

## RECORD OF DISCUSSION

### Homebuilding Plan for Treme/Lafitte and Tulane/Gravier

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**Date** Wednesday, October 10, 2007  
Ujima Building, 1019 N. Prieur

**Next Meeting** Wednesday, November 14, 2007  
Ujima Building, 1019 N. Prieur  
6:00 – 8:00 pm (dinner to be provided)

#### Participants

Alvin R. Banks  
Mary Ann Bondy (for Jessie Osborne)  
Trenise Bryant  
Doretha Bryant  
Parmeledda Carlo  
Caret Clouse  
Frederic Cordove  
Dariel Celestin  
Sheila Condoll  
Mrs and Mr Sidney Daufauchard  
Janette Expace

Jennie Gorden  
Elizabeth Green  
Kedra Green  
Thelma Hardy  
Yelta Harper  
Diane Harris  
Sheila Johnson  
Beverly Jones  
Travis Leblanc  
Cynthia Magraff  
Daniel Mathieu (PICO)  
Rozellia McKay

Michelle Nelson  
Emelda Paul  
Sharon Pierce  
David Rayford  
Sylvia Redmond  
Lloyd Thiel  
Joni Washington  
Glenda Waters  
Shirley Waters  
Ethel Yarker

HANO: Dwayne Muhammad, Louis Harvey  
Case Management: Carol Carter (New Orleans), Diane G. Pitts, Cheryl Glover (Baton Rouge), Glenda Kizzee, Karen Wilson, Tu Duong, William Coleman (Houston)  
Providence/Enterprise: Tammy Crumpton, LaTonya Williams, Jim Kelly, Matt Morrin, Nicole Swerhun, Stephanie Walton, Debora Simmons, Kathleen Mullin, Rosalind Ross, Caroline Gammill, Olivia Stinson

*This meeting record was drafted 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.*

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## I. Questions from Residents, Answers from HANO

Tammy Crumpton brought the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda. Travis Leblanc then asked HANO representative Dwayne Muhammad a number of questions (as raised by residents after the September 2007 Resident Meeting). The questions are numbered below. Responses from Dwayne are *in italics*.

- 1. How long will residents have to wait until the units are completely renovated?**  
*Last time I met with you (in September 2007), I gave you a renovation schedule that ran an 8 month period. After meeting with representatives of Providence/Enterprise yesterday, I requested an updated schedule from HANO's Modernization Department. I have not heard back from them in time for the meeting today, but first thing tomorrow I will send the updated schedule to Providence/Enterprise and they can send it on to you. I believe there have been some changes aimed at trying to reduce the amount of time it takes to re-occupy the repaired units.*

2. **What happens to residents whose apartments are not being renovated by HUD/HANO?** *The last time we talked, there were aspects of the re-occupancy that were still up in the air (for example, the lawsuit). Some issues have been resolved, and HANO has been given permission to start demolition at Lafitte. All Lafitte residents will receive a Tenant Protection Voucher (TPV). A TPV works like Section 8 Voucher. With it residents can go into the private market to find housing until new units are built. The TPV will be made available to all of you when your existing vouchers expire.*
3. **If residents who lived in a unit Pre-Katrina declines to return to the same renovated unit, how will HUD/HANO select residents to re-occupy those units?** *What I've proposed, in order to be fair, is to create a lottery system which gives preference to elderly and disabled people first. We will work with housing advocates like NOLAC (New Orleans Legal Assistance) and Fair Housing when designing the approach and we will have an outside company run the lottery.*
4. **How will HUD/HANO determine which unit to offer qualified residents? What is the selection process?** *As it relates to the units – that will depend on how the overall site will be redeveloped – lot to do with logistics and what makes sense – starting at Claiborne and running back to Roman. How was chosen? Chosen to best facilitate moving as quickly as possible with redeveloping the site. That made the most sense with demolition, reconstruction, reoccupy and manage it while all this going on. How do you place families on the site safely? Provide security and maintenance while redevelopment happening on other part of site?*
5. **Will HUD/HANO repair/replace cabinets in the units?** *I will ask the Modernization Department to give me the scope of what will be done (whether that be floors stripped, walls fixed, etc.) and will forward the answer to Providence/Enterprise tomorrow.*
6. **Will residents resume paying rent once the unit is available? What will the rent be (Pre-Katrina or market value?)** *Yes, residents will begin paying rent at Lafitte. Rent will be based on same factors that it was prior to Katrina.*
7. **I'm living in Iberville now. Will I get offered my old Lafitte unit if it is one of the apartments being repaired?** *If you are a Lafitte family living in a scattered site or in Iberville, and your unit is one of those scheduled to come back on line, then we'll make sure you're offered the unit. Response from resident: I appreciate it.*
8. **Once the units are ready, who will be responsible for moving people back? Will people need to pay for their own UHAUL?** *There are support services available for people on DVP vouchers to move back to public housing. I don't have the specifics with me now, but from a regulatory standpoint, whenever a re-occupancy or relocation is mandated by the Housing Authority, support is provided. Follow up question: What if a family has already received assistance, for example to move from Houston to New Orleans – would they be eligible to receive assistance again? *I can get back to you with the specifics. However it is handled, it will be through my Department and Client Services and Relocation.**

