



Track 2: *Community Engagement Task Force*

August 8, 2007 Meeting #6 Minutes

Approved August 15, 2007)

4:00 p.m. - Room 319 City Hall

Task Force attendees: Russ Adams, Mohamed Ali, Diann Anders, Kathleen Anderson, John Bernstein, Mark Fox, Don Fraser, Elena Gaarder, Diana Hawkins, Jeremy Iggers, Merry Keefe, Repa Mekha, Anne McCandless, Matt Perry (co-chair), David Rubedor, Jessie Saavedra, Jeffrey Strand, Joyce Wisdom, Long Yang, Shirley Yeoman

Task Force attendees absent:, Justin Huenemann, Chris Morris

City staff in attendance: Jennifer Amundson, Council Member Cam Gordon, Erik Hansen, Council Member Diane Hofstede, Luther Krueger, Cara Letofsky, Barb Lickness, Council Member Robert Lilligren (co-chair), Alicia Scott, Michelle Chavez, Bob Cooper

City staff absent: Greg Simbeck

Facilitators in attendance: GrayHall - Nora Hall, Karen Gray, Megan Gomez

Introductions, administration and presentation

- **Introductions** - Council Member Lilligren welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for consistent attendance.
- **Lilligren** – Acknowledged the bridge collapse that happened the night of our last meeting and that just a week ago we were living in a different world. Thank you to all the staff that has done the work of this group while we have been facing additional responsibilities that came from that tragedy. The disaster has shown us that we really are a community. We should all be proud that we live in Minneapolis.
- **Minute approval** - The minutes from the last two meetings were approved with minor changes.
- **Handouts and meeting materials**
 - Draft report: changes in the report material mostly apply to charge #4. A few apply to charge #5, which is a section we haven't done yet.
 - Work plan: This illustrates inputs and outputs for each meeting. Today the focus is Charge #4 and refinement of Charge #1. What the work plan shows us is that if our last meeting was Aug 15th we wouldn't have a deliverable so hopefully this work plan demonstrated the need for two additional meetings.
- **Small group versus large group discussions**
 - **Task Force Members:**
 - It seems small groups have functioned as a place for brainstorming without reaching consensus (Comments in small groups might only represent one person's viewpoint.)
 - Large group discussions should be used to reach a consensus.
 - This report is not necessarily a consensus document
 - While it may not be a consensus document, it should be made clear how the recommendations were formed.
 - It takes time to get in and out of small group.
 - The steering group will take the comments from this group and consider them as we continue to plan.
 - We keep having the discussion on what we're doing. I'd like to have that discussion in a large group.
 - I don't think that would be helpful right now.
- **Other Models**
 - I would like to see some empirical research, not just task force members brainstorming.
 - Why are we not doing the review of the other models? I would like to have that addressed.
 - Later in the agenda there is review of a matrix. Some work done in 2003 / 2004 is available today in a matrix. Today is not the end of the discussion of other systems.

Small group reports

Four groups met to “consider overall content and structure of draft report, discuss charges 1 and 4, and identify characteristics of community organizations.” Following are the summaries of what the small groups reported to the large group. Noted from each group are included at the end of these minutes.

Group #1 summary report

We’re generally ok with the format of the draft report.

Charge # 1 is really unfinished – it doesn’t fulfill the charge – we feel like it maybe needs work and shouldn’t go out. We also felt that it is a large group discussion.

Regarding the additional comment - non-geographic community engagement could result in people who don’t live in a community speaking for the community – we discussed “where do you find the balance?”

Charge #2 – pages 7 and 8 – we are comfortable with. We didn’t have time to wordsmith. We need to consider the audience and make sure everyone can understand the report.

Maybe the principles found in Charge #2 can be moved up and taken out of the expectations section.

Group #2 summary report

Frontline staff (city and neighborhood) should be more customer-oriented

Discussed characteristics - maybe we look at existing citizen participation guidelines for characteristics

There should be a coordinated approach to community engagement and collaboration.

Group #4 summary report

For charge #1, we discussed neighborhood organizations – we need to have a way to evaluate effectiveness.

Neighborhood organizations are one way of effectively engaging residents but there are lots of types of organizations.

How do you determine what is valid? – we could leave out a lot that don’t fit the definition.

For Charge #4 – we didn’t have as many comments.

