connect people to resources that help expand their early childhood development skills. For example – to increase utilization of libraries – issue library cards to kindergarteners and their family members on their first day of school; distribute reading activity books; encourage enrollment in summer reading programs.
- Adult education/literacy
- Coordinated efforts to bring in more resources to Russell, such as out of school time activities. Promote and encourage their use, and use of existing nearby resources, such as the Nia Center, Neighborhood Place
- Utilize trauma informed care and community building to serve residents who have been impacted by violence and trauma.
- Expand free little libraries.
- Technical/trade skills such as the Code Louisville/Code Beech training.

- Promote 55K degrees initiative
- Internet connectivity/hotspots, Google fiber (phones available to people through Passport program don't have internet capabilities)
- Education on how to use your phone (can access information on this at library – Treehouse curriculum and Lynda.com – include info on this in the Vision Russell newsletter)
- Access to computers
- Create an overall built environment in the Russell neighborhood that encourages learning
- Bring high growth/living wage jobs into the area and connect Russell residents to those jobs and to living wage jobs elsewhere
- Chief information officer to help disseminate info about resources, events, etc.
- Workshop/training on soft skills (dressing appropriately, being on time, etc.)
- Mobilize the faith-based community for furthering education strategies as well as other goals/strategies, such as addressing crime and bringing resources to support families
- Connect children with mentors/Big Brothers & Big Sisters
- Connect youth to city's summer employment opportunities

C. Economic Development

- "Mandate" – incentivize specific community benefits in contracts that receive government support (\$/Land)
- Bring in call-center or similar jobs to available space at Louisville Central Community Center (16,000 sq. feet x 2)
- Circulator route within Russell to connect residents to jobs and existing/future retail
- Develop campaign (with incentives?) to share existing job opportunities/businesses with West Louisville residents and visa versa. Connect to job training strategy. Building on business/industry survey conducted by Seed Capital.
- Link resident demand to business "demands" or site criteria, then match businesses to specific sites. Refer to resident survey. Recruit professional service providers.
- Connect micro/small business operators to space at Old Walnut and Micro Business/Louisville Metro loan opportunities
- U of L Signature Partnership – leverage to bring satellite professional services to the neighborhood: dentists, doctors, lawyers, accountants, etc.

Caveat: All participants discussing the above strategies were non-Russell residents.

D. Housing

- Programs to help homeowners improve their homes, both grants and loans (may not be bankable)
- Address vacant housing (demolition or rehab)
 - CDBG or HOME
 - NRSA designation

- Need a plan for the rest of the neighborhood
- Need to focus all the way to Broadway
 - o Improvements to City View and near YMCA (current location on Chestnut)
- Scattered site replacement housing strategy

E. Safety

- Community policing/Neighborhood Engagement
 - o Foot patrols
 - o Active block watches
 - o Block by block approach
 - o Housing incentives for LMPD officers
 - o Engagement of absentee landlords
 - o Neighborhood police sub-stations
 - o Enforcement of existing curfews
 - o Outreach to schools
 - o Moratorium on halfway/boarding homes
 - o More security cameras?
- Adequate/working lighting
- Safe routes to school
 - o Visible crosswalks
 - o Adequate sidewalks
 - o Bike routes/lanes
 - o More speed bumps (deterrents)
- Marketing of community resources

F. Improve Community Connectivity

F. 1. Bring resources/services to Russell

F. 2. Connect to education – Families being involved in children’s education/schools – weave education throughout the TP

F. 2. Connected to central business district/downtown, arts and cultural amenities, extend connector bus

F. 4. WiFi/Broadband for residents

Maybe F/Maybe B

Connect/provide supports for families whose children go to schools outside Russell (transportation, engagement, P-T conferences)

Other misc. notes on F sheet

Booklet of Russell specific resources – make it available in grocery stores, etc.

Marketing resources, mobile resources, resource mobile, school mobile

JCPS, Family Resource Centers, Metro United Way

G. Improve Health Outcomes of Russell Residents

- 1.A. Upgrade and improve Park DuValle Health Center located in City View
- 1.B. Work with community organizations to disseminate health information (exercise and recreation), including ACA (Localize KYnectors if we lose state support)
- 1.C. Work with providers to bring preventive care to the community (Mobile Units)
1. D. Health & Wellness Department expand smoking cessation efforts to create a smoke-free community
2. A. Metro Parks + YMCA providing recreational programming for entire family (free and sliding scale)
2. B. Continue planning to develop pocket parks, larger parks and other green spaces – possible fitness gardens + play equipment, Mayor’s Mile
2. C. Walkable neighborhood including a connection to expanded Waterfront Park
- 3.A. Community gardens and farmers markets (that accept SNAP) throughout the neighborhood
3. B. Utilize Extension Services to educate residents about healthy food choices and cooking