9. **Before Katrina – some people at Lafitte had filled out applications to move to River Garden. What has happened to those?** *If you had submitted applications, I assume you were placed on waiting list, but I'll check. I know there were a limited number public housing units at River Garden.*
10. **Pre-Katrina there were applications issued and accepted for occupancy at Lafitte. Do you have any insight into what's happening with those applications?** *HANO has maintained that waiting list, but we can't offer units to those on the waiting list until all Lafitte residents are served. We also just finished re-writing the criteria for split families. This is a critical issue now because family compositions have changed. We're not going to under-house families.*
11. **I'm the head of household on my DVP voucher, and my daughter is on my lease. Can she get her own unit?** *Call me in the morning and we can discuss your situation. Generally we can't split the DVP voucher, but we may be able to split your household when you move back into public housing. Let me be clear, as it relates to Lafitte re-occupancy, once the redevelopment is finished, each pre-Katrina Lafitte household will be eligible to come back to one unit. That does not mean that there will be one unit at the redeveloped Lafitte for you, and a second one for your daughter. Your daughter would be in public housing, but likely at another site or a scattered site.*

## II. Questions from Residents, Answers from Providence/Enterprise

Travis Leblanc then asked Providence CEO Jim Kelly a number of questions (as raised by residents after the September 2007 Resident Meeting). The questions are numbered below. Responses from Jim are *in italics*.

1. **When will Providence/Enterprise begin construction/renovation on properties they already own?** *We will be redeveloping both on the former Lafitte site and in the surrounding neighborhood. We hope to begin construction in the neighborhoods next spring (2008). In terms of onsite development, we understand that HUD/HANO will shortly be issuing a Request for Proposal for demolition. After demolition, the area will need new infrastructure – water pipes, sewer lines, new electrics, new roads, etc. It will probably take 9 months after demolition, at the earliest, to get this work done. And then it will likely take an additional 10-12 months before new units will be ready on site. Providence/Enterprise have acquired property in the surrounding area to build approximately 200 units of new housing.*
2. **Which properties will be available to residents interested in the rent-to-buy program?** *I don't know if we will have a "rent to buy" program, but there will be home ownership opportunities for Lafitte residents both onsite and off site. We will explore rent to own options, however I don't believe it's permitted with the tax credit financing we have. It may be that we can look at rent-to-own options on some of our other properties that are not tax credit financed.*
3. **Once Lafitte has been re-developed, who will manage the property? Who will residents pay rent to?** *We're interviewing management companies now. Residents will pay rent to the management company.*

