



March 17, 2009

Josh Marceaux
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
646 Cajundome Boulevard, Suite 400
Lafayette, LA 70506-4290

RE: Project review for the Programmatic Environmental Assessment for the Alternative Housing Pilot Program in Orleans Parish, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Dear Mr. Marceaux:

The Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) has applied for federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the construction of housing on individual home sites throughout Orleans Parish, being administered through the Louisiana Alternative Housing Pilot Program (AHPP) Housing Project.

Recognizing the extensive and complex housing challenges facing victims and communities as a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and acknowledging the limitations on FEMA's ordinary statutory authority to provide non-temporary housing solutions, Congress appropriated funds to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to support alternative housing pilot programs (Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2006, Public Law 109-234). The AHPP represents a one-time exception to FEMA's existing authority under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act which legally binds FEMA to a temporary housing mission, by providing an opportunity to explore, implement, and evaluate innovative approaches to housing solutions, and to address ongoing housing challenges created by the 2005 hurricane season in the states of the Gulf Coast region, including the State of Louisiana, especially in the southernmost parishes such as Orleans Parish. The LRA has applied for FEMA funding under the AHPP to provide permanent housing solutions within Orleans Parish for eligible applicant families displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In Orleans Parish, as of March 2009, there are currently 1,167 families displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in temporary housing units consisting of 13 families in mobile homes, 1,101 families in travel trailers, and 53 in park model units. Consequently, there maintains a need to provide a permanent housing solution.

The LRA proposes to utilize AHPP funding for the construction of approximately 160 single-family, permanent housing units (Louisiana Cottages) to be located throughout Orleans Parish (Figure 1).

FEMA determined that the recurring proposed actions that require an Environmental Assessment can be grouped by the nature and location of the proposed actions. These actions can be evaluated through a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and its implementing regulations (40 CFR Part 1500 and 44 CFR Part 10) without developing an EA for every action. FEMA determined that a PEA can be prepared to analyze the potential environmental impacts of LRA's proposed housing initiative in Orleans Parish.

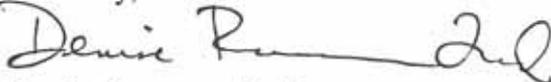
Currently, FEMA and the LRA are proposing two alternatives for this project, the no action alternative and the proposed action alternative as defined below.

Alternative 1: No Action Alternative. Persons who are receiving temporary resources would continue to do so. The No Action Alternative is defined as maintaining the *status quo*, with no FEMA funding for long-term or permanent housing. This alternative evaluates the effects of not providing long-term or permanent housing and provides a benchmark against which the action alternatives may be evaluated.

Alternative 2: Proposed Action Alternative. This alternative would include the installation of AHPP cottage units on previously disturbed land. Previously disturbed land would include land that was previously residential. The sites would be cleared of all debris and vegetation, then grubbed, contoured, and graded, if necessary. Projects under this alternative may require ground disturbing activities, including the demolition of former housing structures, slab/foundation removal, the modification of utilities (*i.e.*, utility lines and septic systems), and the construction of entryways (driveways, sidewalks, *etc.*). If located within the 100-year floodplain, the City of New Orleans would require AHHP units be elevated above to the required digital flood insurance rate map (DFIRM) elevation, as necessary. No AHPP units would be located within the Coastal High Hazard Area (DFIRM Flood Zones V and VE).

Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) has been retained by FEMA to prepare a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for the proposed project. In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, GSRC requests that your agency review the proposed project and provide comments and any available information or resources under your agency's jurisdiction within the project area. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Denise Rousseau Ford by phone: (225) 757-8088, by email: dford@gsrcorp.com, or by fax: (225) 761-8077.

Sincerely,



Denise Rousseau Ford
Project Manager

Enclosure

RE: 80420001s



March 17, 2009

Richard Hartman
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NMFS CASC Route: Atmospheric Administration C/O LSU Center for Wetland Research
Baton Rouge, LA 70803-7535

RE: Project review for the Programmatic Environmental Assessment for the Alternative Housing Pilot Program in Orleans Parish, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Dear Mr. Hartman:

The Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) has applied for federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the construction of housing on individual home sites throughout Orleans Parish, being administered through the Louisiana Alternative Housing Pilot Program (AHPP) Housing Project.

Recognizing the extensive and complex housing challenges facing victims and communities as a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and acknowledging the limitations on FEMA's ordinary statutory authority to provide non-temporary housing solutions, Congress appropriated funds to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to support alternative housing pilot programs (Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2006, Public Law 109-234). The AHPP represents a one-time exception to FEMA's existing authority under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act which legally binds FEMA to a temporary housing mission, by providing an opportunity to explore, implement, and evaluate innovative approaches to housing solutions, and to address ongoing housing challenges created by the 2005 hurricane season in the states of the Gulf Coast region, including the State of Louisiana, especially in the southernmost parishes such as Orleans Parish. The LRA has applied for FEMA funding under the AHPP to provide permanent housing solutions within Orleans Parish for eligible applicant families displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In Orleans Parish, as of March 2009, there are currently 1,167 families displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in temporary housing units consisting of 13 families in mobile homes, 1,101 families in travel trailers, and 53 in park model units. Consequently, there maintains a need to provide a permanent housing solution.

The LRA proposes to utilize AHPP funding for the construction of approximately 160 single-family, permanent housing units (Louisiana Cottages) to be located throughout Orleans Parish (Figure 1).

FEMA determined that the recurring proposed actions that require an Environmental Assessment can be grouped by the nature and location of the proposed actions. These actions can be evaluated through a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and its implementing regulations (40 CFR Part 1500 and 44 CFR Part 10) without developing an EA for every action. FEMA determined that a PEA can be prepared to analyze the potential environmental impacts of LRA's proposed housing initiative in Orleans Parish.

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Sincerely,



Denise Rousseau Ford
Project Manager

Enclosure

RE: 80420001s



March 17, 2009

Tammy Mick
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Fountain Place 11th Floor, MC 6WQ
Dallas, TX 75202-2733

RE: Project review for the Programmatic Environmental Assessment for the Alternative Housing Pilot Program in Orleans Parish, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Dear Ms. Mick:

The Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) has applied for federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the construction of housing on individual home sites throughout Orleans Parish, being administered through the Louisiana Alternative Housing Pilot Program (AHPP) Housing Project.

Recognizing the extensive and complex housing challenges facing victims and communities as a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and acknowledging the limitations on FEMA's ordinary statutory authority to provide non-temporary housing solutions, Congress appropriated funds to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to support alternative housing pilot programs (Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2006, Public Law 109-234). The AHPP represents a one-time exception to FEMA's existing authority under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act which legally binds FEMA to a temporary housing mission, by providing an opportunity to explore, implement, and evaluate innovative approaches to housing solutions, and to address ongoing housing challenges created by the 2005 hurricane season in the states of the Gulf Coast region, including the State of Louisiana, especially in the southernmost parishes such as Orleans Parish. The LRA has applied for FEMA funding under the AHPP to provide permanent housing solutions within Orleans Parish for eligible applicant families displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In Orleans Parish, as of March 2009, there are currently 1,167 families displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in temporary housing units consisting of 13 families in mobile homes, 1,101 families in travel trailers, and 53 in park model units. Consequently, there maintains a need to provide a permanent housing solution.

The LRA proposes to utilize AHPP funding for the construction of approximately 160 single-family, permanent housing units (Louisiana Cottages) to be located throughout Orleans Parish (Figure 1).

FEMA determined that the recurring proposed actions that require an Environmental Assessment can be grouped by the nature and location of the proposed actions. These actions can be evaluated through a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and its implementing regulations (40 CFR Part 1500 and 44 CFR Part 10) without developing an EA for every action. FEMA determined that a PEA can be prepared to analyze the potential environmental impacts of LRA's proposed housing initiative in Orleans Parish.

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Sincerely,



Denise Rousseau Ford
Project Manager

Enclosure

RE: 80420001s



March 17, 2009

Amy Powell
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160

RE: Project review for the Programmatic Environmental Assessment for the Alternative Housing Pilot Program in Orleans Parish, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Dear Ms. Powell:

The Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) has applied for federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the construction of housing on individual home sites throughout Orleans Parish, being administered through the Louisiana Alternative Housing Pilot Program (AHPP) Housing Project.

