



Community Housing, Neighborhood Development and Public Safety Committee

Chaired by Council Member Golden

Committee Members: Golden, Peters, Scarborough, and Williams

June 4, 2019 – 10:00 a.m.

3rd Floor Lobby Conference Room

MINUTES

Present:

Chairman Jeff Golden, Committee Member Monica Peters, and Committee Member Don Scarborough [arrived at 10:08 a.m.]

Also Present:

Council Member Britt Moore

Staff Present:

Randy McCaslin, Deputy City Manager; Randy Hemann, Assistant City Manager; JoAnne Carlyle, City Attorney; Mike McNair, Director of Community Development & Housing; Alisha Doulen, Community Resource Specialist; Lori Loosemore, Local Codes Enforcement Manager; Lee Burnette, Director of Planning and Development; Major Kenneth Steele- High Point Police Department; Eric Olmedo, Managing Director; Roslyn McNeill, Budget Analyst; Mary Brooks, Deputy City Clerk, and Lisa Vierling, City Clerk

Others Present:

Carlvin Foster, High Point resident, Guilford County Board of Commissioners
Willie Davis, Jerry Mingo, James Adams, Brad Lilley, Deborah Barnes, Scott Jones

News Media Present:

Pat Kimbrough, *High Point Enterprise*
Daniel Pierce, WGHP (Fox 8)

Note: The following handouts were distributed during the meeting and will be attached as a permanent part of these proceedings.

- ✓ PP Presentation: Top 10% of Crime and Disorder Properties
- ✓ H.B. 1012 (Minimum Housing Code/Mold and Mildew)
- ✓ Summary of Findings on the Cure Violence Model (Reductions in Violence from cure Violence in North America)
- ✓ Pamphlet: Tiny House Community Development
- ✓ Hammer Tiny House Community Interesting Facts

Chairman Golden called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

2019-255 Update: Top 10% Criminal Activities Program

Staff will provide an update on the Top 10% Criminal Activities Program

Mike McNair, Director of Community Development & Housing, advised that the General Assembly changed the statutes regarding inspections and eliminated the RUCO program that Greensboro was using. He noted it included a list of situations that could warrant an inspection, but the Top 10% is not on the list. He explained there are some constraints in the statutes that address police activity as far as working with properties that are identified and there are still some questions as to when things can occur and the order in which they occur because the statutes are unclear.

Council Member Moore inquired about notifications to the landlords and how much time they have in order to respond. City Attorney JoAnne Carlyle advised the statute says a “reasonable amount of time,” but there is no set definition. She noted that it could be quite burdensome to the city especially with the Police Department having to assist the landlord with whatever problems exist. Council Member Moore felt there should be a defined time and Ms. Carlyle advised a defined time could be put in the city’s ordinance.

After a thorough review of the statute and many discussions with attorneys and experts at the School of Government, it was determined that the statute does not establish reasonable cause for inspections to be done solely because the property is showing up on a list. Ms. Carlyle noted the 10% does not equal to reasonable cause, but there are other approaches that could be used.

Lori Loosemore, Local Codes Enforcement Manager, advised that she did a drive-by evaluation and looked at 23 houses from the outside exterior and only found three that might have reasonable cause. Mr. McNair reiterated that the Police and Fire Departments can also refer properties when they see substandard conditions inside a house.

Chairman Golden asked how often staff would be able to do the drive-by inspections. Ms. Loosemore stated with the assumption that staff would get the list once a year, they would have to work it into their work schedule and it would certainly add work load to the inspectors.

He asked if it would still be okay to publish a Top 10% list and Ms. Carlyle advised that it was, but noted the only issue with publishing the list would be the question as to whether or not anyone in those residences at those addresses are protected by the domestic violence laws.

Mr. McNair stated staff would continue to follow up and will report when properties need inspections. He mentioned the map identifying the target areas and shared a map showing distribution of the Top 10%, which identified properties throughout the city. He explained staff does have the ability to update the list, but had to make a change this year because all police departments went from UCR to FBI data as a scoring mechanism for crime.