4. **How did Providence/Enterprise partner with HUD/HANO to redevelop Lafitte?** *Enterprise is national non profit community development organization, and Providence was formed post-Katrina by a number of catholic groups that are involved with housing. Last year (2006), HUD/HANO approached us and asked if we could help redevelop Lafitte. Being nonprofits, there were certain policies that we said we would like in place before taking on the responsibility of redevelopment, including things like: one-for-one replacement of subsidized units, support for resident services (with HUD/HANO matching this support), home ownership opportunities, and a commitment to looking beyond housing to Head Start and other job programs, charter schools, health, etc. for the community. HUD/HANO agreed to these commitments, and since then Providence/Enterprise have been working hard to move forward with the redevelopment of Lafitte.*
5. **What is the current status of the partnership between HUD/HANO and Providence/Enterprise?** *The status of the partnership has not changed since August of last year when HUD/HANO first asked Providence/Enterprise to lead the redevelopment.*
6. **Will Providence continue to pay resident utility bills?** *Any help we provide to cover utility bills will continue to be done through our case managers, and decisions to provide support are made on a case by case basis.*
7. **Will Providence/Enterprise purchase businesses across from Lafitte on Orleans Ave.? If so, who will manage the businesses?** *We will not be purchasing businesses, however we will continue to do everything in our power to encourage businesses to come to the area, and to support existing business.*

### III. Overview of Who-Does-What

Jim then reviewed a handout that identified many of the different organizations involved with the redevelopment of Lafitte, and the relationships between them (see graphic on following page).

