



October 28th 2019 Meeting Minutes

We had 12 attendees which included Chris Gilbert, Gwen McFarland and Lieutenant Brian Uhl from Springfield Township, and Pastor Lesley E. Jones representing eXcel4 consulting (community organizer)

\$10 Donations collected

- Fred gave update on Frost Park Mulch path. Ruts removed some new chips added.
- Joe said main thing we want to talk about at this meeting is to meet with Community mobilization group to get ideas on how to present our issues with CMHA.
- Chris explained past experiences with CMHA. The problem is that the voucher program is at the federal Gov. level and CMHA is local and can only do what they are told. Not sure on what CMHA can do about tenant and landlord agreement violations.
- Chris explained "due process" law for handling violations and penalizing for violations.
- Chris did Q&A with attendees about issues in the neighborhood and how the legal system is different for Townships than villages such as Greenhill's and Forest park.
- Lieutenant Uhl explained how traffic violations are processed.
- Lieutenant Uhl and Gwen talked about a draft of a law they drew up to limit the amount of Section 8 that can be put in one neighborhood. It went no where. Explained the difference between Section 8 Vouchers rentals and CMHA owned properties.
- Chris explained the tax abatement program where homeowners can make improvements to home and be tax exempt on these improvements by the amount they added to the value of the house.
- Gwen and Chris gave example of Galbraith point that became affordable housing and had many police calls, but cleaned up and changed owners that no longer take rent subsidies of any kind and are very nice now.
- Chris explains how Springfield township has too much affordable housing due to a surplus of low cost houses available to people to buy, flip, and rent out under the Voucher program.
- Gwen introduces Pastor Jones.
- Pastor Jones starts by giving some statistics on affordable housing in greater Cincinnati area and past experience being a renter under the Section 8 and how many people looked down on them for living in a section 8 community.
- Gives History on how affordable housing shifted from the City to outer Hamilton County and that it's a shift that people are not ready for.
- She believes that when people begin to communicate with each other as opposed to an us and them attitude you will find common ground. Gives example of Mt. Airy how it transcended to affordable housing when Laurel Ct. was torn down.
- She is offering to teach us what we can do so that we can be more affective in what we can do as a community. It takes the residence to actually do the work to help the township and work with them to create a model neighborhood.
- Chris comments in how the township is also not ready for transition and does not have the legal power to deal with many of the issues and government is not the answer.
- Pastor Jones explains that the first part of getting concerns addressed is to change the attitude from us to we.
- What Pastor Jones is offering her group to do is help groups to organize to form to learn the system and help us communicate more affectively with the governments and courts and help us see what is there to deal with the issues.

- Gave example of car break ins happening due to people needing property to sell for drug money. Didn't take money because penalties are too high. So neighbors set up a giving bench and put items out for them to take to prevent break ins.
- Pastor Jones is asking us to hire them as a consultant for 60 to 90 days to get us a plan to put in action and get us connected with the people we need to resolve the issue. A 60 to 90 day contract is estimated to be between \$1200 and \$1500. it will involve bringing in more of our community to get trained on taking the proper action to get to where we want.
- She concluded that we can vent and vent but if we don't get to some common ground solutions we will spiral down. So we have to come with some plans. Gave example as a good guys loitering event where a grill out get together is held on a street corner where hanging out and crime is a problem. It cannot be done by the township itself.
- Chris offered to pay for this service through a grant but we as a group need to put the effort into it.
- Joe told Pastor Jones we would meet her, then talk about it, and make a decision at November meeting.