Staff's recommendation is to go out and monitor these properties to see if there might be reasonable cause, the police and fire personnel will advise if they see any substandard conditions in a house. Staff will also continue to monitor it across the state to see if other jurisdictions have implemented the program.

2019-258

Update: Proposed Legislation (H.B. 1012) Regarding Minimum Housing Code (Mold and Mildew)

Lori Loosemore, Local Codes Enforcement Supervisor, apprised the Committee of proposed legislation regarding adding mold and mildew to the Minimum Housing statute that can be adopted into local ordinances for jurisdictions. She noted that the city does get complaints about mold/mildew frequently and although the city does not address or test for mold and mildew, the inspectors do try to find out what might be causing the mold and mildew. Ms. Loosemore pointed out that testing for mold and mildew would be burdensome to the city and could prove to be very costly and add additional work to staff.

Committee Member Peters asked about the possibility of making the management companies for these properties bear the burden of the cost. Ms. Loosemore explained this was not in the statute and noted the burden is on the city.

Deputy City Manager Randy McCaslin asked if this was optional or required. Ms. Loosemore believed it would be optional.

In the case of mold removal or remediation, Chairman Golden asked if the landlords could pass these costs to the renters. Ms. Loosemore explained if the inspectors find any water issues that are causing mold and mildew, they would hold the property owner responsible and require them to make the necessary repairs. She

felt the burden would really be more on the city from a testing aspect and pointed out there are no guidelines currently for testing.

Committee Member Williams expressed concerns with the possible additional costs for those renters that do not have a lease and are paying rent month-to-month.

Towing Contract

Ms. Loosemore advised that they decided to rebid the Towing contract so it will not commence on July 1st and staff will provide an update at the next meeting. Ms. Carlyle advised there is a nuance in a subsection of the law that may allow the city to tow vehicles from private property even though the vehicle is there with the property owner's permission, so staff will be tweaking the ordinance that was just adopted because it increases the amount of authority that the city has to make the determination of when the vehicles should be removed.

2019-256

Presentation- Cure Violence Program

James Adams, President of the High Point branch of the NAACP, shared additional details about the Cure Violence Program. He introduced Rev. Brad Lilley with Peacemakers and the High Point branch of the NAACP; and Dr. Deborah Barnes from the Executive Committee of the State NAACP. He explained this model came out of a conversation from one of the strategy meetings held. Community voices were asking for more to be done about gun violence and to find ways to save our youth. He advised their presentations throughout the community have been positively received and they feel this model can complement other efforts being used in High Point. He pointed out Greensboro and High Point both suffer from an extraordinarily high number of killings and injuries by gun violence and many families and the community continue to suffer.

He explained that the Cure Violence is a model that mimics eradication of diseases throughout the world, is a very effective health model and noted violence has the same patterns as a health epidemic. Using this model, they hope to address violence in the following manner:

1. Protect and interrupt potential violent conflicts;
2. Identify and treat the highest risks;
3. Mobilize the community to change the norm, which takes everybody in the community working together.

Since the model is data driven, he shared some statistics in North America from jurisdictions using the Cure Violence model. The newest model is being used in Durham, NC.

They are asking for High Point to have the opportunity to join Greensboro and Guilford County to effectively address gun violence in our communities. He explained an assessment would be needed which will dictate target areas in High Point, the funds that will be needed to address the target areas.

Following the overview, Mr. Adams entertained questions.

Chairman Golden stated he personally has been gathering questions in the community for the past couple of weeks in anticipation of this meeting.

One of the questions he received was: Are these going to be healthcare workers and interrupters?

Response from Mr. Adams: The model is set up and will be determined by the organization that is chosen to head up the model and if the health department is involved. In Durham the health department actually managed the program. How it is funded and put together will definitely be part of what the community talks about.