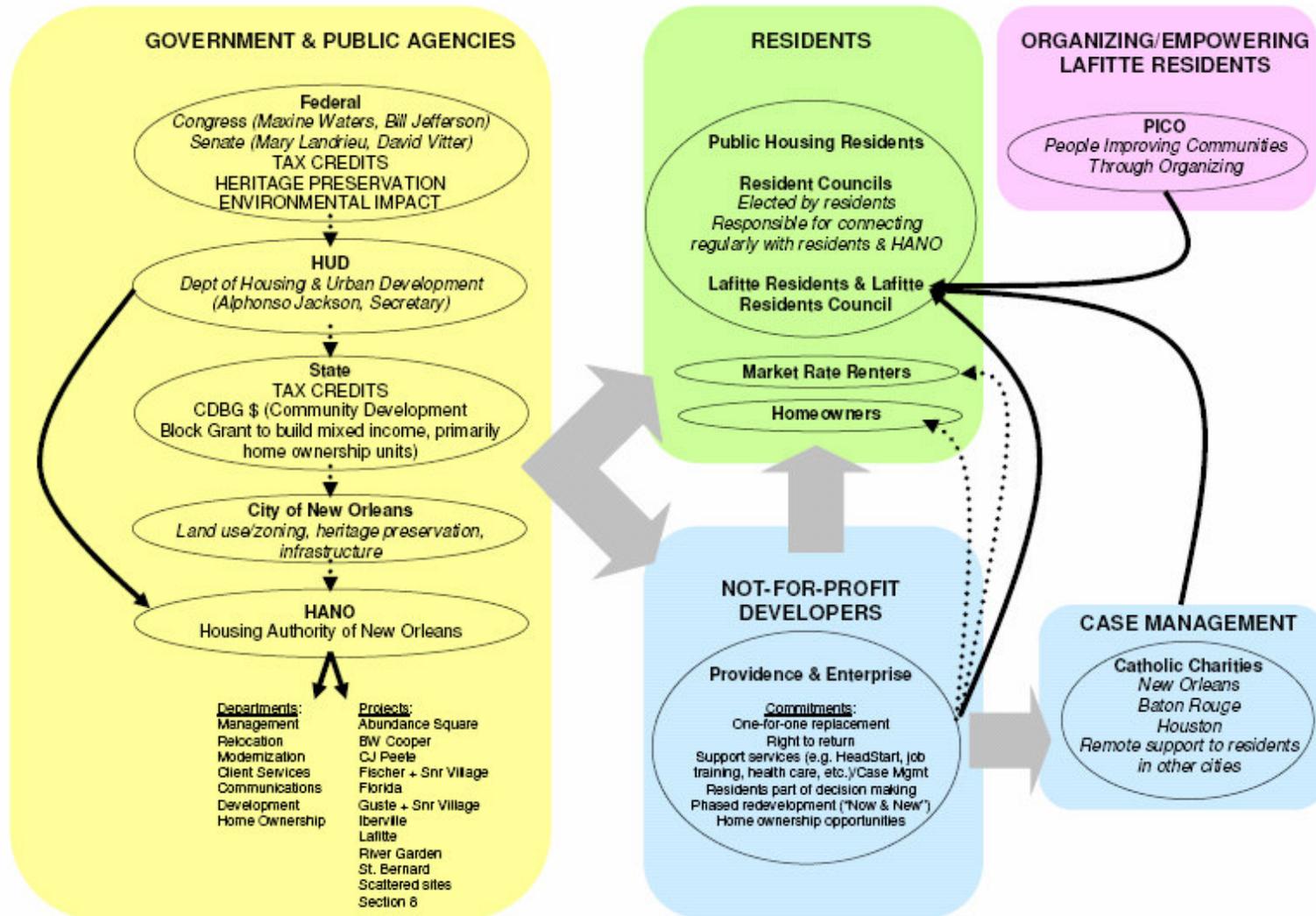
#### Role of Resident Councils

As part of the overview of roles and responsibilities, Louis Harvey, Director of Client Services for HANO, provided a bit more information on the role of Resident Councils:

- A Resident Council is a group of individuals, elected by residents, that provide a leadership role in the community.
- Every month HANO invites Resident Council representatives to a meeting at HANO. These meetings give Resident Councils a chance to identify community issues.
- Residents in the community need to talk to their Resident Council about the issues they're dealing with so that Resident Council members can pass them on to HANO.
- I encourage you get involved, and ask questions if you want to know more. For Lafitte, some of the issues that residents and the Resident Council need to think about include things like: When will you have the next Resident Council election? Will you have an election? These are some of the discussions that Lafitte residents need to have.

## OVERVIEW OF WHO-DOES-WHAT

Draft for Discussion: October 10, 2007 Meeting with Lafitte Residents



## Role of PICO

Daniel Mathieu described the role of PICO – People Improving Communities Through Organizing. He indicated that PICO works in 18 states and over 150 cities, including New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Lafayette, and many others. The main purpose of PICO is to work directly with people in communities, and he is working to help develop leaders at Lafitte. Other points Daniel covered included:

- (a) PICO works with residents to address issues related to the redevelopment of Lafitte, and also to look at broader community issues like crime, bringing in grocery stores, schools, etc. We meet regularly with residents to identify issues and organize the next steps that need to be taken.
- (b) He has met with many of the people in the room (at the meeting) one-on-one, and that some of the group have gone to research meetings.
- (c) PICO has been working with Ms. Emelda Paul and other leaders, and are creating a residents organizing committee. PICO and the residents will also continue to work with HUD/HANO and Providence/Enterprise.
- (d) A lot of the work gets done between these monthly meetings. Residents have been making calls to each other, and ultimately the goal is to empower everyone to be involved in the decision-making process.
- (e) Tomorrow, after this meeting, there will be questions about what we talked about and we will be doing work between meetings to identify next steps. What do you want in terms of grocery stores, better schools, more playgrounds and things for kids, something for seniors, recreation hall? We need to identify the priorities of Lafitte residents. On the one hand we need to keep our eye on what's happening as the buildings are redeveloped and renovated, but we also need to talk about and plan what you want to come back to, and how do we prepare ourselves as people begin to come back.

## IV. Other Questions and Discussion

In addition to specific questions for HANO and Providence/Enterprise, residents at the meeting raised a number of other questions (listed here). Also at this point in the meeting Matt Morin from Enterprise introduced himself. He indicated that he will be working in New Orleans with the Providence team.

1. **I was housed out of town, and I wanted to come home. I had problems finding housing, and kept coming back and forth to New Orleans. On one of these trips my landlord said that I had abandoned my apartment, and they terminated my voucher. Can they do that?** *Dwayne (HANO): You absolutely have to communicate with the Housing Authority and landlord that you intend to move back to New Orleans. It's not as easy as saying "I'm going home". In your specific situation, we can't restore your DVP assistance, but, as your initial public housing authority (HANO), we reserve the right to protect our clients right to return. HANO has an entire team of staff that spend 8 hours a day getting residents out of DVP leases properly. Residents should also know that there are certain rights that HUD notices have given – for example, after your 1 year lease is up, the lease becomes month to month. That means residents only need to give landlords 30 days notice. Proper procedures need to be followed.*