Recognizing the extensive and complex housing challenges facing victims and communities as a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and acknowledging the limitations on FEMA's ordinary statutory authority to provide non-temporary housing solutions, Congress appropriated funds to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to support alternative housing pilot programs (Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2006, Public Law 109-234). The AHPP represents a one-time exception to FEMA's existing authority under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act which legally binds FEMA to a temporary housing mission, by providing an opportunity to explore, implement, and evaluate innovative approaches to housing solutions, and to address ongoing housing challenges created by the 2005 hurricane season in the states of the Gulf Coast region, including the State of Louisiana, especially in the southernmost parishes such as Orleans Parish. The LRA has applied for FEMA funding under the AHPP to provide permanent housing solutions within Orleans Parish for eligible applicant families displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In Orleans Parish, as of March 2009, there are currently 1,167 families displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in temporary housing units consisting of 13 families in mobile homes, 1,101 families in travel trailers, and 53 in park model units. Consequently, there maintains a need to provide a permanent housing solution.

The LRA proposes to utilize AHPP funding for the construction of approximately 160 single-family, permanent housing units (Louisiana Cottages) to be located throughout Orleans Parish (Figure 1).

FEMA determined that the recurring proposed actions that require an Environmental Assessment can be grouped by the nature and location of the proposed actions. These actions can be evaluated through a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and its implementing regulations (40 CFR Part 1500 and 44 CFR Part 10) without developing an EA for every action. FEMA determined that a PEA can be prepared to analyze the potential environmental impacts of LRA's proposed housing initiative in Orleans Parish.

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Sincerely,



Denise Rousseau Ford
Project Manager

Enclosure

RE: 80420001s



March 17, 2009

Ed Giering
USDA, Natural Resource Conservation Services
3737 Government Street
Alexandria, LA 71302

RE: Project review for the Programmatic Environmental Assessment for the Alternative Housing Pilot Program in Orleans Parish, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Dear Mr. Giering:

The Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) has applied for federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the construction of housing on individual home sites throughout Orleans Parish, being administered through the Louisiana Alternative Housing Pilot Program (AHPP) Housing Project.

Recognizing the extensive and complex housing challenges facing victims and communities as a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and acknowledging the limitations on FEMA's ordinary statutory authority to provide non-temporary housing solutions, Congress appropriated funds to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to support alternative housing pilot programs (Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2006, Public Law 109-234). The AHPP represents a one-time exception to FEMA's existing authority under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act which legally binds FEMA to a temporary housing mission, by providing an opportunity to explore, implement, and evaluate innovative approaches to housing solutions, and to address ongoing housing challenges created by the 2005 hurricane season in the states of the Gulf Coast region, including the State of Louisiana, especially in the southernmost parishes such as Orleans Parish. The LRA has applied for FEMA funding under the AHPP to provide permanent housing solutions within Orleans Parish for eligible applicant families displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In Orleans Parish, as of March 2009, there are currently 1,167 families displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in temporary housing units consisting of 13 families in mobile homes, 1,101 families in travel trailers, and 53 in park model units. Consequently, there maintains a need to provide a permanent housing solution.

The LRA proposes to utilize AHPP funding for the construction of approximately 160 single-family, permanent housing units (Louisiana Cottages) to be located throughout Orleans Parish (Figure 1).

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Sincerely,



Denise Rousseau Ford
Project Manager

Enclosure

RE: 80420001s



March 17, 2009

Kyle Balkum
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
2000 Quail Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70808

RE: Project review for the Programmatic Environmental Assessment for the Alternative Housing Pilot Program in Orleans Parish, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Dear Mr. Balkum:

The Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) has applied for federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the construction of housing on individual home sites throughout Orleans Parish, being administered through the Louisiana Alternative Housing Pilot Program (AHPP) Housing Project.

Recognizing the extensive and complex housing challenges facing victims and communities as a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and acknowledging the limitations on FEMA's ordinary statutory authority to provide non-temporary housing solutions, Congress appropriated funds to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to support alternative housing pilot programs (Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2006, Public Law 109-234). The AHPP represents a one-time exception to FEMA's existing authority under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act which legally binds FEMA to a temporary housing mission, by providing an opportunity to explore, implement, and evaluate innovative approaches to housing solutions, and to address ongoing housing challenges created by the 2005 hurricane season in the states of the Gulf Coast region, including the State of Louisiana, especially in the southernmost parishes such as Orleans Parish. The LRA has applied for FEMA funding under the AHPP to provide permanent housing solutions within Orleans Parish for eligible applicant families displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In Orleans Parish, as of March 2009, there are currently 1,167 families displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in temporary housing units consisting of 13 families in mobile homes, 1,101 families in travel trailers, and 53 in park model units. Consequently, there maintains a need to provide a permanent housing solution.

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Sincerely,



Denise Rousseau Ford
Project Manager

Enclosure

RE: 80420001s



March 17, 2009

Diane Hewitt
Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality/Department of the Secretary
Department of the Secretary P.O. Box 4301
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-4301

RE: Project review for the Programmatic Environmental Assessment for the Alternative Housing Pilot Program in Orleans Parish, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Dear Mr. Hewitt:

The Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) has applied for federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the construction of housing on individual home sites throughout Orleans Parish, being administered through the Louisiana Alternative Housing Pilot Program (AHPP) Housing Project.

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Sincerely,



Denise Rousseau Ford
Project Manager

Enclosure

RE: 80420001s



March 17, 2009

Paul May
Orleans Parish
1300 Perdido Street Room 7E07
New Orleans, LA 70112

RE: Project review for the Programmatic Environmental Assessment for the Alternative Housing Pilot Program in Orleans Parish, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Dear Mr. May:

The Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) has applied for federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the construction of housing on individual home sites throughout Orleans Parish, being administered through the Louisiana Alternative Housing Pilot Program (AHPP) Housing Project.

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Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) has been retained by FEMA to prepare a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for the proposed project. In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, GSRC requests that your agency review the proposed project and provide comments and any available information or resources under your agency's jurisdiction within the project area. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Denise Rousseau Ford by phone: (225) 757-8088, by email: dford@gsrcorp.com, or by fax: (225) 761-8077.

Sincerely,

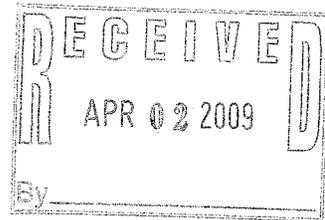


Denise Rousseau Ford
Project Manager

Enclosure

RE: 80420001s

Patti



March 17, 2009

Jim Boggs
Josh Marceau
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
646 Cajundome Boulevard, Suite 400
Lafayette, LA 70506-4290

This project has been reviewed for effects to Federal trust resources under our jurisdiction and currently protected by the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Act). The project, as proposed,
 Will have no effect on those resources
 is not likely to adversely affect those resources.
This finding fulfills the requirements under Section 7(a)(2) of the Act.

Debra A. Jull *March 31, 2009*
Acting Supervisor Date
Louisiana Field Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

RE: Project review for the Programmatic Environmental Assessment for the Alternative Housing Pilot Program in Orleans Parish, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

Dear Mr. ^{Boggs} ~~Marceau~~:

The Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) has applied for federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the construction of housing on individual home sites throughout Orleans Parish, being administered through the Louisiana Alternative Housing Pilot Program (AHPP) Housing Project.

Recognizing the extensive and complex housing challenges facing victims and communities as a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and acknowledging the limitations on FEMA's ordinary statutory authority to provide non-temporary housing solutions, Congress appropriated funds to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to support alternative housing pilot programs (Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2006, Public Law 109-234). The AHPP represents a one-time exception to FEMA's existing authority under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act which legally binds FEMA to a temporary housing mission, by providing an opportunity to explore, implement, and evaluate innovative approaches to housing solutions, and to address ongoing housing challenges created by the 2005 hurricane season in the states of the Gulf Coast region, including the State of Louisiana, especially in the southernmost parishes such as Orleans Parish. The LRA has applied for FEMA funding under the AHPP to provide permanent housing solutions within Orleans Parish for eligible applicant families displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In Orleans Parish, as of March 2009, there are currently 1,167 families displaced by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in temporary housing units consisting of 13 families in mobile homes, 1,101 families in travel trailers, and 53 in park model units. Consequently, there maintains a need to provide a permanent housing solution.

The LRA proposes to utilize AHPP funding for the construction of approximately 160 single-family, permanent housing units (Louisiana Cottages) to be located throughout Orleans Parish (Figure 1).

FEMA determined that the recurring proposed actions that require an Environmental Assessment can be grouped by the nature and location of the proposed actions. These actions can be evaluated through a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and its implementing regulations (40 CFR Part 1500 and 44 CFR Part 10) without developing an EA for every action. FEMA determined that a PEA can be prepared to analyze the potential environmental impacts of LRA's proposed housing initiative in Orleans Parish.

