

RECORD OF DISCUSSION

Homebuilding Plan for Treme/Lafitte and Tulane/Gravier

Date Wednesday, May 9, 2007
 Ujima Building, 1019 N. Prieur

1. **Agenda**

- Providence Updates (Tammy Crumpton, Nadine Jarmon, Jim Kelly)
- Discussion and Feedback from Residents
- Introduction to PICO Organizing Model (Daniel Mathieu)

2. **Highlights of Information Provided by Providence**

- Providence and Enterprise continue to advocate with HUD/HANO for Lafitte residents right-to-return. We also remain committed to providing one-for-one replacement of all 900 subsidized units at Lafitte. We're also committed to providing residents with "wrap around" services, and are working sure to get every Lafitte family access to case management services – if they choose to use those services.
- We continue to advocate for a phased approach to redevelopment so some families can come home right away. Providence continues to push HUD/HANO to open some units at Lafitte as soon as possible.
- Right now Care Coordinators are serving about 100 Lafitte families living in New Orleans, recently 20 new families have been/will be added. Case management will soon be available to Lafitte families in Houston and Baton Rouge.
- HUD/HANO have just chosen developers for the other public housing sites in New Orleans, and the Lafitte project is several steps ahead of what's happening at these other sites. *Laura Tuggle from New Orleans Legal Assistance (NOLAC) added that she has met with the developer selected for CJ Peete, and confirmed that the experience of residents at other sites will be very different then the process that is being implemented at Lafitte.*
- Providence staff (Tammy, Nadine, Jim) are on the phone every day working to advocate for Lafitte residents, and we will continue to advocate until units are open and new units are built.

3. **Key Topics Raised/Discussed by Participants**

Responses to comments/questions, where provided, are written in *italics*.

When will units open?

- *There are a number of steps that need to be taken before the units can be open. HUD/HANO have to describe the work that needs to be done and give different companies a chance to provide a quote. Then a contractor would be selected, and the repairs made. At this point it's unclear what timing HUD/HANO have in mind. The best case scenario is that units would open in October or November of this year.*

- Do you know which units will be repaired? *HUD/HANO are doing assessments on the buildings, and we don't know yet which buildings will be repaired.*
- Lafitte residents need to resolve the uncertainty in our lives. All we want is to be told the truth – that's all we want to hear. We just want to know where we stand, and what we need to do.

Need for repairs

- My house doesn't need repairs, it's not repairable. It's not fit for any human being to live there. It's falling down from the inside. It will take a long time to fix, and I think it's a waste of money. *Different people have different opinions on this. While you may believe your home is not repairable, there are other people who believe their homes are repairable, and they want to come home right away.*

Will vouchers be extended?

- We need to know as soon as possible what's happening with our vouchers. School starts back on August 6th (it's a Charter school). *Laura Tuggle (NOLAC): We understand that HUD/HANO will make an announcement in June about whether vouchers will be extended.*

What happens if HUD/HANO offers us a unit in New Orleans?

- *Laura Tuggle (NOLAC): If you are offered a unit by HUD/HANO, you probably need to take it.*
- I don't agree that residents should have to accept a unit that forces us to move away from Lafitte. For example, if we're offered a unit Uptown, we don't know Uptown and 90% of the killings are Uptown. *Providence is working hard to make sure Lafitte residents have all of the information they need to make an informed decision about their future. We use our monthly letters and newsletters to make sure residents are very clear about what their choices are.*

Breaking leases

- Will HUD/HANO cover the costs if I need to break my lease? *HUD/HANO are willing to work with people on a case-by-case basis for this. They will only help cover costs if the reason you broke your lease is because you were offered a unit in New Orleans by HUD/HANO.*

Who gets to come back to Lafitte first?

- When some units at Lafitte are repaired, who will get to move into them? *If it is your unit that has been repaired, you get the first choice to move back.*

Who is living in the new modular houses in Tremé?

- They were bought privately.

4. Introduction to PICO Organizing Model

Daniel Mathieu from PICO explained the PICO Organizing Model to participants at the meeting. Although PICO is a faith-based organization, they use this organizing model successfully in many different environments (for example, public schools). He described 4 key steps in the model:

- The **FIRST STEP** involves one-on-one discussions with all Lafitte residents. This takes about 30 to 45 minutes, and would focus on Lafitte redevelopment plans. The idea is to understand what is happening with redevelopment, what residents think should be happening, and any other issues of importance to residents. This gives people an opportunity to reach out to each other, and to inform each other about what's going on. It also gives people a chance to share their thoughts, raise questions, or identify concerns.
- The **SECOND STEP** involves research. The purpose of research is to make sure residents can make informed decisions about redevelopment. Research includes figuring out who residents need to talk to in order to get the information they need. Some examples include Providence and Enterprise, HUD/HANO, the former Property Manager (for example, Ms Foxworth), legal experts (so tenants know their rights) etc.
- The **THIRD STEP** involves some type of action that brings residents together with key decision makers. For example, this could be a large resident or public meeting where all the decision makers are in the same room, and they answer resident questions and respond to resident concerns. This is a very effective way to hold decision makers accountable.
- The **FOURTH STEP** involves evaluating what happened, and planning what the next step might be.

No objections were expressed objections to working through the PICO model at Lafitte, and some participants were very supportive of the approach.

5. Next Meeting

The room at Ujima is booked for the second Wednesday of every month. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 13, 2007. The next meeting will start right on time at 6:00 pm, and last until 8:00 pm. Food will be available at 5:30 pm.

A Draft Record of Discussion from this meeting will be given to all participants for review before the notes are finalized.