# RECORD OF DISCUSSION Homebuilding Plan for Treme/Lafitte and Tulane/Gravier

Date Wednesday, April 11, 2007

Ujima Building, 1019 N. Prieur

Participants Patricia Herbert, Travis LeBlanc, Cynthia Magraff, Emelda Paul, Sharon Pierce,

David Rayford, Sylvia Redmond, Laura Tuggle and Sarah McMorris (New Orleans Legal Assistance), Daniel Mathieu (PICO/ACT), Jim Kelly, Nadine Jarmon, Tammy Crumpton (Providence Community Housing), Nicole Swerhun

(Facilitator)

#### 1. Agenda

- Updates Congress, lawsuit, development schedule
- Figuring out who comes back first review criteria
- Building Community residents drive it, ideas on: meeting location (ideally), food/beverages, childcare, etc.

## 2. Key Topics Raised/Discussed by Residents

#### Need for change at Lafitte

- What is the lawsuit all about? The right to return to their units. I can't see it
  because those units aren't livable. I don't agree with the lawsuit. We've been
  dealing with problems at Lafitte for years it's time for a change. I've been there
  too long. I don't understand why old people wouldn't want to come back to
  something better.
- When they built Lafitte they didn't water seal the bricks water comes through and the walls need to be patched up all the time.
- People wanted to come home because people were dying and they felt a lot of pressure and they had no family around. Everyone at Lafitte is family even if you're not family.
- It's time for a change.
- If you let people come home now, you'll have the same problems that Iberville has rats, mould, etc.

#### Need information from HUD/HANO to help with decisions

- What happens after Sept 30<sup>th</sup>? If you're not offered a unit, HUD/HANO will keep paying you until they are able to offer you a unit.
- People are hearing that Lafitte will open up in August of this year and that is influencing their decision making.
- Residents are wondering whether to renew their leases, because if they renew they might be forced to break the lease to come back in August. And who will pay for the broken lease?

- Residents are wondering what will happen when their vouchers expire in September.
- Residents are also wondering where to enroll their kids in school for September –
  they don't know where they'll be living, and they need more information to make
  their decision. School is almost up, and they need to make a registration decision
  soon.
- Residents will need a lot of information in order to be able to complete the HUD/HANO survey.

#### Range of opinions on whether people want to come back

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Some never	Some want to	Some only want
want to come	come back to	to come back to
back	repaired unit	new unit

- Concern that if people do move back to repaired units at Lafitte, that they don't get kicked out (i.e. they need to be moved straight into the new housing).
- We need a system for people who need to break their leases.
- We also need a system for utility transition.
- If you get called back to you pre-disaster unit, then certain rules apply. Right now there are no rules if you get called back to "a" pre-disaster unit. Need rules for this (see re-occupancy handbook at <a href="https://www.hudclips.org">www.hudclips.org</a>, library, pih notices, 2007-03).
- Question for HUD/HANO: How much time will have a resident have to make their decision on whether to return? And what window of time do they have to change their mind? Participants at the meeting think that there should be no deadline (i.e. forever). So even if a resident is skeptical about the whole redevelopment and they didn't know what to believe, they should still be able to come home. They wouldn't be put to the top of the priority list or bump anybody, but they should always retain the right to come back.
- Question for HUD/HANO: Do HUD/HANO have obligation to help residents buy a home if that's what a resident wants?

### Lack of trust between residents and Providence/Enterprise

- I think some people tied up with the lawsuit don't want to participate in these
  meetings but the reality is that whatever happens with Lafitte whether all or
  part of it comes down, some of it WILL come down.
- At October meetings at St. Peter Claver, there were people working with the
  outreach team that were not supportive of the Homebuilding Plan project and/or
  team. There's a feeling that the Lafitte residents who participated in those
  meetings trusted their neighbors and other residents more than they trusted what
  they were hearing from Providence and Enterprise.

#### Criteria to be used to prioritize return of Lafitte residents to repaired units

From Laura (Feb 2007 Res Advisory Meeting)

- 1. If it was your unit, you get 1st choice
- 2. If Head of Household is elderly or disabled (from any project)
- 3. You're from that development
- 4. Any displaced person from any project
- 5. Said you didn't want to come back, but changed mind

(Nadine) Also need to consider:

- # bedrooms needs to match
- Seniority (# years at the development)

Feedback from participants (additions are in ALL CAPS:

- 1. If it was your unit, you get 1st choice
- 2. If ANYONE IN THE HOUSE Head of Household is elderly or disabled (from LAFITTE ONLY any project).
- 3. You're from that development
- 4. Any displaced person from any project
- 5. Said you didn't want to come back, but changed mind

#### Also:

- Would like to see people who already are living in New Orleans be given higher priority for housing then Lafitte residents who ARE NOT back in the city yet
- Would like to have the option to STAY IN CURRENT HOME until the new housing is ready (i.e. don't want to be penalized if they're offered and then turn down a comparable repaired unit). \*\*Right now if turn down a comparable unit, you lose your DVP

### 3. Next Meeting

Providence will be transitioning the organization of resident meetings to PICO/ACT. Daniel Mathieu will be contacting residents to discuss this transition. The room at Ujima is already booked for the second Wednesday of next month (Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>), so the next meeting will be held at that time at the Ujima Building (1019 North Prieur).

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