Currently, FEMA and the LRA are proposing two alternatives for this project, the no action alternative and the proposed action alternative as defined below.

Alternative 1: No Action Alternative. Persons who are receiving temporary resources would continue to do so. The No Action Alternative is defined as maintaining the *status quo*, with no FEMA funding for long-term or permanent housing. This alternative evaluates the effects of not providing long-term or permanent housing and provides a benchmark against which the action alternatives may be evaluated.

Alternative 2: Proposed Action Alternative. This alternative would include the installation of AHPP cottage units on previously disturbed land. Previously disturbed land would include land that was previously residential. The sites would be cleared of all debris and vegetation, then grubbed, contoured, and graded, if necessary. Projects under this alternative may require ground disturbing activities, including the demolition of former housing structures, slab/foundation removal, the modification of utilities (*i.e.*, utility lines and septic systems), and the construction of entryways (driveways, sidewalks, *etc.*). If located within the 100-year floodplain, the City of New Orleans would require AHHP units be elevated above to the required digital flood insurance rate map (DFIRM) elevation, as necessary. No AHPP units would be located within the Coastal High Hazard Area (DFIRM Flood Zones V and VE).

Gulf South Research Corporation (GSRC) has been retained by FEMA to prepare a Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for the proposed project. In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, GSRC requests that your agency review the proposed project and provide comments and any available information or resources under your agency's jurisdiction within the project area. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Denise Rousseau Ford by phone: (225) 757-8088, by email: dford@gsrcorp.com, or by fax: (225) 761-8077.

Sincerely,



Denise Rousseau Ford
Project Manager

Enclosure

RE: 80420001s

Providence Community Housing Public Involvement



February 13, 2008

Dear Residents of Lafitte:

We're excited to let you know that we're rapidly approaching a construction start date at Lafitte. Right now we're in the process of finalizing our financing arrangements, and although the economic climate is tough, we're still on track to have our first residents on site by the end of this year.

Construction will start on the infrastructure first – the roads, sewers, electricity and other utilities that will service the community. We expect it will take about 4 months to finish the first three blocks of infrastructure (between Rocheblave and Galvez). About a month after the infrastructure work starts, we'll be getting started with building the new homes.

We're also working to get back in touch with all Lafitte residents – to make sure we have the latest contact information for people, and ideally also email addresses. **Please take a moment to complete the enclosed survey and return it to us.** It will help us keep you informed about our construction progress, jobs, homeownership opportunities, and other news. **If you are in touch with other Lafitte residents, please ask them if they received this letter. If not, please encourage them to contact us so we can make sure they receive important updates directly.** The person to contact is our Director of Resident Services, Tammy Crumpton, and she can be reached at (504) 827-9963 or tcrumpton@providencech.org.

Other quick reminders:

- **Interested in finding out about job or small business opportunities on the site?** If you are, please contact our new Section 3 Coordinator (who deals with both employment and contracting) Sombra Davis (504) 827-9963 or sdavis@archdiocese-no.org.
- **Are you interested in home ownership?** There are 10 renovated homes for sale in the Treme neighbourhood, and one has already sold. The houses come with 12 foot ceilings, a hardy plank exterior, bamboo floors, and all appliances (including washer and dryer). A subsidy is available to low income families. For more information contact real estate agent – Stephanie Woodside at (504) 975-1575. There are 3 models of homes, each with 3 bedrooms, ranging in price from \$119,000 to \$180,000.
- **Sojourner Truth Community Center is open** – if you're in New Orleans please stop by to learn more about the services being offered out of the Center, and opportunities to program the space. Talk to Carol Carter at (504) 827-9963 for more information (or by email at ccarter@archdiocese-no.org). Our monthly meetings with residents continue on the second Wednesday of every month from 6:00 – 8:00 pm at the Community Center.

All the best to you and your families, and please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions about our work, or want more information about how to get involved. You can also find more information on our website at www.providencech.org.

Sincerely,

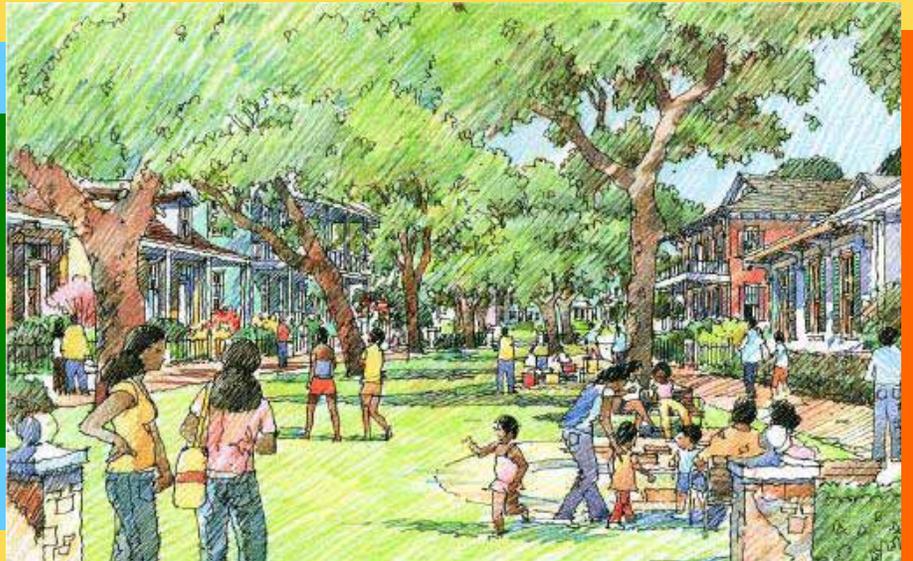
James R. Kelly
President & CEO
Providence Community Housing

Michelle Whetten
Director, Gulf Coast Rebuilding Initiative
Enterprise Community Partners

Come To The

LAFITTE-TREMÉ COMMUNITY FAIR

*Music & Entertainment
Food & Drink
Arts & Crafts
School Supplies*



Information & Services on:

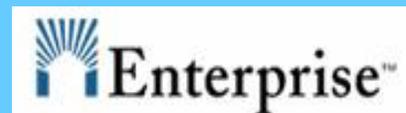
**Housing * Education * Health Care
Employment * Finance
Youth Programs * Senior Programs**

◆◆◆ **Saturday, August 11, 2007** ◆◆◆

**@ Playground Area adjacent to Sojourner
Truth Community Center at 501 N. Galvez**

11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Sponsored by :



FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 504.821.7226



HOUSTON MEETING Record of Feedback

December 2, 2006

What's Inside:

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This report was written by Nicole Swerhun, Neutral Third-Party Process Advisor and Facilitator to Providence Community Housing and Enterprise. It is based on both verbal feedback from over 40 participants, as well as notes written in 26 workbooks submitted by individuals (19 of which identified themselves as Lafitte residents) and another 8 workbooks completed by facilitators who summarized discussion at small tables. It is not intended to serve as a verbatim transcript. If you have questions or comments on this report, contact Nicole Swerhun at nicole@swerhun.com or (504) 613-0167.

Copies of the conceptual Homebuilding Plan, as well as Homebuilding Plan newsletters and other materials are available from Providence Community Housing at www.providencech.org. Providence can be contacted at info@providencech.org or phone (504) 821-7222.

Meeting Overview

Over 40 people attended the Houston meeting from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm on Saturday, December 2, 2006. The workshop was held at the Full Gospel Cathedral Church of God in Christ (COGIC), 1369 Spears Road, Houston, Texas. A number of members of the Homebuilding Plan team also participated, as well as facilitators from the All Congregations Together (ACT) outreach team.

The purpose of the Meeting was:

- To talk to Lafitte families living in Houston about the work that Providence Community Housing and Enterprise are doing in the Tremé/Lafitte and Tulane/Gravier communities;
- To tell people what we've heard from residents to date; and
- To understand the needs of Lafitte families living in Houston, and discuss how the Homebuilding Plan team can help meet those needs – through support services and the repair and replacement of homes and apartments.

Participants were also informed that the information gathered from the meeting would also be forwarded to HUD and HANO for use in their historic review process (Section 106).

The agenda included:

- An opening prayer by Elder LaFrance from the Full Gospel Cathedral COGIC;
- A welcome from Father Michael Jacques, St. Peter Claver Church, New Orleans;
- Facilitator's introduction and agenda review by Mary Fontenot (All Congregations Together) and Nicole Swerhun;
- Remarks by Nadine Jarmon and Jim Kelly, Providence Community Housing, Chickie Grayson, Enterprise, and Ray Gindroz, Urban Design Associates (UDA); and
- Small table and full room discussions.

