

## RECORD OF DISCUSSION

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

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**Date** Wednesday, February, 2008  
St. Peter Claver School Cafeteria, 1020 N. Prieur

**Next Meeting** Wednesday, March 12, 2008  
St. Peter Claver School Cafeteria, 1020 N. Prieur  
6:00 – 8:00 pm (dinner to be provided)

#### Participants

Alvin Banks	Barbara Harris	Daniel Mathieu (Micah Project)
Lloyd E. Bell	Cynthia Hill	Emelda Paul
Oretha Baylor	Dorothy Hill	Sharon Pierce
Tremee Baylor	Vasline Jeanmarie	Christina Quezergue
Arianne Burnett	Valerie Johnson	David Rayford
Frances Burnett	Warren Johnson	Jerry Richards
Mary Carter	Alice C. Jones	Rochelle Roberts
Dariel Celestin	Beverly Jones	Gale Sanders
Daffney Davis	Marvin Jones	Alice Smith
Mairha Duplessis	Diana LeBlanc	Maxine Stewart
Tony Facione (City of NO)	Marion LeBlanc	Carol Thomas
Rodderick Franklin (NOPD)	Julene Lloyd	Evelyn Wallace
Debra Fuies	Letetia Lowe	Rebecca Warren
Elizabeth P. Green	Cynthia Magraff	Joni Washington
Yetta Harper	Sarah Marcello (NOLAC)	Mary J. Watson

HANO: Tracy Mercadel, Dwayne Muhammed, Nicole Barns  
Case Management: Carol Carter (New Orleans)  
Providence/Enterprise: Jim Kelly, Brenda Richard-Montgomery, Andreanecia Morris, Tammy Crumpton, Matt Morrin, LaTonya Williams, Nicole Swerhun, Stephanie Walton, Carey Clouse, Caroline Gammill  
St. Peter Claver: Rev. Michael P Jacques (Providence Board Chairman)

*This meeting record was drafted by Caroline Gammill, staff of Providence, and reviewed by Nicole Swerhun, community development and facilitation consultant to Providence. Prior to being finalized, it will be 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. HANO Update

Dwayne Muhammed, the Director of Section 8 at HANO, opened the meeting by providing the following updates:

- **Tenant Protection Vouchers (TPV)** – Mr. Muhammed passed out a green information flier. The flier detailed the step-by-step process of obtaining a TPV. All former Lafitte residents are eligible for TPV. Mr. Muhammed reported that HANO is currently assembling a staff team to help residents obtain a TPV. If you are currently part of the DVP (Disaster Voucher Program) and a client of HANO, **then you will be automatically transferred to the TPV on March 1 (2008), so there is nothing for you to do.** If you are not going to be automatically transferred, please refer to the steps outlined on the green sheet to enroll in the program.

- **Additional Information** – As many of you know, HANO is working to re-certify all of our clients. We are doing this because as of January 1, 2008, all clients are required to go back to paying 30% of their gross adjusted income in rent (same as pre-Katrina). Because the re-certification process takes some time, HANO decided to charge all clients \$50 per month in rent until the re-certification process is complete. HANO hopes to have all re-certifications complete by April 15<sup>th</sup>.

## Questions and Discussion

1. **I am already paying 30% of my income in rent. Do I need to make an appointment to be re-certified?** *No, but you will need to be re-certified one year from now (as part of the annual re-certification process).*
2. **I'm in from Houston, this is my first meeting, I've done a quite a bit of paperwork and still don't have a unit in New Orleans. Is there a way to make this process go faster?** *Let's talk after the meeting and we'll see what we can do. (Mr. Muhammed, Carol Carter of Catholic Charities and Mr. Johnson (questioner) arrange to speak after the meeting).*

Tracy Mercadel, the Director of Management, provided the following updates:

- **Repairs to Units at Lafitte** – Repairs are underway on the 94 units at Lafitte that are in the 8 buildings closest to Claiborne. The plumbing crawl spaces and the roofs will be repaired first. As soon as that work is complete, the contractors will begin repairs in the units. The first units will come online within the next month. Model units (what the contractors will show to HANO) will be complete within two weeks. HANO expects to contact residents within the next week for the 94 units.
- **Demolition** – Buildings will not come down until the City issues demolition permits. They have not done that yet. At this time, HANO does not have site control – the contractors are managing and securing the property.