Group #3 summary report

We were in agreement about inter-jurisdictional collaboration.

We were ambivalent (needs dialogue) about CE department creation co-existing with NRP.

Regarding characteristics of organizations, based on empowerment model and communication is critical.

Large group discussion

Small group versus large group

- Small groups aren’t going to get us where we want to go.
- **Motion** - There was a motion to stay in a large group as we move forward, which passed after some discussion.

CETF Draft report

- This is an extraordinarily difficult process we’re involved in. I would like to see the work of this group turn into something valuable. I suggest looking at other models and redrafting it and come to the group with a draft. At least we would be working off something – Seattle, Portland, we would expect their models to be good.

Presentation of other practices in a comparison matrix (by Bob Cooper, City of Minneapolis)

- Folks are looking to draw on the experience of other cities. We tried to break it down into basic info. This is not in-depth research. The cities were selected because they have been recognized or they have been mentioned by task force members. Also, many have been looked at in previous work from 2003 / 2004. The preliminary information is pulled from past work so it might be old. He asked if getting information from other cities is helpful and if we are asking the right questions.

- I would be interested in seeing regionally competitive cities – Denver, Toronto, Montreal
- We have steered away from international models because of the different forms of government. He noted that we can't cover all cities but we can include others.
- Can the speaker's work (Professor Fung) be incorporated if he has best practice information?
- He does have specific information on specific cities.
- Maybe someone could summarize his work for us.
- If researching more cities we need to consider staff time. Maybe you don't find the city you want to copy, but you find the best practices that you like.
- Maybe we can have an "other ideas" column.
- If people look at the draft report and it says we looked at models they are going to want to know what we looked at.
- Dr. Fung has offered to come and talk about the models he's studied. He has done a lot of research on this. Not that his is the only research we consider.

Motion – there was a motion to accept the NRP's offer to cover expenses and invite Professor Fung to speak to the group – the motion passed. There was an amendment to the motion to also invite the Humphrey Institute and CURA to speak. This amendment did not pass.

- If Dr. Fung is here long enough maybe he could speak to a larger audience – having an event open to the public.

Meeting adjourned

Notes from Small Groups

Charge #1

Group #3

- Empowerment model
- Communication is critical

Group #4

- Diagram of existing structure is needed
- 4th Bullet, P 6, Charge 1
 - Sometimes effective
 - Add: tangible results
 - Is a neighborhood organization effective if they flyer all neighborhood residents, but nobody reads it?
 - There needs to be standards and guidelines for neighborhood organizations who participate in CE efforts
 - Neighborhood organizations are one way but not the only way to access information
- 8th Bullet, P 6
 - Organizations should not be dependent
 - Organizations can become pigeon holed when certain issues come up (e.g. Health, schools, zoning changes, etc.)
 - Would you ask North Point @ Zoning versus Health? Yes, if No. Pt's the place people go to for information
- 3rd from bottom, p. 6
 - Strike in entirety
 - City will exclude some organizations by keeping "validation"
 - City does need to exclude some organizations
 - How does a community view validity of an organization – should not just be a "city" decision @ validity
 - Needs to be a balance for weighting organization validity

Charge #4

Community Engagement Groups, August 8th, 2007

Group #2

- Front line City staff should have a goal/value/culture of customer service
- Front line community organization staff, too (connection points between city and community organizations and people)
- Comprehensive approach, not just tweak – better coordination is good, but find multiple ways for city to engage the community
- “Coordinated input between NRP and City departments” (add other jurisdictions?)
- Get citizen input in the beginning of the planning process

Group #3

- Agreement on Point #1, collaboration inter-jurisdictional
- Ambivalent (needs dialogue) about CE department creation co-existing with NRP

Group #4

- Independent jurisdictions will work together to engage the community

No charge listed

Group #2

- Characteristics of community organizations:
 - Take existing language from current CE program – but enforce it.
 - Representative of the group they purport to be representing.
 - Organizational capacity (file taxes, etc) (have or get technical support for)
 - Have no barriers to participation (no cost)
 - Hold open meetings
 - Be incorporated, have board members that are elected from the membership
- Review of Draft #1 of report
 - Include text on what this task force ISN'T – including a re-do of NRP
 - Generally, need more text providing the context that this task force is working in.
 - Process of group, too. Explain – set framework.