

NOAH Affordable Housing Task Force Meeting Minutes

April 19, 2020

Present: Monica Rainey, Susie Ries, Mike Hodge, Paulette Coleman, Natasha Deane, Kay Bowers, Carleen Dowell, Elizabeth Jessie, Edward Thompson, Ray Sells, Irene, Kaki Friskics-Warren, Jerry Park, Betty Lickstein and Kenny Lickstein, Ann Gwinn, Shirly Marks, Molly Williams, Grace Brady, Jacob Huff*, Burkley Allen, Maggie Cox, Jim Zralek, Billie Irving*

*First time attendees

I. **Introductions and check in:**

Check in included our affiliation and something we like about being quarantined.

II. **Metro Budget update:**

Kay Bowers reviewed the Metro Budget Crisis, \$250-300 million. There are damaged schools, need to deal with insurance FEMA. Property tax increase recommended to help with shortfall. Cares Act will mean \$100-120 mill will come to Metro. 3 million has come to MDHA not sure how it will be used but it can be used for rent relief. There is an April 29 deadline for presenting the Metro budget to the Council and the public.

III. **Tax Assistance Update:**

Susie reported the tax relief and freeze deadline has been extended to July 1. NOAH needs to help publicize the new deadline.

IV. **Tornado Recovery Update:**

Monica talked about tornado recovery. She, Susie and Mike had a Zoom meeting with North Nashville stakeholders invited by Urban League about tornado recovery. We will concentrate on North Nashville and will continue to communicate with the group involved with recovery efforts. We are concerned that no one is looking at long term gentrification of North Nashville.

Steve shared there is a map of tornado damage at <https://www.newschannel5.com/news/interactive-map-shows-path-of-damage-from-tornadoes-across-davidson-county>

Kay talked about long term recovery efforts which will include construction and case management. The Westminster Home Connection, chaired by Greg Bailey, has received grant from Community Foundation to coordinate agencies involved in long-term recovery. That group covers funding, construction and case management. UMCOR (United Methodist Committee On Relief) is in charge of case management and is looking for part time case managers.

Key Partners who have MOUs with Metro government include 1) The Community Foundation, (Tornado Recovery Fund) 2) Westminster Home Connection (coordinating volunteer construction groups and material donations) and 3) UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief is providing case management)

V. **Census Update:**

NOAH has a census committee that had planned door-to-door interaction with the IVE (Integrated Voter Engagement) people. Because of the pandemic, this has become a phone banking effort and making one minute videos for social media about the importance of filling out the census.

VI. **Integrated Voter Engagement:**

The NOAH IVE Committee has one representative from each task force, and Natasha Deane represents our task force. She has participated in three training webinars with Gamaliel – looking at methods to learn what issues voters care about and then organize them around those. This also involves talking to decision-makers and developing a “power analysis” of who has the power to give us what we want on a specific issue. They are contacting state legislators and other groups concerned about affordable housing.

- VII. **Letter to the Governor** – Stand Up Nashville, NOAH, MICAH, CALEB, and various unions are asking Governor Lee to use his emergency powers to “suspend” certain laws to allow localities to be more flexible in responding to the COVID-19 crisis. In the past, the state legislature has blocked ideas which we got passed at the local level (such as inclusionary zoning). The letter asks the Governor to relax certain laws related to property tax freeze, local hire, good wages, and ways of making housing affordable. There will be a Faith Leaders’ Zoom press conference about this on Thurs April 23 at 11:00 AM. On Monday, April 27, at 6:00 PM, a Zoom Town Hall meeting will feature workers and others being affected by these restrictive laws. We ask that you share the letter to the Governor with your congregations and friends. The letter can be seen and signed at <https://bit.ly/read-ltr>. An email link to send emails to the Governor is at <https://bit.ly/gov-email>.

VIII. **Our Next Steps**

1. Contacting NOAH member groups in North Nashville for follow up on problem of gentrification after the tornado.
2. Encouraging other groups, our members and acquaintances to sign and email the letter to Governor.
3. Calling Metro Council Members to ask about their feelings on the Metro budget and how affordable housing fits in.
4. Exploring ways to publicize Property Tax Assistance for senior low-income homeowners, which may shield them from coming property tax increases (extended deadline is July 1.)

IX. **Upcoming Events:**

Metro Council has a special committee of Council Members from tornado-affected districts, which will be reviewing tornado recovery. Next meeting is Thursday (April 23).

The Mayor will present his proposed budget at the end of April. In early May, we will email council members about the changes we will recommend in the budget.

Submitted by Carleen Dowell