## Questions and Discussion

1. **Who can I contact to retrieve things from my apartment?** *Unfortunately, the time period to do that has expired.*
2. **Will the renovated units be permanent?** *No, residents will be in these units for probably about one year.*
3. **Which units will be re-occupied?** *The units from Claiborne to Derbigny.*
4. **How long would I be in that temporary unit?** *Probably one year.*
5. **When I move out, where will I go?**

Jim Kelly, CEO of Providence: *Everyone living in a temporary unit will be offered a new unit at Lafitte. However, if you are in a temporary unit, it is not a guarantee that you will be the first residents offered the new units. The residents and Residents' Council will work with HUD and HANO, Providence/Enterprise, and other groups (like Fair Housing, NOLAC)*

to create a process that all groups agree on to determine who will move into the new units and in what order of priority. It is possible that this may involve a lottery system. We want this system to be fair to the whole group – we'll work hard to create a plan that everyone says is fair, not everyone is going to be happy, but it will be fair. It also has to be legal.

Nicole Swerhun, Providence: To clarify who will be eligible, HUD and HANO have rules, Providence / Enterprise will have its own set and the residents will have theirs. We want to make sure that we coordinate between these three groups.

6. **How will I know if I'm eligible? It doesn't make sense for me to move back otherwise.**  
Tammy Crumpton: You have to be able to meet the criteria – for example, you must have a criminal background check, it might be a national check, or a check of credit history. Our commitment and our involvement is for residents to set those criteria and make sure that they align with the rules of HUD and HANO. Daniel is asking everyone to come to his meetings, so please take part in that process and help form a system that will work for you.
7. **What if you don't want to move back to Lafitte? How long are you eligible for TPV?**  
You won't go unassisted, TPV works like a regular Section 8. You'll be on it, unless you violate the terms of the contract

Additional Information from Tracy Mercadel: The renovation is happening in the first eight buildings, from Claiborne to Derbigny. We are required by City Council to also hold the units from Derbigny to N. Roman for potential future repairs; today there are no plans to open those units. If you were living between Derbigny and N. Roman, you'll be rolled into the TPV program or moved into open public housing.

8. **If someone decides not to return in the section between Claiborne and Derbigny, would other former Lafitte residents have the opportunity to move into a unit there?**  
Yes, it will be open to other residents, there will be a lottery for the balance of the tenants who lived at the Lafitte site.
9. **When was the decision made not to open 196 units at Lafitte?** That was put in place by the City Council. The number of rehabilitated units is based on need. Once we've completed our survey, we will make a decision about the rest of the units. To be clear, tenants will only be in those renovated units for about 12 months. If those tenants aren't selected for the first available new units, then they will have to move again until a new unit is ready for them.

## II. Community Safety Update

Officer Franklin, New Orleans Police Dept.

- The crime in the area has been in check since the last meeting. Special Operations has been actively patrolling as well as the SWAT team. Several weeks ago, in the 900 block of Prieur a cab driver was robbed, we're not sure how much money was taken. There was a similar incident somewhere else in the district (not in this area).

### III. Resident Update

#### Resident Vision & Tenant Bill of Rights, Daniel Mathieu

- On January 28, a group of nine residents met together and discussed the future of Lafitte as well as a Bill of Rights. Three main things emerged: the need for Recreation, including arts and crafts, parks, boy and girl scouts, etc.; Education, including the need for GED classes, the current school system, ways to engage parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles; and Job Development, including the types of job training programs to have and ways to collaborate between residents with local business owners. These areas are important and we look forward to working with Providence / Enterprise on them, but we'll return to these in some time.
- Our main focus right now is the Resident Bill of Rights, specifically re-occupancy and who will return to the new permanent housing units. Our meetings are the last Monday of the month, from 6 -7 pm at 170 Broadway St., Suite 235 at the office of Micah Project (also this location may be moved to closer to Lafitte). We will be contacting residents to see who will be interested in working specifically on the Bill of Rights. We want to have a draft within the next couple of months – when the new units are online, we'll have a draft for people to review. We'd like to have a final draft in place by June or July at the latest.

Ms. Emelda: This Bill of Rights is about all of us. If we don't have input then we can't participate, and we want the residents to come out and participate. If you have trouble getting a ride, we'll still keep you informed so you can be part of what is happening.

