

UNWA Town Hall Meeting
Employment, Education, and Jobs Committee Discussion
October 21, 2004

Facilitator: John R. Hall

Discussion:

1. Began discussion by deciding direction of meeting would like to add to last weeks' topics.
2. Contractor's for government projects should be encouraged to hire residents that live in UNWA, like the upcoming U. S. Post Office building – some government policies do require persons of low-to-moderate income to be part of this process – U. S. Representative Julia Carson has been contacted concerning this issue.
3. In any event, UNWA should encourage all companies, public or private, to hire local persons from neighborhood.
4. The bottom-line for education is we must prepare students for available jobs in market and have to work with UNWA to educate and train students and other adults.

Plans for commercial node in UNWA:

5. Plans have been drawn to specifically focus on Martin Luther King, Jr. Street, between 27th and 29th Streets, for a “central point” of commercial development in UNWA. The needed specified uses were grocery, hardware supply, banks, pharmacy, and dollar merchandise stores. Also, specified parcels of land that would be prime for development.
6. A problem encountered was that some grocery chains require large parcels of land for development.
7. In this area – around 25th and 26th Streets, an existing commercial center could be converted to more public uses, such as a library, bookstore/coffee shop, and the potential for a Job Hub.
8. This area would also be a good location for a police substation (roll call).
9. Currently, the west side of MLK, Jr. Street, between 27th and 29th Streets, is predominately social service uses, commercial on east side (good area for job hub).

Issues raised during commercial plan process:

10. Two of the biggest complaints by residents are the lack of respect and overall bad customer service from some existing commercial businesses in UNWA.
11. Crime is an issue, however, violent crimes are not out of control. Drug use and prostitution is an issue, though. (NOTE: Crime Data)
12. In large cities', majority of burglaries occur (52%) within one mile of burglar's residence.

Specific problems in UNWA:

13. UNWA is a fragmented neighborhood – Existing services for the public not well known – Flanner House, UNWA, etc.
14. Need better organization to get people involved and to ‘get the word out’ on available services in UNWA.
15. Technology and communication skills need to be improved in the existing service organizations and businesses.
16. Action – UNWA should organize neighborhood.
17. Youth need to be taught that education is the first tool for success in life – add programs that would help in this area. Problem currently is that we fit the program to the person, which doesn’t stop children from dropping out of school.
18. Need to motivate kids’ to stay in school.
19. Have to get kids off streets, but priority for children – for teens it could be too late.

Needs:

20. Start teaching children at young age to stay in school.
21. Help single parents by providing affordable daycare.
22. Need police to help neighborhood rather than waiting for crime to occur (too late).
23. Need a central place for people of UNWA to look for jobs (Job Center/job hub).
24. Encourage UNWA businesses to place job postings in central location.
25. If there are 50 jobs available, could the neighborhood supply the people to adequately fill those positions?
26. UNWA needs to implement a continuing education training program to help further person’s ability to gain quality job.
27. Need to have churches involved through faith-based organizations to help motivate people.
28. Need to get out word on existing programs such as Flanner House, Riverside, Holy Angels, etc.
29. Tie initiatives together.
30. Community organizing – working together on missions and obligations.
31. Need a clearer understanding of neighborhood organizations and missions.
32. Focus on communication skills in these programs.
33. Mentors are needed for non-violent offenders who work.

Attendance:

Facilitator: John R. Hall

Members: J. Y. Brown, Robert Polk, Emma Sullivan, and Vikki Whorton-Alexander

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Employment, Education and Jobs Committee will be Thursday, October 28 at 5:30 p.m. at Riverside Center Conference Room.

Notes taken by Jeff York, Department of Metropolitan Development, City of Indianapolis.