The following focus questions were posed to participants:

Regarding Support Services

1. What type of support services would be most helpful to you? How can Providence Community Housing and Enterprise help make those services easy for you to access?
2. Would you like assistance returning to New Orleans? If so, give us your name and up-to-date contact information here.

Regarding the Homebuilding Plan

1. Using the large map on your table, identify the 3 best and worst places in the community. Use a green dot to identify the best places. Use a red dot to identify the worst places.
2. What would you like to see in your community in the future?
3. Review the pictures at your table that show some of the ideas being considered for the Homebuilding Plan. What do you like about the pictures? What don't you like?
4. Use a yellow dot to indicate where you might like to live in the community.
5. Do you have any other advice for the Homebuilding Plan team?

Summary of Feedback

The points listed below summarize the key messages heard. There is much more information included in the rest of this report that reflects the rich range of opinions expressed.

- **Frustration with HUD and HANO.** Participants had a lot of questions regarding the future of Lafitte, and particularly around the decision to demolish Lafitte. They understood that Providence and Enterprise were not in a position to answer many of these questions, however they were also frustrated that nobody from HUD or HANO was at the meeting.
- **Life in Houston is tough.** Houston is a huge place, and people are having lots of problems getting around the city – which has an impact on everything from grocery shopping, finding work, getting to and from work, getting kids to school, and getting to the doctor. Employment is also difficult, especially when people identify themselves as being from New Orleans or Louisiana. Seniors are having a particularly hard time. Some children are also getting treated differently in school.
- **Many people just want to come home.** People would like assistance returning to New Orleans. They could use help finding housing in New Orleans, and in some cases help covering moving costs, as well as the deposit and first month's rent. Even if it's just transitional or temporary housing, many people want to come back as soon as possible.
- **Support services would be helpful.** There are a lot of ways the Homebuilding Plan team could help Lafitte residents, either by directly providing support or connecting residents to existing supports and resources. In addition to help with transportation and employment (described above), people said they would like help getting job training, trauma counseling, child care, and health care, paying utility bills and in some cases paying rent.
- **Many people liked the ideas proposed in the Homebuilding Plan.** Most people said they liked the pictures that showed different ideas for the future of the Treme/Lafitte and Tulane/Gravier communities. They liked the landscaping, space for kids to play and neighbors to meet and walk, the design of the houses, and the community interaction. There were mixed opinions on the proposed view of a Seniors Building.

Map of the Homebuilding Plan Study Area
(outlined in red)



Detailed Feedback on SUPPORT SERVICES NEEDED

What type of support services would be most helpful to you? How can Providence Community Housing and Enterprise help make those services easy for you to access?

1. *Transportation:* The city is so big, that getting around Houston is a major problem. People need help finding a church that picks them up (e.g. offers a van service), and help traveling to work, medical appointments, to get groceries, and to get kids to school. Some people are traveling 4 hours/day.
2. *Employment:* People need help getting jobs in Houston. Some said the work force requirement is too harsh, and that they've been cut off from food stamps. And when they can get a job, they're not being paid enough (some are working for \$6/hour, less than they got paid in New Orleans). They are being told not to put "Louisiana" on job applications, and if they do they are experiencing job discrimination against New Orleans residents. In some cases, employers don't like them. Some said that they can't get a job through "work source". Participants talked about wanting an advocate who can work on their behalf (e.g. to help with disputes that come up on-the-job). Job training is also needed for the service industry and managerial programs. On-the-job training would also be helpful.
3. *Getting back home:* People need help getting back home. That includes help finding a stable place in New Orleans on a temporary basis. Some need help with a deposit and first month's rent, and help with moving expenses (e.g. to rent a U-Haul). They need stores to be open in the neighborhood when they go back. When they get home they need affordable housing/homeownership.

"This is what I need someone to do for us – help us find a home to go back to so my daughter can find a job and take care of herself and her child. Thank you."

Participant Workbook

"Evacuees are picked on and treated differently. We need to get home."

Participant Workbook

4. *Health care:* Many people are having trouble getting Medicaid assistance. "If you're getting 7 medicines you can't pay but for 4". Houston won't take/stopped taking Louisiana Medicaid. Some need help finding Medicaid doctors, and assistance paying medical bills and for prescriptions. People also need home health services for the elderly (prescription drugs, wheelchairs).
5. *Trauma counseling:* A number of participants said they need help finding counseling services in Houston, to talk about their flood experiences, about the things they've seen that are on their mind, and for help calming their nerves.
6. *Utilities:* Almost all participants talked about needing help covering the cost of utilities – electric/light bills.

7. *Childcare:* Some people need help with childcare/nursery, especially while they're looking for work. Services are also needed for special needs children.
8. *Disabled assistance:* People talked about very specific things they need, like handicap rails on the tub in the bathroom, braces for hands to help with arthritis, ramp/wheelchair for disabled, and a general program for the disabled.
9. *Money isn't flowing:* People need help getting their rent assistance, with some saying that FEMA wouldn't pay their rent. People need help figuring out what to do if they're not receiving Section 8 or FEMA funds.
10. *Education:* Would be helpful to have tutoring programs for LEAP. A school just for New Orleans children was also suggested a few times, which could help deal with problems with Houston kids.
11. *Food & Clothing:* Some people need clothing/food stamp assistance. They said that they can't get food stamps without a job. It's one reason people say they need to get back to Louisiana.
12. *Other supports that would be helpful:* Help finding a church. Senior services (help doing things, senior daycare). Help with money management. Education for people that are HIV+.

“Resources to acquire resources are not accessible (transportation to work not available, so job not granted)...sometimes all our resources denied after a LA Drivers License is presented.”

From participant workbook

Would you like assistance returning to New Orleans?

25 of the 26 people who handed in their workbooks at the end of the meeting provided their contact information in response to this question (including a couple of workbooks that included contact information for more than one person). 19 people identified themselves as Lafitte residents, 18 people indicated that they would like help returning home, and 17 indicated they would like someone from the Homebuilding Plan team to contact them. *The contact information for these participants has been forwarded to the Homebuilding Plan team for follow-up.*

Detailed Feedback on HOMEBUILDING PLAN IDEAS

What people like best and least about their community in New Orleans (with a focus on locating the best and worst places on large community maps)

Liked best: Community center (many people mentioned Sojourner Truth), St. Peter Claver, Rocheblave tennis court, Craig School, Dooky Chase, Orleans and Tonti (close to church, stores, school), playground and parks, St. Phillip, Orleans Avenue & Lafitte Avenue, North Broad & Roman Street, historic, playground, 7th Ward Orleans, Broad & Banks, LaHarpe & Claiborne, keep the community together, it's near to the schools, Tonti, Orleans, Broad, keep the spirit alive, keep the busline, Orleans & Claiborne, Tulane, Broad Street, Orleans & Johnson, Claiborne & Orleans, Lafitte, Tonti Street, St. Phillip

Liked least: Corner stores, bars, hotels and motels (MRV, Rainbow, Brown Derby motels), N. Prieur and Orleans, Claiborne & Orleans, Basin Street, Claiborne & St. Ann, Joe's cozy corner, Tonti Court, Palmyrs and Banks (crime areas), Dumaine St. (killings), close strip of night clubs on Orleans and Claiborne, Dumaine and N. Broad drug activity, Dorgenois and Orleans abandoned property, Claiborne, N. Robertson, Iberville, Lafitte Housing Project, St. Louis & Philip, drugs in the area, Claiborne, Prieur, St. Ann, no need to have people hanging around the store, Dumaine, Rocheblave, Tonti, crimes, drugs, killing, Iberville, St. Ann & Prieur, Dumaine & Prieur, Dergenois, N. Villier, N. Robertson, Claiborne Ave.

What would you like to see in your community in the future?

Health: Health center, medical services for everyone (24 hours), medical health clinics, satellite hospital

Children and youth: Positive events for children, child care, day care centers, training for teens and young adults, safe and clean playground, state of the art public schools, GED tutoring programs, playground with security, playgroups, a nice place for the kids, community colleges

Seniors: Senior citizen center, seniors assistance, bingo hall

Safety: More police activities involved in community safety

Culture: Need a museum – a local museum that addresses local culture, preserving the historic, cultural, and heritage value of our community

Employment: Job training/tutoring/vocational training center, open a lot of local businesses that employ locals that live in the area (now people from other communities or states – a lot of landlords also own local businesses, but if they're not hiring locals, how can the locals pay the rent?), community colleges (since lots of jobs now ask for training).

