

Rockford Choice Neighborhoods
Community Meeting Summary – November 20, 2012
Joyner Resource Center/Banner of Truth International

Purpose: To review project proposals suggested at previous community meetings, service providers and other stakeholder groups and to identify the level of support within the Ellis Heights neighborhood. Project proposals with significant community support will be further developed and refined for inclusion in the Ellis Heights/Fairgrounds Choice Neighborhood Plan.

Strategic Initiatives, Projects and Priorities

Camiros Principal Les Pollock presented a recap of the community vision for the Ellis Heights neighborhood developed at previous community meetings and described where we are in the planning process. A handout listing current project initiatives and proposed new projects was distributed along with a description of project ideas and proposals to be prioritized during the meeting through a key pad polling exercise. The priority ranked results of the keypad polling process are presented below.

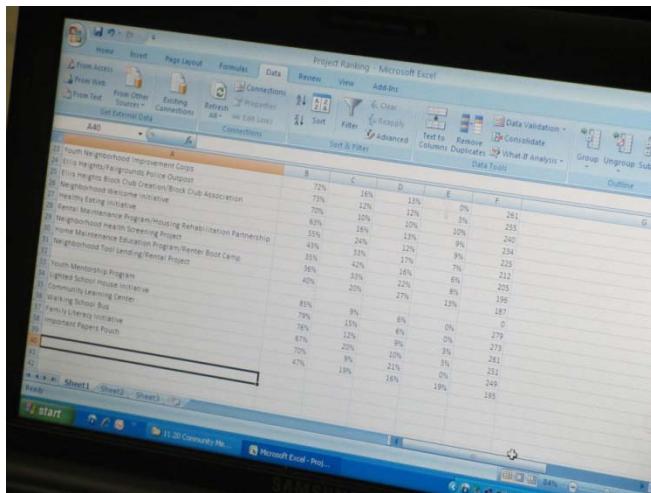
STRATEGIC INITIATIVE - INCOME AND JOBS					
Key Pad Polling Rating	High	Medium	Low	Not Needed	Project Score
New Project Idea/Proposal	3	2	1	0	
West Side Grocery Store Development	86%	8%	5%	0%	279
Work to Home Transit Links	85%	9%	3%	3%	276
Business Apprenticeship Project	74%	21%	3%	3%	267
Ellis Heights Daycare Center	69%	26%	6%	0%	265
Ex-offender Employment Initiative	76%	14%	3%	7%	259
Preston Street Employment Center	71%	18%	6%	6%	255
Business Mentoring Program	68%	24%	3%	5%	255
Ellis Heights Farmers Market	63%	25%	9%	3%	248
Neighborhood Youth Garden Project	59%	19%	22%	0%	237
Micro-Lending Program	55%	24%	13%	8%	226
Urban Farming Project	54%	20%	23%	3%	225
Building Trades Skills Development	50%	24%	18%	9%	216
Institution Support Business Cooperative	53%	19%	19%	8%	216

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE - SAFE, HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOOD					
Key Pad Polling Rating	High	Medium	Low	Not Needed	Project Score
New Project Idea/Proposal	3	2	1	0	
Housing Demolition Project	75%	19%	6%	0%	269
Family Fitness Center	77%	14%	9%	0%	268
Neighborhood Boys & Girls Club	76%	18%	3%	3%	267
Life Skills Training	73%	17%	10%	0%	263
Youth Neighborhood Improvement Corps	72%	16%	13%	0%	261
Ellis Heights/Fairgrounds Police Outpost	73%	12%	12%	3%	255
Ellis Heights Block Club Creation/Block Club Association	70%	10%	10%	10%	240
Neighborhood Welcome Initiative	63%	16%	13%	9%	234
Healthy Eating Initiative	55%	24%	12%	9%	225
Rental Maintenance Program/Housing Rehabilitation Partnership	43%	33%	17%	7%	212
Neighborhood Health Screening Project	35%	42%	16%	6%	205
Home Maintenance Education Program/Renter Boot Camp	36%	33%	22%	8%	196
Neighborhood Tool Lending/Rental Project	40%	20%	27%	13%	187



Community residents and community representatives are provided with an overview of the project ideas suggested for inclusion and engage in a key pad polling process to rank proposed projects.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE - EDUCATION					
Key Pad Polling Rating	High	Medium	Low	Not Needed	Project Score
New Project Idea/Proposal	3	2	1	0	
Youth Mentorship Program	85%	9%	6%	0%	279
Lighted School House Initiative	79%	15%	6%	0%	273
Community Learning Center	76%	12%	9%	3%	261
Walking School Bus	67%	20%	10%	3%	251
Family Literacy Initiative	70%	9%	21%	0%	249
Important Papers Pouch	47%	19%	16%	19%	195



Projects are sorted by priority rankings from the key pad polling exercise.

Discussion

The project rankings were reviewed and the following observations were made by community representatives for consideration as the Ellis Heights/Fairgrounds Choice Neighborhood Plan project elements are refined and project sponsors secured:

- The economic development focus should be on higher wage jobs rather than entry-level hospitality jobs or other low-skill jobs.
- Minorities need to be included in constructions jobs for housing and other neighborhood improvements.
- The West Side grocery store needs to be a full-service store with affordably priced food and not a convenience store that carries a limited selection of healthy food.

- The governance structure that will be used to guide implementation of the Choice Neighborhoods Plan needs to be clarity; it is critical that the roles of the various entities responsible for various projects and plan elements be clearly defined. A monitoring system is needed to make sure that projects are carried out.

Next Steps

The planning team will take the list of current project initiatives and the results of the ranking exercise from this meeting and work to identify project sponsors. Projects without an organization or entity willing to take implementation responsibility may need to be dropped from the Choice Neighborhoods Plan.