Mr. Adams asked Carlvena Foster, Guilford County Commissioner, to expound. She advised the Guilford County Commissioners did meet on May 7th with the Greensboro City Council and they have discussed the program in-depth. They are looking at One Step Further as the agency that will implement the program. She noted that the Greensboro City Council has the program in their budget recommendation and it will be on the Guilford County Commissioners agenda on Thursday, June 6th for action. It will be a one-year contract for about \$220,000 a year with an option for a renewal at the end of year one. It is proposed to be a 50/50 split between Greensboro and Guilford County. The funding, if approved, will be used for a program administrator, program assistants, interrupters, and program operations.

Committee Member Peters asked if the funding would be used in High Point as well. Commissioner Foster stated it is her hope that it would be, but it would depend on what High Point decides to do.

Chairman Golden asked if they have reached out to the hospitals in the community to see if they will contribute since it is being based on a healthcare model. Mr. Adams replied that he did send an email to Dr. Hoekstra with Wake Forest Baptist Health, but has not received a response with the information that has been requested.

In Mr. Adams' opinion, Cure Violence is what is needed in our community to be proactive in the fight against gun violence. He reiterated that we have a wonderful model with HPCAV doing the after the fact crisis management and felt the Police Chief did a great job in removing a number of weapons off the street. If the City of High Point does not want the Cure Violence model, Mr. Adams asked that the city offer another model that would allow them to be proactive in these efforts.

Chairman Golden pointed out the people doing the shootings in High Point do not live in the Census tracts, they are just passing through. He asked how the Cure Violence Program was the reason for a decrease in the census tracts from the

program in Durham when people are coming in and out from all over the place. Mr. Adams replied this was derived from data and information from their police department. Rev. Brad Lilley explained you would see an overall reduction in shootings/killings and they are aware that the perpetrators are not limited to city limits, tracts, etc...

In vetting the applications for the interrupters, Chairman Golden asked what role background checks would play in the hiring process for these positions and pointed out most would have a criminal history. Mr. Adams explained that some of it is their word and track record and pointed out they need someone committed to effecting change in the community. He noted the interrupters job is to get into the middle of the conflict on both sides and the interrupters will be someone who has had track record in a certain area of the city and sees a need for change. Commissioner Foster stated that One Step Further would be doing the hiring, background checks, and would be trained as interrupters before being put out in the community. Rev. Lilley added that interrupters are people that have the ability to walk into a room of people who are gang members and those that are pulling triggers and they have credibility and can relate with the people because they are personally familiar with their behaviors. They are known and recognized and have a voice. He noted that there are a group of men in the High Point Peacemakers organization that have agreed to be interrupters.

Mr. Adams added that the interrupters stay away from the police for a reason and pointed out the model is not built to snitch, but it is built to prevent. He noted the Cure Violence interrupters would be identified by bright hats, T-shirts, etc....

Council Member Moore asked if there have been any instances where Cure Violence interrupters were mediating at a scene and were arrested where violence erupted and if the police are supposed to stay away in those instances. Mr. Adams replied that on occasion, interrupters might get arrested and provided some examples of situations that have occurred in other jurisdictions using the Cure Violence model.

Willie Davis, a resident of Ward 1 in High Point, asked if One Step Further would also be doing the hiring for the interrupters in High Point. Commissioner Foster pointed out that High Point has not yet committed to be a part of the Cure Violence program.

Committee Member Williams asked if any of the funding for the program would go to the people serving in that group to help them, especially the ones that want to do better and get away from that lifestyle. Mr. Adams explained that's in the second and third component of the Cure Violence Program.

Council Member Williams inquired about the number of staff that would be necessary for the program. Mr. Adams advised that there are seven staff people in Durham, which includes three interrupters.

Committee Member Scarborough commented that people in the drug industry can make much more money by selling and dealing drugs and asked how they would change that. Mr. Adams replied the goal is to change the norm and they need to convey to them that the quick money is not necessarily the best money.