Services: Special needs services

Housing: One floor house, wide doorway for wheelchair, ramp

Other things in the neighborhood: Local grocery stores (Circle Food Store), barber shops/beauty salons, movie theater, skate rinks, pet area, shopping area, library, schools K-12, put a church in the community – right on the Lafitte site.

Best Places in the Community (Green Dots)



Worst Places in the Community (Red Dots)



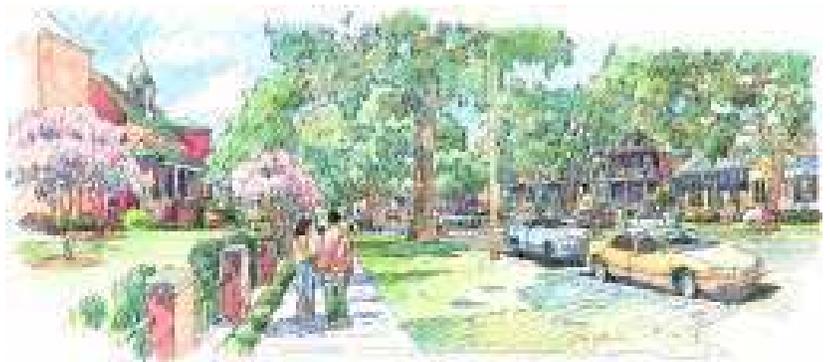
Review the pictures at your table that show some of the ideas being considered for the Homebuilding Plan. What do you like about the pictures? What don't you like?

1. Proposed view of neighborhood infill



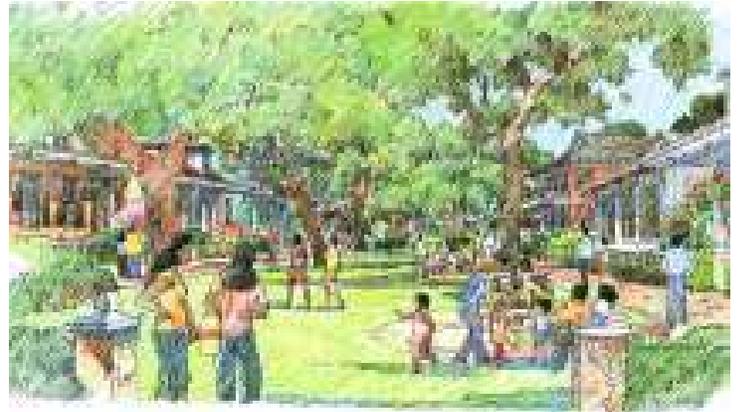
- Like everything about the picture.
- Like the landscape.
- Need a pet area.
- Should have off street parking.
- Area is nice, lighting, houses aren't too close together, no corner stores, spacious surroundings, trees, gardening. (GREEN DOT)
- Dumaine Street is too narrow.

2. Proposed view of infill around Wicker School



- Like the picture.
- Landscape and the fence makes it safe (keeps people from running through).
- Like picture, but think area should be gated so people not coming in and out of the community.
- Wide streets are good – street should be wider.
- 2 green dots.

3. Proposed view of new housing on Lafitte site



- Like play area for kids.
- Everything is real lovely.
- Open space for kids to play.
- 2 green dots.
- I don't like it. It looks too much like it is today. If you're going to change things, you should change it all. I want it to look different.

4. Proposed view of Lafitte Street and Management Building



- Like picture.
- Good for walking and talking with friends and family.
- 2 green dots.



5. Proposed view of Senior Building



- Need shopping area.
- Mixed reviews, some like 2 stories, others don't.
- Looks like it belongs in the French Quarter ☺.
- 1 red dot.



General feedback on the ideas being considered for the Homebuilding Plan

“We understand that it is going to be built, but if we can, we would love our red bricks back.”

Quote from a workshop participant. The comment was followed by applause from a number of others at the meeting.

What people said they liked about the pictures: A number of people said they liked the pictures, that they were really impressive and that people really enjoyed them. In particular participants said they liked the community interaction, preserving historical design, the fact that children's safety can be insured by the fences, the landscape is appealing, the senior center, the color of the homes, the landscape, trees, wide streets on some blocks, double homes.

What people said they didn't like: On street parking, some people thought the houses are too close together, and that more porches and backyards are needed (for each house – so we can have family gatherings), streets are narrow (kind of small), we don't want shot gun homes, some would like to see a bigger play area.

“What was so special about Lafitte? Why do people want to return? It had a little to do with how the community looked and that there was a roof over head. But why? The love. Love for community and self respect. The thing that distinguishes house from home is love, and that’s what we want.”

Quote from a workshop facilitator, reporting on behalf of his table. The comment was followed by applause from a number of others at the meeting.

Yellow dots show where workshop participants indicated that they would be interested in living



Do you have any other advice for the Homebuilding Plan team?

Support for moving ahead: Ready to go! I would like to help rebuild so I can come home. Great job. Keep striving for us.

People want to see:

- The Carver Theater restored.
- Tutoring and trauma counseling provided to residents.
- Modern houses with porches, yards, trees, 2 doors, and a parking area. Enlarge the bedrooms. Some would like two *whole* bathrooms, and the kitchen and the bedrooms to be large.
- Lots of trees and gardens, and a lot of lights. Safe roots (family ties) for kids. Make sure we have grocery stores. More light, more police.
- Affordable housing/home ownership is needed for low-moderate income families, disabled and elderly and family that care for a disabled family member.
- Get abandoned houses out. No liquor stores, and some people are also very concerned about corner stores.
- Keep community involved in the community center. One person suggested another community center at Lafitte and Galvez.
- More recreational activities for kids.

Concerns about Homebuilding Plan: Don't tear down the Lafitte. Renovate Lafitte in order to return families home sooner. Stop killing trees in community. I don't like the thought of housing being torn down because I'm ready to come home.

Urgency: I want to come home as soon as possible.

“It will also be a big help if the Lafitte was not torn down because it's making me stay where I don't wanna be.”

Participant Workbook

“Would the site ever be torn down, so the new ideas can begin and we can return home? The sooner the better.”

Workshop Participant



Jemera Johnson's vision for the community

Questions & Answers

Participants asked a number of questions during the meeting. Many of those questions (with answers *in italics*) are listed here. The Homebuilding Plan team will continue to work to provide answers to these and other frequently asked questions in future meetings and newsletters.

Related to the future of Lafitte and the Homebuilding Plan

- Has Lafitte been sold? *No, HUD and HANO still own Lafitte.*
- Would the site ever be torn down, so the new ideas can begin and we can return home? The sooner the better. *If the site was torn down, then we would rebuild with better, more family friendly homes and apartments.*
- How long will it take to build the homes? *Homes will start to be available in 12 months.*
- Can we participate in helping build them? *We're looking at job training programs where former residents/residents can be trained in the trades through the AFL- CIO. We are also talking to lots of service providers about supports for Lafitte residents.*
- Because we addressed hot areas on the map, what will be available in terms of police to keep the area safe? Can there be better lighting, eliminate blight, more eyes on the street? We need community-based policing. *We will take that as a recommendation..*
- In order to create a quality community, will there be a school that is independent from government so 20 years from now we'll have quality kids? *That's one of the things we can advocate for.*
- Who would an actual vendor speak with in helping with rebuilding? *Contact Dr. Nadine Jarmon at Providence Community Housing (504- 821-7222).*
- Why can't we buy the abandoned property for \$1.00 like they are offering organizations? *That would need to be explored with the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority.*

Help coming home

- If it could happen, please send for all the seniors first, they are homesick. *We are working to bring home seniors quickly, and are repairing places like Annunciation Inn and St. Ann's.*
- What do we need to do to prepare to come home? *Contact our Homebuilding Team so we can explore options together with you and help you develop a plan.*

Help needed in Houston

- A long long time ago people used to come and watch our kids while parents had to run errands – is that kind of service still possible? *We'll take that as advice as we develop our Supportive Services program.*
- Since utilities are so high, could assistance be made available to help pay them? *Yes, we would be happy to explore that with you.*
- I'm not employed here, I was employed in LA, what avenues do I have? *Case managers will work one-on-one with folks. There are lots of jobs in New Orleans now because there are not a lot of people.*
- Who can I speak to (here in Houston) about the emotional problems related to the flood? *You can contact the local Catholic Charities office.*
- Will Section 8 vouchers be honored? *Yes.*

Questions for HUD and HANO

- Can Providence/Enterprise patch up the major problems with the units so we can come back home? *That's in HUD and HANO's hands.*
- Why can't you open Lafitte up temporarily before you redevelop? *That has been suggested to HUD and HANO and is under discussion. It is their decision.*
- Why can't we come home and clean our own places to live in? *Again, that's in HUD and HANO's hands.*

Participants felt strongly that HUD and HANO should have been at the meeting to answer their questions. They added that the amount of money provided from HUD and HANO (to help people move) is not enough.

