

CITY OF CUMBERLAND, MD

## **Neighborhood Advisory Commission (NAC)**

*MEETING MINUTES – January 25, 2016*

Introductions included attending appointees: Lee Borrer, Councilman Seth Bernard, Mayor Brian Grim, and Terri Hast, Also attending were: Councilman-elect Rock Cioni, and Nancy Forlifer. Unable to attend were: Allen Hedrick (chair), Michael Cassidy, Jenn Jeudy, Katie Gattens, Lt. Brian Lepley and David Cox. It is noted that there was snow and ice this evening.

Approval of the Minutes from the November 2015 was tabled for quorum vote in February.

Councilman Bernard announced that Councilman-elect Cioni will be sworn on February 2 at the Mayor and City Council meeting and will then hold the second City Councilmember appointee spot vacated by Dave Kauffman.

Nancy Forlifer with Western Maryland Health System announced creation of 3 additional community gardens throughout the City this spring as well as again on Williams Street. They are looking for contacts for input from Eastside, Wills, and Westside neighborhoods. Eastside's was provided. Nancy said another project is in the planning stages involving youth along with the Salvation Army and Jane Frazier Village.

At the last meeting, all commission members were asked to compile a list of NAC accomplishments and suggestions for NAC top 5 initiatives to help create a good NAC piece to present to the public. All are asked to please forward any work you may have completed to Terri for compiling a handout. Sheets from David Cox, Katie Gattens and Terri Hast were handed out (and are attached). Councilman Bernard added that he feels the NAC has already done better with social media presence, better advertising in general, and in going out to a neighborhood. Lee added that a NAC's sub-committee co- chaired by Jenn Jeudy and Josh Greise, created the Neighborhood Association Tool Kit; and that two neighborhood associations are in process of forming as a 501(c)3 due to their growth and that a logo/brand was created for the NAC and each neighborhood.

Lee brought CDBG information to meeting but had no one with whom to share the information.

Lee mentioned a mapping overlay project possibly using providers such as CivicPlus and [www.nextdoor.com](http://www.nextdoor.com) where a person could type in their address and see what neighborhood they are in and find information on all neighborhood groups and possibly more.

Due to Dave Cox's suggestion in his paper, it was decided to motion for a change in day/time at the February meeting. After reviewing all other neighborhood group and related meeting times, suggestions were made for keeping the last Monday or possibly the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday at 4:30 or 5:00 p.m.

Councilman Bernard said he hopes the NAC has appointees who are vested in the NAC moving forward. Mayor Grim has asked Mayor and City Council members to attend at least one of each of the neighborhood meetings throughout the year.

It was decided that each NAC meetings will now alternate between a work session meeting held at City Hall and the regular NAC meeting held at a location within a pre-selected neighborhood of focus (decided at the preceding work session). The public, including NAC appointees, NAC participants, and neighborhood groups are invited to attend both. The NAC will start this process with the February 2016 work session meeting. The process or agenda for each work session would be similar to the following: Choose the neighborhood, read the comp plan neighborhood element for that neighborhood, choose a venue and discuss notable research from what was read and from what is known. For instance, what notable businesses and groups are in the neighborhood who could become vested in a neighborhood group? What are considered the neighborhood's strengths and opportunities? The idea is to arrange for a neighborhood meeting of residents and convince them of the importance of joining together as a community for the sake of their own neighborhood. An agenda would be set for this neighborhood meeting with a moderator and/or speaker suggestion. A hot topic for that neighborhood

could be used as a way to gain an audience. But it is important to remember that the main reason for the meeting is to launch a neighborhood group and to connect them (or the current group) with the Neighborhood Advisory Commission as a liaison in connecting with Mayor and City Council. Promotion and marketing to that neighborhood would begin - using the best match for that demographic based on Katie's research. Websites, newspapers, Sunday newspaper, radio, Facebook, community calendars were standard media mentioned. The idea would be for the NAC to leave this meeting with a primary neighborhood contact person, a day and time for a successful next neighborhood meeting, agenda ideas for organizing that neighborhood group such as electing leaders, discussing and forming a mission statement etc. using the NAC Toolkit to help them organize. It was noted that if one or more groups already exist within the same neighborhood, the attendees could be encouraged to attend the larger group as long as the neighborhood would be represented. The NAC would repeat this process until we have met in all 11 neighborhoods. The NAC would then revisit each neighborhood and if they were not successful in developing an organization, would review the process and try again.

Some fears are that not all NAC members will be involved and only one or two will show up. It was noted that the achievement won't be "the NAC got x amount of people to show up", but that "the NAC tried and executed this action".

Center City (Downtown Cumberland) was chosen as the first NAC development site. The topic example could be the Sage Group's downtown design input request that is out to the public right now. Most felt this might be the easiest group to reach and good practice for the NAC. the two existing groups in this neighborhood are the Downtown Development Commission and the Downtown Cumberland Business Association.

Homework to be completed by the February 29 meeting for all commission and any public willing to assist includes: Read the 2013 Comprehensive Plan: Neighborhood Element, II. Center City, pages 13-17, before the next meeting <http://www.ci.cumberland.md.us/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1282> . Using this information and current events, consider the boundaries and note possible meeting locations, assets of the neighborhood, significant groups and businesses. Look over Katie's research regarding best methods to market to those residents and add your thoughts. Choose who you think might be the best moderator for this group. This way the work session can move smoothly and quickly. The agenda will be very specific. A moderator should be concise and consider group input, while also keeping the topic and meeting on track and focused. A one hour meeting is desired.

The meeting ended at 6:50 p.m.

The next regular meeting will be a work session held at City Hall on Monday, February 29, 2016 at 5:30.

Respectively submitted,  
Terri Hast

cc: Margie Woodring, City Clerk