

RECORD OF DISCUSSION

Homebuilding Plan for Treme/Lafitte and Tulane/Gravier

Date Wednesday, September 12, 2007
Ujima Building, 1019 N. Prieur

Next Meeting Wednesday, October 10, 2007
Ujima Building, 1019 N. Prieur
5:30 pm Dinner
6:00 – 8:00 pm Meeting

Participants

Lloyd Bell	Lois Foley	Sherri Lawson	David Rayford
Mary Bondy (for Jessie Osborne)	Jennie Gorden	Travis Leblanc	James Redman
Denise Bryant	Elizabeth Green	Jacqueline Lotts	Sylvia Redmond
Doretha Bryant	Sheila Green	Cynthia Magraff	Elaine H. Reed
Parmeletta Carlo	Leah Green	Alonzrine Martin	Rochelle Roberts
Joan Coycautt	Yelta Harper	Daniel Mathieu (PICO)	Maxine Stewart
Dariel Celestin	Diane Harris	Sarah McMorris	Joni Washington
Sheila Condoll	Karen Herbert	Marcello (NOLAC)	
Mrs and Mr Sidney Daufauchard	Patricia Herbert	Emelda Paul	
	Sheila Johnson	Gail Pierre	
	Edwina Joseph		

HANO: Dwayne Muhammad, Kathy Haynes
Case Management: Carolyn Carter, Diane Pitts (Baton Rouge)
Providence/Enterprise: Tammy Crumpton, Krystle Gibson, Jim Kelly, Matt Morrin, Nicole Swerhun, Caroline Gammill

This meeting record was written by Nicole Swerhun, community development and facilitation consultant to Providence. Prior to being finalized, it was provided in draft to all meeting participants for their review. It reflects the key messages and main points raised at the meeting. It is not intended to represent a verbatim transcript.

1. Highlights of Information Provided by Providence

- *Community Fair.* Providence and Enterprise will be holding a Community Fair on Saturday, August 11th, 11 am – 3 pm. The Fair will be held beside Sojourner Truth Community Center, and will include games for kids, free school supplies, health services, a section for vendors, food, and many other activities and displays. If you know anyone interested in providing entertainment or having a Vendor's Table, please contact Krystle at Providence at 504-821-7226.
- *Art/T-Shirt Design Contest.* Design a t-shirt for the Community Fair – deadline is July 24, 2007, 4:00 pm. Prizes: \$100 first place, \$50 second place, \$25 third place. For additional rules and details see the flyer distributed at the meeting.
- *St. Ann's Seniors Housing Opening in the Fall.* Providence will be opening St. Ann's Seniors Housing in the Fall, and any units that are not occupied by previous residents may be available to Lafitte seniors (could be approximately 10-15 units – although

this is only an estimate until previous residents confirm if they are interested in moving back).

Note from New Orleans Legal Assistance (NOLAC) – added after the meeting: *As of right now, HANO's policy for Reoccupancy of Project Based Section 8 Units does not allow for any preference to be given to any former public housing residents. If HANO does change its policy to include public housing residents in the Project Based selection preference, we are not sure how that will impact their right of return to their original development.*

Providence response: *Providence is requesting/urging HUD/HANO to change their policy to ensure Lafitte seniors are a priority at St. Ann's.*

- *HUD/HANO response to Lafitte concerns about moving to Iberville.* At the June meeting with former Lafitte residents, there were many significant concerns raised about moving into Iberville. Providence forwarded those concerns to HUD/HANO, and HUD/HANO replied by saying that Lafitte residents would not be penalized for turning down an Iberville unit. This message has been confirmed in the most recent Providence/Enterprise newsletter that was mailed this week.

Note from Providence – added after the meeting: *Though residents will not be “penalized” for denying an Iberville unit, it could still have an impact on their future housing assistance. If demolition does not occur before the DVP Vouchers expire, tenants could find themselves placed in a lottery or on a waiting list, and could possibly lose their housing assistance (it is Providence’s belief that Tenant Protection Vouchers will become available to former, qualified Lafitte residents).*

2. New information from New Orleans Legal Assistance (NOLAC)

Sarah McMorris Marcello from NOLAC announced new information just received on July 11th from HUD/HANO. Any residents that do not have a DVP need to get one by July 31st. **Note that after this meeting HANO sent around a notice that said residents wanting a DVP must contact them by Wednesday, July 25th, and attend a mandatory DVP briefing on Tuesday, July 31st.** By August 10th Requests for Tenancy need to be approved, and by September 1st everyone must be in a lease. *For more information about this new HUD/HANO announcement, you can contact HANO at 504-362-4210 or Sarah McMorris Marcello at 504-529-1000 ext. 243.*