Participant List

Participants were encouraged, but not required, to sign in at the meeting. In total, over 60 people attended the meeting, including Lafitte residents as well as members of the Homebuilding Plan team and the Outreach and Facilitation team. In total, 19 people identified themselves as Lafitte residents.

Everyone who signed in at the meeting and provided complete address and/or email information will receive a copy of this Summary Report. Note that some of the handwriting was tough to read, and so the names provided here represent a best effort to transcribe the information provided. Affiliations, where provided, are also included here.

Participants are listed alphabetically by last name. Affiliations are included, where provided.

| | | |
|---|----------------------------------|--|
| Milton Anderson, <i>Full Gospel Cathedral COGIC</i> | Patricia Fulford | Elder Joseph LaFrance, <i>Full Gospel Cathedral COGIC</i> |
| Ron Angeletti | Jacqueline Fulford | Joyce S. Owens, <i>Joyce S. Owens Real Estate, New Orleans</i> |
| Mathews Brock | Jacqueline Gray | Maggie Ruph Marshall |
| Clarence Brown | Gail Green | Marilyn Paye |
| Carmalita Bryant | Yetta Harpa | Nancy Payne |
| Mazie Burris | LaToya Harper | Cheryl Scales |
| Yolanda Butler | Ballerina Jarvis | Mary Scott |
| Phyllis Davalie | Anna Jarvis | Joyce Terro |
| Mervin Dolliole | Lloyd Jernigan, <i>20/20 DSI</i> | Mark Thiele |
| Lois R. Eugene | Deborah Johnson | Gloria M. Wells |
| Yretha Evans | Earline Johnson | Chiquita Willis |
| Dwayne Finnie | Leslie Johnson | Michael Wilson, <i>Full Gospel Cathedral COGIC</i> |
| Carolyn Fulford | Mary Johnson | |
| Jnylesia Fulford | Sheila Johnson | |
| | Lisa V. Kelly | |

Participants provided names and phone number for another 20 Lafitte residents who were unable to attend the meeting. This contact information will be used to continue to expand the list of contacts in the Homebuilding Plan outreach database.

Outreach: All Congregations Together (ACT)

Mary Fontenot, New Orleans
Deborah Jackson, Houston
Daniel Mathieu, New Orleans
Wayne Nuriddin, Harvey, LA
Keisha Owens, New Orleans
Dan Packard, New Orleans
Emelda Paul, Mariscopa, AZ
Mary Scott, Houston
Sabrina Short, New Orleans
Karen Trudeaux, Houston
Cheryl Turner, Metairie, LA

Homebuilding Plan Team

Charlotte Bourgeois, Providence Community Housing
Nadine Jarmon, Providence Community Housing
Jim Kelly, Providence Community Housing
Chickie Grayson, Enterprise
Ron Wilson, Enterprise
Reverend Michael Jacques, St. Peter Claver
Tiffany Haile, Urban Design Associates
Ray Gindroz, Urban Design Associates

Meeting Facilitation

Nicole Swerhun

Background to the Meeting

New Orleans has a major housing shortage and creative solutions are needed quickly.

Two non-profit organizations teamed up to help address this need – Providence Community Housing and Enterprise. Providence is a Catholic housing initiative that was formed in response to the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina. Enterprise is an organization that's been around for over 20 years creating decent affordable homes and rebuilding communities. Its mission is to see that all low-income people in the United States have the opportunity for fit and affordable housing, and to move up and out of poverty into the mainstream of American life.

In August 2006, Providence and Enterprise were selected by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) to help plan a new community on and around the site of the Lafitte public housing development. This followed HANO's June 2006 decision to demolish Lafitte. This was because of the extensive repairs needed to bring the development up to HUD's Housing Quality Standards and to meet City code compliance.

In agreeing to lead the replacement of Lafitte, Providence and Enterprise committed to developing a Homebuilding Plan that would build at least 1500 units of housing in the Tremé/Lafitte and Tulane/Gravier area to meet the needs of a broad range of households, including seniors and families. They also committed to providing:

- an absolute opportunity for the 865 families and individuals who lived in the Lafitte development before Katrina to return to better quality homes and a healthier neighborhood;
- nine hundred subsidized homes, the same number as in the Lafitte development before the storm, integrated into mixed-income communities on and around the site;
- community supportive services; and
- an opportunity for resident participation in planning and developing a more vibrant community.

Contact with residents began in mid-September 2006, with the distribution of the first Homebuilding Plan Newsletter. Each Lafitte resident was mailed a copy, along with a feedback form designed to collect information to help guide development of the Homebuilding Plan. A New Orleans based non-profit organization, All Congregations Together (ACT) then began the process of calling each Lafitte household to make sure they had received the newsletter and were aware of the process underway. This outreach continues today.

During the first week of October 2006, Providence and Enterprise hosted a week long series of working sessions to begin developing a conceptual Homebuilding Plan. Over 300 people participated. Because so many Lafitte residents are not in New Orleans, Providence and Enterprise have committed to holding meetings in other cities. The December 2, 2006 meeting in Houston was the first of these meetings.



RECORD OF FEEDBACK RECEIVED

October 3 – 7, 2006

From Residents, the Public and other Stakeholders

November 2006

This report was written by Nicole Swerhun, Neutral Third-Party Process Advisor and Facilitator to Providence Community Housing and Enterprise. If you have questions or comments on this report, contact Nicole Swerhun at nicole@swerhun.com or (504) 613-0167.

Copies of the conceptual Homebuilding Plan, as well as Homebuilding Plan newsletters and other materials are available from Providence Community Housing at www.providencech.org. Providence can be contacted at info@providencech.org or phone (504) 821-7222.

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Introduction

New Orleans has a major housing shortage and creative solutions are needed quickly.

Two non-profit organizations have teamed up to help address this need – Providence Community Housing and Enterprise. Providence is a Catholic housing initiative that was formed in response to the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina. Enterprise is an organization that's been around for over 20 years creating decent affordable homes and rebuilding communities. Its mission is to see that all low-income people in the United States have the opportunity for fit and affordable housing, and to move up and out of poverty into the mainstream of American life.

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During the first week of October 2006, Providence and Enterprise hosted a week long series of working sessions to begin developing a conceptual Homebuilding Plan. These working sessions were led by Urban Design Associates (UDA), a firm of architects and designers that specialize in rebuilding communities with guidance and advice provided by the people who live, work and play in those communities. The Ujamaa Community Development Corporation (CDC) provided critical supports to these working sessions, particularly through the strength of their relationships with local organizations and leaders, and their ability to identify and understand the range of perspectives and priorities held.

Meetings with residents, stakeholders and the general public started with a Kick-Off Community Workshop which was held on Tuesday, October 3rd. Two informal Drop In sessions were held on Wednesday and Thursday, October 4th and 5th, and a Wrap-Up Community Workshop was held on Saturday, October 7th. There were 235 people who voluntarily signed in at these events (see Participant List). Many people participated in more than one event, however their names are only listed once. Given that there were other people who chose not to sign in, the total estimated number of participants is over 300. There were also at least 250 residents who, by the first week of October, had completed and sent in a survey sent out by the Homebuilding Plan team.

This report summarizes the feedback received at these four events. It was written based on verbal feedback received, as well as notes written in 58 workbooks submitted. It is not intended to serve as a verbatim transcript.

Map of the Homebuilding Plan Study Area (outlined in red)



Feedback Summary

Approximately 300 people shared their thoughts, perspectives, and advice with the Homebuilding Team from October 3rd – 7th, 2006. A number of people were residents of Lafitte and the surrounding communities of Treme and Tulane/Gravier, while others represented a range of interests, from local businesses and non-profit groups, to public agencies and the media. The points listed below attempt to summarize the key messages heard, but there is much more information included in the rest of this report that reflects the rich range of opinions expressed.

