



social +
economic
vitality

Crosby Advocacy Group

January 16, 2018
Meeting Minutes

"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" – Martin Luther King, Jr.

Attendees: Gerladine Alshamy, Priscilla Awkard, Charlenzo Belcher, Verna P. Best, Derrick W. Byrd, Michelle Crawford, Jerry Dodson, Kristin Feierabend, Marcia Greaux, Avis Jones, Jarvis Jones, Ben Kittner, Nikki Lyons, Deidre McCullers, Nikki McDougald, Emily Mueller, Tamara Perkins, Kathy Peterson, Dalia Place, Diana Powell, Shelia Reich, Anona Smith Williams, Denise Spaugh, Hannah Taylor, Christal Toodle, Chad Walker, Gregory Watts, Lorna Wesley Parks, Johnette Whichard, Kimberly Williams, Ruthie Wofford

Guests: Sharon Peterson (Wake County Planning Department), Jessie Hathcock (Jobs for Life), Tamara Perkins (Wake County Human Services Family Services)

Project Manager: Verna P. Best

SEV VISTA/Recorder: Hannah Taylor

Welcome, Review Agenda and Meeting Minutes Diana Powell/Priscilla Awkard, Co-Chairs

- Priscilla Awkard and Diana Powell welcomed the group at 9:12 am

Information Presentations

Wake County Planning Department – Sharon Peterson, Long Range Planning Administrator

- Sharon shared about growth trends in SE Raleigh and the area surrounding the Crosby-Garfield building (US Census tract 508)
- Wake County population growth – from 2000-2016 420,000 people moved to Wake County, it is projected that by 2020 over 1.1 million people will live in Wake County
- Growth distribution - of 420,000 people who moved to Wake County, 60% moved to Raleigh and Cary, growth is distributed in smaller municipalities and unincorporated land as well.
- Statewide - NC municipalities with largest population increase between 2010 and 2016: Raleigh is #2 and Cary is #4
- 2015-2016 67 new people a day (20 from natural increase (births/deaths), 47 from net migration)
 - 36 domestic migrants (mainly Durham, Cumberland, Guilford, NY NJ, PA, 11 international migrants (India, China, Mexico)
- Majority minority municipalities (municipalities where non-Hispanic white residents are less than 50% of population)
 - In 2015 - Knightdale, Morrisville, Zebulon

- Population growth by human services zones - fastest growing is West Wake 9.8%, East Central grew by 5.6%
- Community vulnerability map - based on 455 block groups in WC
 - 29 block groups in East Central zone in 2015 - mainly red and orange with some green and yellow (red is most vulnerable and green is least)
- Median incomes in Wake County increased (both household and family income)
- Rent affordability by zone - in East Central - 58% of people spent 30% or more of income on rent - highest of all WC zones. In addition, 13% of people spent 30% or more of income on mortgage in the East Central zone
- Summer food/free and reduced lunch eligibility - 31% eligible youth county wide, 56% in East Central
- In 2016 in 508 census tract, 559 jobs in 2015 in tract; 553 of those jobs are retained by people who live outside of the census tract
 - 1020 people live in 508, 1014 work outside tract 508
 - Jobs within census tract - educational services (36%) construction (25%), health care and social assistance (15%)
 - Workers who work in 508 but live outside mostly live in east Raleigh (Sunnybrook, Poole Rd, Rock Quarry areas)
 - Many census tract 508 residents work in Tryon/Cary area, Sunnybrook, downtown areas.
- CAG member questions around low-income housing - Alicia Arnold will come to CAG speak about housing (Verna noted) if housing is a large interest for CAG
- Nikki from Wake County Smart Start – working to canvass areas to identify children 0-5 who are in vulnerable communities to provide services and support, share information, and facilitate community meetings about early education
 - If you know families that have children, sign up for imagination library to get one free book a month until child is 5
 - Transportation to school - depends on school, but Wake County Smart Start does not provide transportation
 - www.wakesmartstart.org
- Southgate Library and Richard B. Harrison Library has regular programming and some resources/information, happy to post/share other opportunities/information
- Growth in Raleigh due to jobs, high tech, medical services according to Sharon Peterson
- Highest growing demographic - 55+. As adult children move to Wake County, their 55+ parents follow them.
- Discussion about developers soliciting seniors who may not have family nearby, developers preying on seniors who may not know how to advocate for themselves, CAG member gave the example of offering \$90,000 for a house that is on land that is worth much more
 - What is Wake County doing to prevent predatory practices?
 - Verna noted that a lot of the work around the predatory practices goes through the city. How can CAG and CAG members work to educate people about the value of their land and how to advocate for themselves? This is an issue that SEV is focused on.
 - One CAG member proposed that this information should be shared through churches because they are an institution that many people trust.
 - What happens to people who sold their property and weren't paid a fair price?
 - Geraldine Alshamy noted that she knows of some older women who sold their homes to developers and are now homeless