3. Key Topics Raised/Discussed by Participants

Iberville

- My case worker said that if I deny Iberville then I'll lose my housing. *That's not true. HUD/HANO have assured us that there will be no penalty to Lafitte residents for turning down Iberville. We have printed it on our most recent newsletter and sent copies to all Lafitte residents. If you turn down an Iberville unit, you may receive a letter from HUD/HANO that says your name may go into a lottery at some point in the future.*

Note from Providence – added after the meeting: *Though residents will not be “penalized” for denying an Iberville unit, it could still have an impact on their future*

housing assistance. If demolition does not occur before the DVP Vouchers expire, tenants could find themselves placed in a lottery or on a waiting list, and could possibly lose their housing assistance (it is Providence's belief that Tenant Protection Vouchers will become available to former, qualified Lafitte residents).

- **ADVICE FROM RESIDENT:** If they're going to offer people Iberville they need to clean it up. It's not clean and not safe.

New HUD/HANO announcement re: DVP

- If I'm living in Baton Rouge and want to move to another location in Baton Rouge, do these new deadlines apply to me? *The September 1st lease deadline applies to everyone on DVP, no matter what housing authority. Other housing authorities probably have their own deadlines for voucher issuance and Request for Tenancy Approval, so everyone on DVP who wants to move should call their housing authority immediately.*
- When HANO gave us the vouchers they said we have 120 days to get a house. Now it sounds like they're shortening that? *Yes. HUD/HANO has said that the last day they will issue DVP Vouchers is July 31st, that as of August 10th a Request for Tenancy Approval must be submitted, and by September 1st all residents must be in a lease.*
- If we're under lease and we're staying where we are, do the new HANO rules and dates apply to us? *No.*

DVP Extension?

- What happens when the DVP runs out? *We are hopeful that DVPs will be extended through until June 2008, however we don't have that from HUD/HANO in writing yet.*

Note from Providence – added after the meeting: *Secretary Jackson has since announced that DVPs will be extended until June 2008 (see PIH Notice 07-17 issued on June 21, 2007).*

Number of units to open at Lafitte

- How many units will they open at Lafitte? *HANO has told us they'll repair and open a minimum of 200 units at Lafitte. At the moment we are unsure how many former Lafitte residents want to return to a repaired unit at Lafitte. HANO will be surveying all displaced public housing residents to see who wants to come home. Some people may want to come home now to a repaired unit, others may want to wait for a new unit, and still others may not want to come back at all. Only after HANO has the results of the survey will we know for sure how many units need to be repaired at Lafitte. We understand that the survey will be implemented in August and that they may have the results from Labor Day.*
- Is Lafitte included in the 3000 units that Maxine Waters said would be open (in weekend Times-Picayune)? *See answer from previous question.*
- **ADVICE FROM RESIDENTS:** I think you should let residents help repair the units.

Questions for HUD/HANO

Nicole Swerhun, meeting facilitator, asked residents if they had any questions they would like Providence to forward to HUD/HANO. Many participants indicated that they had been asking questions of HUD/HANO for months, and Nicole committed to compiling a list of questions based on the minutes taken from previous meetings. In addition to this list, participants indicated that they would like to know:

- Why has it taken so long to repair Lafitte?
- What evidence is there that Lafitte was damaged in the storm – from their experience/observation, some of the units (for example those on the third floor) were not damaged.

Selection process for units available in St. Ann's Seniors Apartments

Residents were asked for their advice on how to select which former Lafitte residents get offered a unit at the newly re-opened St Ann's seniors apartments. One participant suggested that a lottery approach be used, where every Lafitte resident over 62 is put into the lottery. If someone turns down the offer, then the unit is offered to the next person on the list (selected by the lottery). Many participants at the meeting expressed support for this approach.

Note from New Orleans Legal Assistance (NOLAC) – added after the meeting: As of right now, HANO's policy for Reoccupancy of Project Based Section 8 Units does not allow for any preference to be given to any former public housing residents. If HANO does change its policy to include public housing residents in the Project Based selection preference, we are not sure how that will impact their right of return to their original development.

Providence response: Providence is requesting/urging HUD/HANO to change their policy to ensure Lafitte seniors are a priority at St. Ann's.

Suggestions for future meetings

Participants were asked if they had any suggestions/requests regarding speakers or topics for future meetings. One participant suggested that it would be helpful for Providence to invite someone from the Home Equity Loan Program to a future meeting. Many participants supported this suggestion.

4. Next Meeting

Providence meets with residents on the second Wednesday of every month. **No meeting will be held in August due to the Community Fair. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 12, 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.