

RECORD OF DISCUSSION

Homebuilding Plan for Treme/Lafitte and Tulane/Gravier

Date Tuesday, February 6, 2007
Ujima Building, 1019 N. Prieur

Participants Residents: Frederick Cordova, Helen Coycault, Joan Coycault, Sheree Crawford, Aaron Green, Leah C. Green, Sheila Green, Edwina Joseph, Travis Leblanc, Emelda Paul, Anthony Roaell, Leanne, Sarah McMorris and Laura Tuggle (NOLAC)

Providence Community Housing: Nadine Jarmon (Vice President Community Development), Tammy Crumpton (Director Resident Services), Charlotte Bourgeois (Chief Operating Officer)

Enterprise: Ron Wilson (Director of Housing Initiatives), Christine Madigan, Vice President

Other people working on the Homebuilding Plan: Ray Gindroz and Tiffany Haile, Urban Design Associates (architects and designers), Daniel Mathieu, All Congregations Together (outreach), Nicole Swerhun (facilitation)

The purpose of the meeting was to meet with a small group of Lafitte residents living in New Orleans to:

- provide an update on what's been happening on the Homebuilding Plan;
- get feedback on the process for staying in touch with residents and responding to their needs;
- get feedback on the updated drawings for the Lafitte redevelopment; and
- get advice on things to think about when bringing residents back in a phased way.

Summary of Updates provided by the Homebuilding Plan Team

- Providence and Enterprise are committed to one-for-one replacement of all units from Lafitte.
- Providence and Enterprise have held meetings with residents in October in New Orleans, and in December in Houston. 2 newsletters have been sent out, and we've been working to answer questions from Lafitte residents when they call our office, and we've been helping refer them to support services.
- Right now we're working with a \$2 million grant from Catholic Charities to set up a case management system for all Lafitte families.
- We want to continue these face-to-face meetings, and to show you that we're committed to making this work.
- In terms of the future of the existing Lafitte buildings, our team is advocating for the redevelopment to happen in phases. This means that some units would be reopened, while others would be demolished and rebuilt.
- In addition to building replacement units on Lafitte land, we are also building housing in other areas of the neighborhood, close to Lafitte.

Key points covered during the discussion

1. Information that residents need (responses from Providence/Enterprise are in *italics*)

- Residents need to know the date that Lafitte will open (if it will open). They also need to know what happens when people's vouchers are up.
- How much will rent be in the housing redeveloped in the neighborhoods? *It will be the same rent formula that residents had at Lafitte.*
- Will people need to pay their own utilities if they live in a single or double? This has been a problem in other redevelopments. Providence and Enterprise need to think about if/how residents moving into singles and doubles will be able to afford utilities (has had impact on other residents in the past – need a system for helping them with this). *Providence and Enterprise agreed to look at how to address this.*
- Some residents are fixing up their own units. Why can't residents do that with Lafitte? *The places where residents have fixed their own units are not managed by HANO.*

2. Advice on how to stay in touch with residents

Residents at the meeting thought it was smart for Providence and Enterprise to keep sending newsletters out every 3 months, and to also send a letter monthly to all Lafitte families (this will start in March). Ideas suggested by residents included:

- provide employment opportunities for Lafitte families with Providence, Enterprise, or their contractors (the Providence team noted that this had already started with the hiring of Lafitte residents to work on the ACT outreach team, and that other opportunities would continue to be explored)
- start a website just for Lafitte (suggested address: www.lafittedevelopment.com)
- put the newsletter online (this is already happening)
- drop newsletters in areas where we know large populations are – housing authorities in Houston, Dallas; certain apartment buildings, areas, complexes
- Resident involvement in management/redevelopment
- Explore possibility of a Lafitte Economic Development Corp.

3. How to choose who gets to come back first:

If the redevelopment of Lafitte happens in phases, then some units will be ready before others. It's important that Providence and Enterprise start thinking about how they will select who returns to the units as they come back on line. It was suggested that this be put on the agenda for next small meeting of residents. It was suggested that the discussion could start by reviewing/building on criteria already developed by others. For example, the following priorities have been developed through other processes:

Residents would be selected to move back into a unit:

- if it was your unit before, you get first choice to move back
- if you're elderly or disabled
- if you're not elderly or disabled, but you're from that development
- any displaced person from any public housing project
- said you didn't want to come back but then you changed your mind

4. Feedback on updated plans for new housing:

Ray Gindroz from Urban Design Associates reviewed the updated plans for new redeveloped housing at Lafitte and in the surrounding community. He talked about how plans have responded to what we've heard from residents over the last few months, including bigger room sizes, a preference for houses (singles and doubles) instead of apartments, parking in behind the units, and a phased approach so that some of the current Lafitte buildings stay up until some of the new housing is built. The following points were raised in discussion, responses are in *italics*.

- How long until people can move into the new units? *The first units that will be ready will be built in the area of the Sacred Heart Church. About 25-30 new units will be built on the site itself, with the potential for up to 40-45 units if adjacent land is acquired. The homes will be identical to the types of housing that will be built on Lafitte. Our goal is to have the units ready in 9-12 months.*
- We would like to see parks for kids, and we need playgrounds. *There will be "tot lots" behind the housing, and there will be playgrounds.*
- How many of the handicapped accessible units are not in the seniors village? *Because the parking areas will be raised, a lot of the ground floor units will be accessible.*

5. Next meeting:

- People thought that the group should continue to meet monthly
- People agreed to meet on the second Wednesday of every month
- The next meeting Mar 14th, 6:00 – 7:30 pm
- The meetings will last 1.5 hours (2 hours is a bit too long)
- Location of the next meeting is still to be confirmed (Providence will let people know closer to the date – people said the Ujima Building was a fine location)
- Draft Record of Discussion will be given to all participants for review before the notes are finalized