2. **I have a DVP voucher. I went to Sojourner Truth to redo my lease. They said I have to start paying rent because housing wants some of their money back. Is that right?** *If you're a public housing client, that shouldn't be the case. As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, people who were Section 8 clients pre-Katrina will be taken off DVP and will go back to paying rent. We can talk more about the specifics of your situation after the meeting.*
3. **We know a lady who stays in Baton Rouge. She used to live in the Lafitte. She has been paying rent for 2 years in Baton Rouge, and it's more than she paid in rent at Lafitte. People told her that because she's living in public housing she has to pay rent. Is that right?** *Prior to moving into public housing, the Housing Authority should have done an assessment of her pre-Katrina status. It sounds like there may have been an improper assessment of her pre-Katrina status. That being said, if she chose to go into a public housing unit, they have every right to charge her rent. FEMA won't pay her rent because she's assisted by HUD.*
4. **Some residents from public housing are living in FEMA trailers. We were recently notified that Renaissance Village will be closing. They're telling us that people who have a DVP but aren't using it, need to pay \$50 each month because they are in the FEMA program. Do you know how this works?** *If a HANO public housing residents remains on the FEMA program, the answer is yes, they will need to pay the \$50. I'm surprised FEMA's assistance to the individual lasted this long – in most places FEMA is requiring residents to seek HUD assistance.*
5. **Will the resident's employment status impact their ability to receive a unit?** *It will not impact their ability to receive a repaired/renovated unit. For the redeveloped units, this needs to be addressed by Providence and Enterprise, their management entity and the Resident Council.*
6. **So if someone lost their job post Katrina because they stayed in Houston, will they be offered a unit?** *They will be offered their renovated unit - YES. In terms of the redeveloped units, Providence/Enterprise, their management company, and the residents will have to decide. We would make that kind of decision together. We won't say "everyone has to work, or you're out". Those kinds of decisions will be made in tandem, in partnership with residents.*
7. **What are the income guidelines for residents?** *At the redeveloped Lafitte the income guidelines will be determined by a number of factors. Some of our funding is tied to housing people of certain incomes, and there will be income requirements that will apply to different types of units that will be at the site. It will depend on what type of unit you'll be moving into.*
8. **Will employment opportunities be made available to residents?** *There are federal guidelines that requires contractors to provide employment opportunities to residents. The onus is on residents to be prepared to take advantage of these opportunities. On that note, HANO Client Services, and especially Louis Harvey, work in conjunction with contractors to help connect residents to these job opportunities. If you know if anyone that is interested in working, this is the time to start preparing, not when the trucks roll on to the site. It takes at least 6*

*months to get the proper training. In the past there have also been a number of residents who want to work, but can't pass the drug test. Contractors will not let a person on drugs work on a construction site. Safety is the number one priority, and one incident can ruin a person's life.*

*If you know someone interested in working on the redevelopment, give us their name. Best to call me at 670-3399. Remember that these jobs are for both woman and men. Woman are often the most successful. I'll be attending these monthly resident meetings from now on as well. If you know of anyone who wants to get these jobs – now is the time.*

9. **Do you have to be a resident to take advantage of these job opportunities?**  
*Yes and no. We prefer to provide residents the opportunity first.*
10. **Did you know that people are inspecting the homes people are living in now? They wanted everyone to take the air conditioning units out of their windows within 24 hours.** *There are housing quality standards that must be met for Section 8 Unit. HANO contracts out housing inspections of these units. It may be an issue of fire safety – if you only have one window in a room and that's the only way out in a fire, then they may require you to remove your air conditioner.*
11. **Will the resident's council remain intact?** *As wonderful as this community is, I would encourage all of you to start thinking outside of the public housing realm. We are working to create an integrated community, and are hoping that people will view themselves as members of the larger community. That being said, there is an important ongoing role for the resident council, and it's up to Lafitte residents to figure out what ongoing role they want for the resident council. The current resident council is the one that was in place before Katrina.*