Summary of key messages:

- **Residents just want to come home.** People have been away too long, and they just want to come home as quickly as possible. They want to know if transitional housing is available, because even though they would prefer to move back to Treme, just getting back to New Orleans would be a big improvement to their current situation.
- **The last year has been difficult, and the stresses continue to build.** Relocation has been incredibly tough on people. Many are in unfamiliar cities, disconnected from their families, friends and loved ones. Accessing much needed services is difficult (like health care, child care, elderly care, and transportation), finding a job is hard, and some people are still without many of the belongings they had to leave behind when they left Lafitte. Some of the biggest stresses relate to the security of their housing – are their vouchers going to run out, rent is getting hard to cover, and people don't know what's going to happen next.
- **People need support services.** The highest priority for most people is getting help figuring out their housing situation – where they're going to live, how they're going to cover rent, and how long they have until their housing situation will change again. People also need help accessing health services, child care, elderly care, skills development services and job training.
- **Some people think the Homebuilding Plan is a great idea, and some people don't.** The people who think it's a great idea said that while they will always treasure their memories of Lafitte, it's important that the community move forward to a better future. They talked about the decline of Lafitte over the years, and their interest in seeing things change. Many were also excited about the opportunity to live in their own home, and possibly owning their own home. On the other hand, there were also people who were very upset about the Homebuilding Plan and the team of people working on it. They feel strongly that Lafitte should be repaired. They talked about the fact that there was minimal damage from Katrina, that Lafitte is one of the sturdiest housing projects in New Orleans, and about the importance of preserving the architectural and cultural heritage. Many participants didn't express a strong opinion either way about the Homebuilding Plan itself, and instead focused on what kind of supports they needed in their lives in the immediate term, and what kind of community they wanted to live in going forward.

- **People have lots of strong, good memories of Lafitte.** Living close to family and friends is what people like best about Lafitte. People talked a lot about the sense of community that came with living in Lafitte, and how much they value the relationships they have with their neighbors. People also talked about Lafitte's important cultural and heritage value – this includes everything from music, second lines, and the Carver Theatre, to the stories that describe what families experienced through their years in Lafitte. People want to make sure that the best parts of the Lafitte culture and heritage are preserved and celebrated.
- **People say that Lafitte isn't the same as it used to be.** Many people talked fondly about the old Lafitte, when it was first built and the care people took to look out for each others children and the community. They said that today's Lafitte is different – that people don't have as much respect for the community, buildings are in disrepair and neglected, and inadequate schools are contributing to idle young people. Remembering life at Lafitte 20 years ago, people had memories of drugs, crime, and violence, as well as racial tension, segregation, and inequality of economic opportunities. Many people said that drugs, crime and violence was also what they liked least about Lafitte pre Katrina.
- **Children are the future.** In talking about the future, children were the main focus of discussion. People wanted good schools and a strong education system, child care, safe places for kids to play, activities for children, as well as mentors to guide them into the future. People also envisioned a future that includes better health and community services, businesses that are *for* residents and *owned by* residents, a better life for seniors, and better infrastructure (including better lighting, less trash, and landscapes that are maintained).
- **Future community should fit in with the traditional architecture.** While there were some people who wanted to see some more modern homes, most people want to see the Homebuilding Plan reflect New Orleans architecture. People liked the idea of having variations of designs on the same architectural theme. Building materials need to be strong, and many would like their own yard and their own porch, as well as off street parking. Some people specifically said they don't want to see single shotgun homes or large, multi-family buildings that put residents back in buildings that were similar to in Lafitte.
- **Positive comments on early Homebuilding Plan ideas.** While some participants were opposed to the Homebuilding Plan, there were a number of people who said that they liked the early ideas put forward for the initial Homebuilding Plan. They liked the green space and the effort to keep many of the neighborhood trees. They liked the front porches and yard space, as well as the colors of the houses. Some said they liked the idea of de-densifying the community, and that it looks cleaner and safer.

Kick-Off Community Workshop

Tuesday, October 3, 2006

Workshop Overview

Over 200 people attended the Kick-Off Community Workshop held in New Orleans on the evening of Tuesday, October 3, 2006. The workshop was held in the cafeteria of St. Peter Claver School from 6:30 – 9:00 pm.

The purpose of the Workshop was to:

- Introduce the Homebuilding Plan for Treme/Lafitte and Tulane/Gravier;
- Share what the Homebuilding Team had heard from residents to date; and
- Understand what type of homes people want and need in their community, and how the those homes can be built so that they contribute to the rebuilding of the community as a whole.

The agenda included:

- An opening prayer by Imam Rafeeq Nu'Man, Masjidur Rahim;
- A welcome from Father Michael Jacques, St. Peter Claver Church;
- Facilitator's introduction and agenda review by Mary Fontenot (All Congregations Together) and Nicole Swerhun;
- Remarks by Nadine Jarmon and Jim Kelly, Providence Community Housing, and Ray Gindroz, Urban Design Associates (UDA); and
- Small table and full room discussions.

The following focus questions were posed to participants

1. Think about the Treme/Lafitte and Tulane/Gravier communities. Think about what the communities were like 20 years ago, and think about what they were like pre-Katrina. Tell us, what are the 2 or 3 things you liked best 20 years ago? Least? What are the 2 or 3 things you like best pre-Katrina? Least?
2. Using the large map on your table, identify the best and worst places in the community. Use a GREEN DOT to identify the BEST places. Use a RED DOT to identify the WORST places. Use a BLUE DOT to identify those places where it is most important to take action.
3. What would you like to see in your community in the future?
4. Review the pictures of different housing types. Tell us what you like and don't like about the pictures.
5. Do you have any other advice?

Key Messages from Participants

20 Years ago – What people liked, and what they liked least

Liked best: Community was together, people were friendly, families and neighbors were close, kids in the neighborhood were protected by the elders and each other, talent shows in Lafitte, second lines, culture, heritage, churches, people worked, everyone knew each other, people cared about keeping the place clean.

Liked least: Drugs, crime, violence, prostitution, police brutality, economic decline, building of I-10 disrupted black, family-owned businesses, not enough job opportunities, inequality around economic opportunities, no job training, racial tension, segregation, motels, bars, too many liquor stores, problems with blighted housing, called management too often, not enough opportunities for children, young people, and the elderly.

Pre Katrina – What people liked, and what they liked least

Liked best: Family and friends were near, housing was affordable, good access to the city and transportation, close knit community, good churches in the area, black people were here (and now most of us are not), Dooky Chase, Carver Theatre, Willie Mae's, having the police nearby.

Liked least: Crime, drugs, killings, not a lot of places to enjoy ourselves, motels, corner stores, idle young people, buildings in disrepair, not safe walking the streets, corruption, neglect, inadequate schools, people don't live well stacked on top of each other, not enough retail shops in the neighborhood owned by us, racial profiling, lack of representation.

Best and Worst Places in the community

Best places: Schools, churches (St. Peter Claver, St. Augustine), Sojourner Truth Community Center, Dooky Chase, Musicians Hall, Lehmann Park, Willie May's Restaurant, Zulu, Louis Armstrong Park, Lil Dizzy, Bayou areas, Lafitte (historic, heritage, legacy, family generations, pride of place and local heroes, safe because everyone knew each other), Canal Street (stores and parades), Circle Food Store, Medical Center, City Hall, pharmacies, university, hospital, Q'Lee Cleaners, Art museum, Brick street museum, St. Ann Shrine, historical significance in terms of architectural design, Esplanade (the entire street), N. Rampart (because its clean and everyone get along), Orleans Avenue from N. Galvez to Tonti (local businesses and homeowners), homes on Villiere & Ursulines, St. Phillip and Derbeigny, economic development on Claiborne, Ursulines (Claiborne to Prieur), Broad Street.

Best Places in the Community (Green Dots)



Worst Places in the Community (Red Dots)



Worst places: Abandoned houses that need to be taken down, crack houses, drug houses, crime and prostitution on the side streets, MRV, TRC, and Rainbow motels, corner grocery stores that sell alcohol, tobacco and drugs all day long, corner stores, too many bill boards promoting alcohol use, poor educational system, physical deterioration of neighborhood, trash, Club Fabulous, Wicker School, Sojourner Truth Community Center and Lehmann Park (adults would do unspeakable things), Clark High School (not enough lighting, dry activity), blight, bars, liquor stores, blasting music while in church, vacant schools, drug dealers on Orleans, Roman & St. Philip, St. Philip St. & Claiborne, Dumaine & St. Ann, Orleans & Tonti (project side), Robertson and Ursuline, Galvez and St. Bernard (strip mall vacant), Gov. Nichols and N. Johnson (drugs and crime near senior apartments), Dumaine from N. Prieur and Broad (crime and drugs), Claiborne Ave, Orleans to Esplanade (vacant businesses and crime), McDonough (dark block, crime), St. Phillip and N. Robertson (sell drugs), St. Claude (between Gov. Nichols and Ursulines), Galvez & Orleans (no access through), Dumaine, Johnson (crime), Esplanade Ridge, Tulane Ave, Orleans Ave halfway toward Basin, N. Galvez, Dumaine (Claiborne to Broad), Johnson (Esplanade to Orleans), St. Ann Street, Prieur and Ursulines, Prieur and St. Ann, Roman and St. Phillips, Galvez and Dumaine, St. Phillip and Claiborne, Dumaine and Claiborne, St. Ann and Claiborne, Orleans and Claiborne