Committee Member Williams asked if there is a community element on a regular basis that works side by side with those that will be on the staff in the Cure Violence program. Rev. Lilley noted a community element is already involved in the High Point Peacemakers; they are involved and support the Cure Violence model. He stressed that it will take the involvement of everybody in the community to make it successful in order to make a difference. Commissioner Foster advised there is a public education component, outreach component, and a faith-based outreach component.

Dr. Deborah Barnes, Chair of the Poverty Committee of the State NAACP, explained that poverty creates a dynamic and most have managed to avoid it. She emphasized that people are driven to make these choices because of the lack of education, nourishment, opportunity. She further explained that the Cure Violence model says to start with those people who understand the reality and have them talk to the people who are caught up in those circumstances so they can find a way to be like most people. She emphasized the community norm is not all “them”, but is “us” (the norm) as well. She noted no one ends up in situations like this because that is what they want and stated people keep being forced away with no hope of regaining humanity. She urged High Point to start changing the norm and thinking about these people differently because they are “us.” She noted that in many cases, they are “trapped” because we (“us”) won’t let them out. She suggested this could not be done by persecuting and eliminating them from the mix.

Chairman Golden inquired about the ask on the City of High Point’s part. Mr. Adams noted it was uncertain at this point because the assessment has already been done for Greensboro and Guilford County and High Point declined to participate. He stated he was not sure what the exact cost for an assessment for High Point to join these efforts would be, but noted the assessment could be done in a month’s time and he will ask if it could possibly be combined with Greensboro’s and Guilford County’s efforts. Dr. Barnes noted they could come back with a hard number on the cost of an assessment for High Point.

Chairman Golden moved to recommend to the City Council that an assessment be done for High Point. Committee Member Peters made a second to the motion.

For further discussion, Committee Member Williams stated his only concern was about the undisclosed amount for the assessment. Chairman Golden commented that Guilford County should have assessed High Point because High Point is part of Guilford County. Commissioner Foster pointed out a presentation was made to

High Point and there was an ask, but High Point decided not to participate. She further advised that the assessment that was done was for Guilford County and the City of Greensboro to move forward with participation in the Cure Violence program with a 50/50 split; and emphasized it was not a three-way split.

The motion carried by a 4-0 unanimous vote of the Committee.

2019-257

Update: Tiny House Program

Scott Jones with the Tiny House Community Development group updated the Committee on the tiny house community that is proposed in High Point, more specifically located at 401 Hay Street. He shared pictures of their logo for High Point Tiny Houses and stated their mission boils down to community—not just one area because they want to diversify their program across the state. Their goal is to provide permanent, safe, and affordable housing. They are an Equal Housing Opportunity and he advised a huge part of their funding (80%) comes from the NC Housing Finance Agency. After providing a brief history on the nonprofit, Tiny House Community Development, Inc. Mr. Jones shared some photos of a tiny house community that was recently completed in Greensboro on a 0.46-acre tract of property consisting of five tiny 288 sq. ft. houses and one 180 sq. ft. tiny home—all of which meet the NC Building Code and they go one step further by building them to Energy Star standards making them very energy efficient.

He proceeded to share some photos of the tiny house community proposed to be located on Hay Street in High Point; the property was donated by Jack Green. Work is beginning and the property is in the rough grading and clearing phase. The property originally had a duplex on it and college students came to High Point to help clean out the structure, as well as clean the property.

Mr. Jones reported that the site plan for the Tiny House Community in High Point has been approved and they are ready to start pulling permits to begin construction. One of the proposed houses has been sponsored and paid for by the High Point Jaycees. There are ten homes proposed on this site. The perimeter homes are 384 sq. ft. (16 x 24) and will be built on insulated, energy-efficient slabs. Two of the houses are single family (parent/child) at 448 sq. ft.

