

Flint Neighborhoods United Meeting
Saturday November 7, 2020, 9:30-11:30am
Facilitator: Carma Lewis

Resident comments, concerns, announcements & Community partner updates

Share your successes, upcoming events and programs, ask questions, etc.

Glenn Wilson

- Step Up, Pick Up competition Sept 19-25th for litter pickup
 - Friendly competition, partnership with FNU and Keep Genesee County Beautiful
- Neighborhood groups picked up 1.5 tons in trash during that week
- Winners announced, press release soon!
 - 1st place: Mott Park had 24 volunteers, 63 hours, 109k steps, 94 bags of litter and 2350 lbs of litter
 - 2nd place: Glendale Hills
 - 3rd place: Sarvis
 - 4th place: Hasselbring
 - 5th place: Rollingwood

Michael Lawlor, City of Flint

- City has hired a new lead planner who will start next Monday, so I hope by next month he'll be able to come and introduce himself here
- Lead planner is primary supervisor of planning division for the city; all of the work we do is implementing the Master Plan; his role will be to continue this process
- Q: Did City Council vote on this plan? Zoning code?
- A: was approved unanimously by the council by 2015; **zoning code is a separate issue**; this will be part of the new lead planner's job (present and get new code passed by council)

Heather Griffin, Public Works

- Announced yesterday that the Bag it program will be week of Thanksgiving
- If you have service on Thurs or Fri will be delayed by one day
- Our website has not been updated yet; still says November 22nd, but **this is incorrect!!**

Chris Frye, Flint: Our Community, Our Voice

- Available online now! Please share!

Lynn Williams, Community Foundation of Greater Flint

- Community foundation under its initiative entitled "TRHT" -- which stands for "True Racial Healing and Transformation" is looking for a few individuals, 8-10 that would be interested in participating in something called a "racial healing circle"
- Bring people together from different experiences who are working together on community initiatives dedicated to transforming systemic racism
- Commonalities across differences
- Contact: Lynn Williams - Community Foundation
 - lwilliams@cfgf.org
 - 810-767-8304

Theresa Roach, Crim

- Openings at the Crim office
- Community School Director, job posting is up until later this week
- LISC opportunities to join Active Communities, Theresa's team!

Michelle Kachelski (on behalf of Kate Cole), Traffic Taming Task Force

- Focused on dangers driving that may cause injury or death to other drivers on the road
- Radar Sign alerts at 6 sites tracking dangerous Speeding in residential neighborhoods
- Site 6: 2550 Miller Rd, High Speed Alerts

- Poses threats to people on the sidewalks and workers working
- Radar Sign Data: numbers have been getting worse
- Appropriate solutions:
 - Red light cameras (in other places, amount of tickets issued has paid for camera technology in long run)
- Accepting pledges for the distracted driving month

Holly Wilson, Flint Neighborhood Action Council

- FNAC will host a safety forum Thursday, Nov 19th at 5pm.
- Discussion will focus on the Pierson Rd corridor and the safety issues and crime that surrounds liquor stores and gas stations.
- Join us using the following link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/working-together-for-a-safer-flint-n-flint-ic2-community-safety-forum-tickets-127030079387>
- Additional questions contact Holly Wilson 810 919-1800

Kay Schwartz, Flint Public Library

- Open at temporary space in Courtland Center, still honoring the occupancy guidelines which were increased!
- We're still in a browse and go mode; two spaces at Courtland Center: one where you get your materials and check them out and the other where we have our computer access and local history and genealogy (books that don't check out)
- Browse and Go means you can come in for an hour in each other those spaces
- 3 week check out, but automatic renewal if nobody has your book on hold
- Construction on Kearsley update:
 - As of October 30, 2020, most of construction has been destruction; inside of library is being transformed so completed that they've done a lot of tearing out
 - We're getting a lovely glass curtain wall all around the building!
 - Floors are being reinforced (books are heavy)!
- We are opening up this beautiful view of windows looking out on Crapo street, collections are moving in from windows so that people can sit all around

Michael Freeman, Genesee County Land Bank

- Exciting information to share with you, want input from you, for you to be a part of this
- Lank Bank history
 - Gov't org (but "quasi-governmental"), created in 2004 as a response to tax-foreclosure crisis in Genesee County
 - Receives and manages properties transferred from Genesee County treasurer after tax-foreclosure
 - We get the "orphan properties"
- We are a community development tool
- Before, the auction process involved no control from residents or community development corporation on what happened, a lot of private interests coming in and taking properties and they'd often end up back in foreclosure; by parking them at the landbank we can think about the future of the property
- To restore value to the community be acquiring, developing, and selling vacant and abandoned properties...to people with capacity for responsible land ownership
- Current inventory of properties is 15K
- 25% are residents, 71% commercial