Most important areas to take action

Area schools (St. Ann's, Bell, McDonough, Wheatley, Clarke High School), hotels/motels, Carver theatre, after school activities/activities for children, senior activities (Sojourner Truth Community Center), corner stores, grocery stores that sell cigarettes and liquor to kids, bar rooms (Escape, Joe's Cozy Corners), Lafitte (salvage at all cost, reopen Lafitte, no demolition, tear down ½, keep other ½ for residents on top floors while we bring up the rest), commercial district (Claiborne Avenue between Orleans & Esplanade – bring back businesses like movie theatre, clothing shops, family entertainment), rebuild, repair Louis Armstrong Park (bring back to it's original), selling drugs on other side of St. Ann Shrine (and the other areas they are selling drugs at), potholes, bad lighting, infrastructure (repair/repave streets), trash pick up, rebuild the medical center, jobs, grocery, cleaning, area behind Sojourner Truth could be developed, senior housing with a day program, recreation, and clinic (adjoining a park), elderly housing that allows for independence with support, more businesses and restaurants, Old Schwegman's (at Bienville and Broad) should be redeveloped, make residents of public housing accountable, mandatory job training, Zulu social aid and pleasure club, take action where all worst places have been identified. Hotels, motels, street corners where lots of people hang out (where bad language is used sometime there are shots fired in the air), broad Street, bus transportation, Winn Dixie, Dooky Chase, 3 Sister's Restaurant, Cox Cable, development of restaurants.

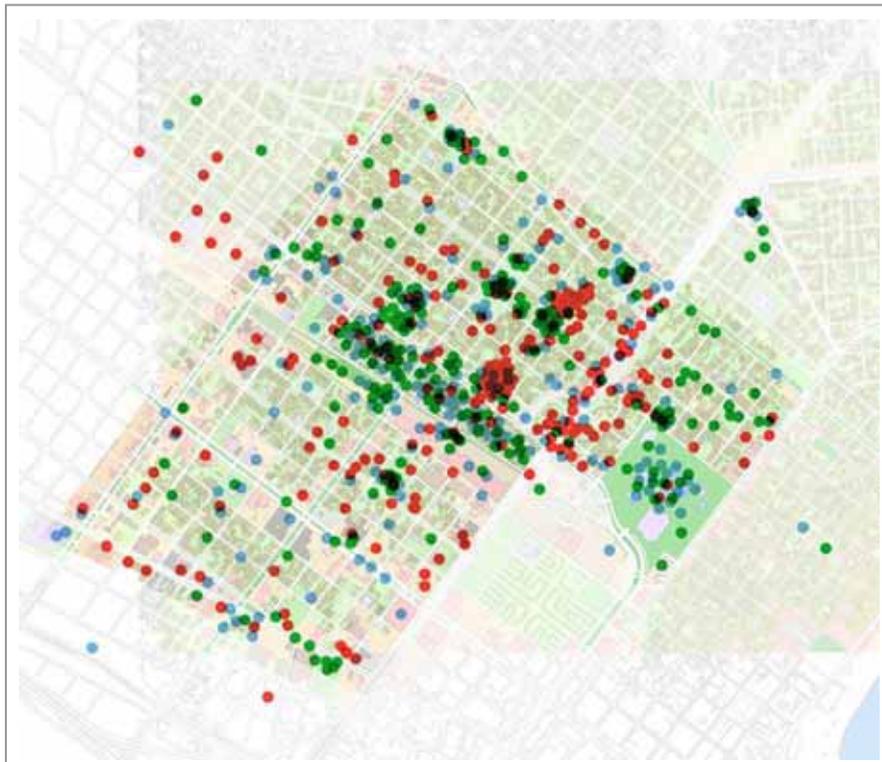
From one small table:

“What's in a name? Best? Worst? We won't use dots. Whole area needs redevelopment (i.e. attention to safety, lighting, roads, repairing and reoccupying blighted houses).”

Most Important Places to Take Action (Blue Dots)



**Best Places, Worst Places, and Most Important Places to Take Action
(All dots overlaid on one map)**



What people want to see in their community in the future

Services: Better clinics, health centers, security, cleaners, daycare centers, baby sitting, dentist, hospitals, more police (a sub station), banks, post office, library (in walking distance), job training for everyone not just public assisted (for both genders, skills and industrial), parenting classes/sex education, job readiness/trade/architectural schools

Stores: Entrepreneurs (e.g. coffee shops, poetry spot), business for and by the people, Claiborne Street with businesses, more restaurants (family owned), stores nearby (bakery shops, grocery/supermarket, big brand name stores, health food, drug stores, Wal-Mart, retail, hardware, dry cleaners), chain restaurant (i.e. Ryans, Shoney's – modestly priced), quality family-oriented restaurants, mall, flourishing businesses that connect African families, fewer stores that sell alcohol,

Children: Better schools, more things to do (for kids and seniors), get the film company to run a children's drama school and recording/film school, mentor program, music school for children, ask kids about what they want, children playing in a safe environment, early pre-teen skills classes, organized sports,

Seniors: senior citizen center, daycare for elderly, more seniors housing, elderly care, elderly housing that allows for independence with support, senior housing with a day program, recreation, and clinic (adjoining a park)

Recreation: Playgrounds (pools, security, ball parks, basketball courts, nourishing with African American families), parks (swing set, seesaws, etc.), game rooms, gym, supervised sports, exercise classes, open community center, expanded community center, health clubs, a pool,

Infrastructure: More lighting (get rid of dark spots), transportation, bus stops/increased bus routes, amphitheater, maintain/cut trees, clean community/no debris, less trash/trash cans, "do for us what you do for Uptown", movie theatre, bike paths, dog park, clear drainage system, solid structures, handicap accessible, power and water, streets repaired, schools repaired, area behind Sojourner Truth could be developed

Design: Driveways for each house, no corner bars, green space, sitting areas, scenery, architecture, flowers, landscaping, no white picket fences, trees, greening, like River Garden where St. Thomas was, the houses should have big yards in the front and back

Culture: Preservation of our culture and music, second lines, families together – church and schools, high quality teachers, young people working (not on corner), better opportunities, equity and justice across the board, all churches collaborating, interaction with community and churches, neighborhoods collaborating together – one New Orleans, politicians with more action than words, historical value, movie theatre (redevelop Carver Theater)

Other: Comparing New Orleans to Texas (we need to step up our game – need Neighborhood Watch, more protection), affordable, safe, safe places to walk, tax dollars to pay for what's needed, Old Schwegman's (at Bienville and Broad) should be redeveloped

What do you like about the pictures of different potential housing types that could be considered for the Homebuilding Plan?

Design: Beauty, shape, windows, front porch/closed in porch, shutters, high ceilings, color/colorful, driveways, structure, picket fences, wood floors, space between houses, trees, yard of your own fenced off to itself (especially for kids), lots of closet space, independent living

They're new: setting style, landscape, new multi-family with porches, gables, white trim, new homes and the way they are modeled

Architecture: like the architecture of the building, like the idea of variations of the same architectural theme, unique New Orleans architecture (French Quarter style), love the old architecture, keep with design of neighborhood, prefer houses not on ground (no slab homes), keep traditional New Orleans look, like modern ideas

Types: Doubles/raised, Katrina cottage, individual houses are nice, New Orleans' style architecture, double traditional homes, better homes, shot gun, cottages, 2 storey, housing that makes the landscape beautiful, one picture looks like home, the whole deal, some people liked all houses

Modular: modular homes are quick, good to get residents home quickly, modular houses with porches

Materials: Want homes to stand up to hurricane force winds and fireproof materials

Pictures of Some Potential Housing Types



What don't you like about the pictures of potential housing types that could be considered for the Homebuilding Plan?

Types: Don't want single shotguns, don't want townhouse design, don't like any, don't like the designs, housing is too close together (just like the project, it starts crime), need to keep the scale of the house in line with the scale of the street

Don't like modern homes: Don't like Tulane house, doesn't look like home, didn't like houses that didn't fit in with the existing architecture,

Design: Homes with galleries not typical homes for families, don't like houses without porches, don't like loud colors, don't like lack of back yards, don't want to be too close to the street, don't like ceiling less than 10 feet, ceiling height of modular is too low, don't like houses without driveways, the big house with the white picket fence and big yard is too much (the extended Katrina cottage)

Parking: Don't like that there isn't any off street parking, need more off street parking