A community garden will also be placed in the middle of the community that will have raised beds and it will be ADA compliant. The landscape along the perimeter has been approved and will incorporate edible landscaping (fruit trees, blueberry and blackberry plants). He advised that the nonprofit will maintain the landscaping/garden on the site. The garden will be maintained by Sustainability Resources Center, another nonprofit that they have partnered with. They have hired a person to go around and maintain the garden and they will work with the community teaching kids and residents in the community at large about gardening (how to cook, plant, harvest, maintain while growing). This person also works with

several other agencies such as Out of the Garden, The Agriculture Extension office, the Master Gardener's program, etc....

Mr. Jones proceeded to share some interior pictures of the tiny homes built in Greensboro which have vinyl flooring, granite counter tops, sliding glass shower doors.

Committee Member Peters asked about selection of the residents for the tiny houses. Mr. Jones explained they are a partner with the Guilford County Continuum of Care, which is made up of all the agencies that provide shelter and housing, including High Point Housing Authority, Greensboro Housing Authority. They bring resident referrals to the Tiny House Community Development Group. These are individuals who have been through 12 months of case management and ready for independent living. They will have a UNC-G student (an AmeriCorps Vista worker) who will be working with them part-time 25 hours a week for one year providing oversight for the case management.

Mr. Jones noted right now all the tiny homes will be leased, but their goal is to build and sell one to see how it works out. He explained that a UNC-G student led project is underway for a tiny home project at 900 Haywood Street. They will market it and design it and it will be a build-sell. Once it sells, then the Tiny House Community Development group will pay UNC-G for the price of the property.

Mr. Jones shared a timeline for the Hammer Tiny House Community in Greensboro that started in February 2017 and was completed in October 2018. He provided a cost breakdown for the amount spent on developing the tiny houses in Greensboro which totaled \$64,384.00. He pointed out since this was the first tiny house development, it took more time to work everything else. The future tiny houses will be built in a shorter amount of time.

He advised that the NC Housing Finance Agency loves what they are doing with the tiny house communities and are committed to the project. He noted the funding would be there to start and finish the project, but the downfall in the process will be trying to raise the additional 20% needed (\$132,000); they have raised about \$47,000 to date. They will start taking funds from their existing Self Help accounts and will start doing work in High Point. Volunteers will be coming to High Point this Saturday to start working onsite. They are having to find about 15% while continuing fundraising efforts and they are looking for house sponsors, sidewalk sponsors, garden sponsors, etc.... He emphasized that they could go out and borrow the money needed, but stressed that it is about community and support is vital from the community at large because it is important that the community buys into what they are doing.

He shared that Greensboro's costs were based on 1,540 sq. ft. and six houses; High Point will be then houses at 3,968 sq. ft. He advised they plan on getting the tiny houses in High Point up in a fourth of the time that it took in Greensboro if they

can find the 15% needed. He noted they are trying to find sponsors in High Point that are willing to commit to building these ten houses.

Chairman Golden inquired about the cost of the lease to the tenant. Mr. Jones explained that the tenant would be referred by a shelter agency who has already worked with them and they are qualified for SSI, SSDI, or are receiving some sort of support housing voucher. They will accept whatever that voucher pays (which is essentially based on 40% of their income or whatever is received in housing support). He further explained there will be one master water meter with individual utility meters and the nonprofit will be responsible for the cost of utilities.

He stated they would be removing three large trees that have reached their life expectancy at the High Point site and they would like to upfit/upgrade the corner of Hoover/Hay and put in a nice bus stop (covered, lit, and convenient to the residents).

The Committee thanked Mr. Jones for the work that the Tiny House Community Development Group is doing in High Point and other areas as well.

COLTRANE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Chairman Golden requested the following names be added to the Coltrane Planning Committee.

- ✓ Bernita Sims
- ✓ Kimberly Mozingo

The Committee was in agreement that these individuals be added.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m. upon motion duly made and seconded.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa B. Vierling, City Clerk

Jeff Golden, Chairman