Alexandria Riley

- The Land Bank values and promotes affordable housing and homeownership
- 192 houses sold in FY 19/20; 9 houses renovated by Lank Bank crews in FY 19/20
- Intentional about balancing not just overalls mount of sales but value in terms of creating home ownership

- **Question:** What can neighborhood associations do if they want to do publicly accessible vacant lot reuse projects but can't afford liability insurance?
 - **A:** King Avenue Plus has taken the lead on this, they're a good resource
 - Liability insurance is about \$500/year
 - Land Bank has general liability insurance, but not like the City, so in talking to communities throughout the country and insurance agents, really the only way to get protection is for the group to get liability insurance if you're doing some park like use, so insurance is covered
 - This is something that funders are open to supporting
 - Another option is to work with an organization (e.g. Crim) whose insurance can cover the event or project
- The Land Bank has been a strong partner in large-scale and small-scale commercial redevelopment

Raynetta Speed, Land Bank

- Vacant property maintenance in Flint
- It would cost 7M annually to mow tall grass and remove trash for more than 20K vacant properties in Flint, once a month from Spring to Summer
- It would cost 845K to board vacant properties that have open doors and windows
- This season the Land Bank spent 2M on those efforts
- Residents want to keep their neighborhoods clean and safe
- 30% fewer assaults in Clean & Green areas than areas with abandoned lots w/o community mowing (!)
 - 40% fewer violence crimes overall

Christina Kelly, Land Bank

- 270 blighted structures demolished in FY 19/20
- 8300 blighted structures demolished since 2004
- Selecting and prioritizing residential demolitions in flint with limited funding
- We don't have a large source of federal funding like we used to have (hardest hit fund)
- 448, 029 allocated through community driven voting process
 - Demolish vacant properties beyond repair (235 votes)
 - Take down properties that have been burned (193 votes)
 - Demolish homes listed on Flint property portal that are designated as needing demolition
 - 30-35 demolitions
- It costs ~\$14,250 to demolish a house
- Given all this, what do we prioritize?
 - 3 tiers based on future land designation: 1) Neighborhood demolition, 2) demolition for green reuse, 3) demolition for redevelopment
 - Proposal to score each property within Tier 1 neighborhoods based on the following
 - Condition: how damaged is the house?
 - Density: how many nearby homes are occupied?
 - Proximity: are parks or schools nearby?
 - Visibility: highly visible?
 - Adjacency: is it next to occupied homes?
 - Leveraged funds: are fire insurance funds available to cover demo costs?

Please use this form to access the survey! <https://forms.gle/XdeomuP7UDmpn4936>

Discussion:

- **Q:** Has there been any thought to taking vacant lots that have already been converted and turning those into clover? 7M to mow is a substantial amount of money
 - **A:** It's been difficult to do lawn management, treat the lawns

- **Q:** Residents take care of their houses but they're sandwiched in between land bank homes with rodent infestations, what do you do about that?
 - **A:** we're looking for new sources of funds, to do things like hardest hit again, hoping that a new federal administration will change our ability to access funds
 - That said, we can't just rely on hope, need current solutions, so we're looking for additional funds
- **Q:** When you look at areas on North side, we have a disadvantage, according to the criteria for scoring properties (e.g. we're not near schools or playgrounds)
 - **A:** Fill out survey, and you can say how important schools and playgrounds are...
- **Q:** How do we find out where an urban orchard or farm could be developed?
 - **A:** Any urban ag would typically be in a green innovation zone, but with zoning code there's always possibility for variance for that type of use in other areas
- **Q:** Are there funds to help residents whose homes have been infested as a result of proximity to Land Bank properties treat their properties? These kinds of issues can drive people out of the neighborhood.
 - **A:** We're having conversations about "non-structural blight"
- **Q:** Will you be able to highlight how criteria was prioritized by wards once you have the survey results?
 - **A:** not sure we'll be able to sort input by ward and create models for each ward, that would be a multi-step process, whereas this is 30 properties, and given time constraints i don't know that we'll be able to commit to doing that

Ashley Everhart, NEH

- Neighbors changing Flint planning team is in process of working to develop the curriculum for NCF this year, how we can use zoom and other technology services to make the workshop series accessible to residents!

Shareka Howard, Keep Genesee County Beautiful

- KGCB, has 15 Fall Neighborhood Activities Totes available. Anyone interested can contact me Shareka Howard at showard@gcparks.org or 209-6012
- Last day for Bag It Leaf program in Flint is Nov 28th.
- KGCB will have a grant to replace the playground on other side of Kearsley Park near the baseball fields, as well as Fleming Park and Durant Park

Celeste Lord, Community Education, Crim

- Partnering with Flint Fresh and putting books into food boxes for delivery, for people who can't show up to distribution sites
- If you know anyone who isn't in contact with community school director, we'll get your name down and on a list of deliveries
- Celeste Lord - clord@crim.org Flint Fresh Boxes

Thursday, December 3: Tree lighting celebration downtown!