- Deidre McCullers noted that some families are forced to live together, sometimes up to 3-4 families in one house
- One CAG member argued that the City of Raleigh is complicit in this predation by giving developers permits and turning a blind eye on this issue
- Priscilla Awkard noted the importance of voting and advocating in the political arena around this issue.
- Geraldine Alshamy noted frustration with the CAG group and other groups that tend to talk about problems but don't always identify what the people in the room can do. Many agencies and organizations are represented in CAG, and we should educate ourselves and share information with people if this is really a concern. Put together resources and report back at next CAG meeting
 - Some folks going to CACs but some are not - possible medium to sharing information
 - Need to create a directory of CAG members - who works in what areas (libraries, nonprofits, senior care, etc.)
 - Power up an organization that canvasses to talk to people already about weatherization and could be an already existing medium to provide some information on saving your house
- Kristin Feierabend and other SEV staff have spoken with DHIC to find resources on housing for the community such as appraisals and advocacy. The SEV team can share this information with CAG and then distribute to community
- Priscilla Awkard- *Resilience* film screening - working to choose some dates in February, ask the group to note dates that are already booked to avoid conflicts, note that REI training on Feb 7-8, regional meeting 2/22. This film screening may collaborate with a Bring Back the Village meeting (Mondays 7-9pm) or the Wake Parent2Parent group (6pm-8pm at Crosby 1st Thursday of each month)

Jobs for Life (JFL) – Jessie Hathcock, Business Relations Manager

- Jobs for Life started out by connecting churches with employers after identifying needs among congregations for more job opportunities and employers who needed more employees.
- JFL focuses on community, character, and emotional development as well as soft skills such as resume development, confidence building, and mock interviews. They also connect participants with a network of employers.
- 84% of graduates find a job or pursue more education, 72% graduation rate. One CAG member asked why some participants don't graduate; not everyone is ready for the JFL class as well as some barriers like transportation or childcare.
- CAG member question: what is the success rate for people who might have a record? JFL doesn't have that specific statistic but they do work with many employers who are willing to give a second chance or who don't do background checks.
- CAG member question: do you provide transportation? JFL does not provide transportation but encourages sites to support transportation needs of participants by picking them up or providing bus passes.
- CAG member question: do you have to be a member of a church to participate in the program at that site? No, sites (such as churches) are responsible for recruiting and recruit through schools or other partners.

- CAG member question: do you go to churches to present about the Jobs for Life program? Yes! If you are interested in your church or other organization acting as a site, contact Jessie Hathcock at jhathcock@jobsforlife.org or info@jobsforlife.org
- CAG member question: is there a fee to participate in the JFL program? No, JFL is free!
- CAG member question: Do you have a list of sites and providers? Yes, flyers were provided at the meeting that included ways to get involved, sites, and other partners. CAG will email a PDF of the flyers.
- Please refer job seekers to JFL, gauge interest with your congregation, volunteer with classes, or launch your own site.
- Verna Best noted that there will be a Jobs for Life program located at the Crosby Garfield building soon.

Wake County Human Services Family Services -- Tamara Perkins, Senior Practitioner

- The Family Services Academy is using grant money to facilitate the Wake Parent2Parent program. This will be at the Crosby-Garfield building on the first Thursday of each month from 6-8PM. It is open to the public in the cafeteria.
- Child care and activities will be provided for children aged 3 and up. Food will be provided
- The Parent2Parent classes will focus on parenting as well as other topics like budgeting and finance and housing.
- Parent2Parent will focus on prevention rather than intervention and work to empower and educate so parents can be the best parent possible.
- Please share referrals with Michelle Crawford (mcrawford@wakegov.com)
- CAG also discussed doing a screening of the film *Resilience* with this group.

CAG Date and Time Discussion

- CAG reconsidered the time and date of the meeting due to issues around parking as well as resident/community voices having accessibility to the group
- SEV Survey data indicated that weekday evenings and Saturday mornings were best for residents to participate in “community activities”
- The group disagreed on what “community activities” meant – would CAG fall under that classification?
- Some CAG members noted the issue of dwindling community trust in city and county governments and institutions. If residents tell us what they need and we do not act on it, that trust could continue to deteriorate.
- Others disagreed, stating that CAG meetings were part of their professional work day/hours and evenings or Saturday mornings would not be an appropriate time for them to participate in work-related activities.
- The issue of space was also raised as the room CAG currently meets in already gets very crowded, so we may not have space to invite more community members

- It was noted that in the East there are two distinct groups, one that is a community based group and another where partners/organizations attend as a part of their job to participate in information sharing.
 - Verna Best was not sure that CAG would be ready for a split like this as the group is still just finding its focus and structure with the help of the Social and Economic Vitality effort and the action teams
- Charlenzo Belcher noted that we should not just attend CAG to talk about issues or focus on problems but try to be a solution-based group focused on action. We need to meet people where they are and make the group more accessible to the community to maintain and develop trust
- It was proposed to try out a new time and see how many people showed up.
- Verna Best proposed to maintain the 3rd Tuesday of the month and alternate each month between evening and morning times (9am-11am, 5:30pm-7:30pm). Then assess new times in 3-6 months.

CAG upcoming events/announcements

- ROAR (Raleigh Organizing Against Racism) Racial Equity Institute is a two-day training (9-5 each day) that costs \$295. Individuals from vulnerable or underserved communities can get in for free. Contact Deidre McCullers at deidre919@aol.com
- Passage Home's culinary school initiative. Contact Jarvis Jones at jjones@passagehome.org for more information
- Justice Served expungement opportunity – closed as of noon on 1/16/18 but still taking referrals for people who would like non-violent crimes expunged from their records. May do an event at Crosby soon.
- Verna noted that at 1pm today (1/16/18) she will present to the Raleigh City Council on what Social and Economic Vitality has achieved so far with an emphasis on the Innovation Challenge that was in Fall 2017 so that the city can consider investing more resources into another innovation challenge event.

Next Meeting Agenda Items:

- Hannah Taylor, Kristin Feierabend, and Verna Best will put together housing resources and directory of CAG members

Adjourn at 11:30am

Next meeting: February 20th 9-11am