### Questions and Discussion

1. **For the people who live out of town, can they get updates on what is happening?** *(Daniel) I've been contacting residents, I speak to them on a one-on-one basis. If you sign the sign-in sheet, I'll contact you and we'll have a chance to talk and I can get a better sense of what your opinions are – there are also plenty of opportunities for us to meet. I'm open to finding a new location for these resident meetings as well.*
2. **How can I stay involved if I can't come to the meetings?** *(Daniel) My schedule is flexible, we can have two monthly meetings – one at a time that works better for other people. As long as people show up, we can meet whenever. One of the challenges is finding a date, time and place that is suitable for everyone, so you do have to be flexible.*

Tammy: *We will try to send out minutes so you can be involved, we'll put information in the newsletters. Also, feel free to call the office if you want access to updates – we will provide that. We appreciate the time you spend here and we also want to thank Daniel for all of his work. If you haven't gotten correspondence from us, we don't have your most up-to-date information, so please sign-in and give us your information so we can reach you.*

## IV. Special Update from the City

### Tony Facione from the City of New Orleans – Office of Recovery Management

- I wanted to come and give an update to you on the commitment of the City of New Orleans and the mayor's office to the neighborhood and the expansion of the Lafitte development throughout the community.
- Lafitte is in the middle of one of the 17 targeted zones developed by Dr. Blakely. These zones are small and refined – but for the neighborhood to sustain itself, we need to support the entire community around these zones.
- We've needed to sustain things like commercial investment and commercial retail so neighborhoods have the services they need. Now, our investment is changing and we're looking to support residential neighborhoods. We have relationships with Ujamaa CDC, with Sister Vera at Tulane / Canal; we've been supporting their programs and we're starting our own owner-occupied program.
- Most recently, we've committed funds to repair 18 units on Orleans Ave. The City conducted a Lead Hazard control assessment – we tested the property and the paint for traces of lead. Here are the results and we're giving them to Providence, when the houses are repaired, they will be up to code and modern. They will also be a lead-safe living environment; we're not only building back, but we're building safer.

## V. Providence / Enterprise Update

### Andreanecia Morris, Providence Community Housing

- **Homeownership Opportunities:** Of the 1500 units we're building, 660 will be for homeownership, and the rest will be subsidized rental units. We don't expect that everyone will be going back to a rental unit – some might want an opportunity to buy a home. For as many of you who would like to buy, we'd like to help you. If you have a case manager, tell them you're interested and we'll enroll you in a Homeownership class with Nicole Barns at HANO. You will be able to use your TPV to buy a home.

### Tammy Crumpton:

- Across the nation, HANO is at the top in Section 8 Homeownership programs. There is lots of money available to participate, if you earn \$15,000/ year then you are eligible for this great opportunity.

### Carol Carter, Catholic Charities Case Management:

- If you are interested in this program and you already have a case manger, call 889-6980 ext. 226 for the Homeownership Program. If you don't have a case manager, call LaTonya at Providence, 821 – 7222 .

### Matt Morrin, Enterprise

- At this stage, we are getting into the design details of the new units. We want your input on what the unit should be like and hear your preferences. We don't have a lot of

flexibility to change the size of the units, we are trying to fit as many as possible in the neighborhood, while keeping parking spaces, green spaces and using good construction. It is our goal and our assumption that we will have these things in every unit: washer and dryer, refrigerator, stove, dishwasher, energy star appliances, wood floors in foyer, carpet in living and bed rooms, linoleum in kitchen and bathrooms, wood cabinets in the kitchen, wood base boards and crown moldings.

- Behind you, mapped out in tape on the floor, is a representative two-bedroom apartment – not every unit will look like this, but it is one of the designs we have. Please walk around, give us feedback: are the rooms, the closets in the right place?
- These plans are on the HANO website, on the Providence website. This unit is 1,008 sq. ft.
- Please place your comments on the sheet on that wall, I'll be standing there as well to answer any questions.

Meeting adjourns for walking around model unit and dinner. Resident comments below.

### **Questions and Comments in Reaction to Proposed Unit**

#### What do you think about the amount of space in the rooms:

- Kitchen seems too small
- I want lots of storage space for utensils and appliances
- Kitchen space is more valuable than living space room space relatively speaking

#### What do you think about the location and size of the closets?

- We should try to have space for walk-in closets with shelf space for luggage

#### Colors on the walls: Would you prefer lighter? Darker? Different Colors?

- White in the living room, off-white in the bedrooms
- Look into what colors are calming for children for the bedrooms
- If the wood is not of good quality, don't use it

#### Other Comments

- Do not use carpet
- 2 bathrooms in 2 bedroom unit, or 1.5
- Make the floors easy to maintain, use ceramic tile, no carpet, no hardwood floors
- Need more than one drawer for utensils in kitchen, and it should be big enough to fit a utensil tray