



## **Envision Cayce Community Advisory Group (CAG) Meeting #1**

*March 14, 2013, 8:30am @ MDHA*

**Agenda:** see attached Agenda

**Attendee List:** see attached Attendee List

**Meeting Materials:** see attached Presentation

### **Introductions**

**Ralph Mosely, MDHA Board of Commissioners Chair**, introduced the meeting and gave an overview of the history of Cayce Place and the current status of the Envision Cayce planning effort. He then introduced **Rhae Parkes of EJP Consulting Group, Project Director of the Planning Team**.

Each attendee, including the members of the Planning Team, introduced himself/herself and described their affiliation to Cayce Place and/or East Nashville.

The **MDHA Interim Executive Director Jim Thiltgen** welcomed the group and provided a description of MDHA's motivation for the Envision Cayce planning effort, emphasizing the desire to hold a community-driven process rather than one driven by the parameters of a specific funding opportunity.

Rhae Parkes began the meeting presentation by giving an overview of the vision and goals of Envision Cayce. **Debbie Frank of Urban Blueprint**, described the planning team's efforts to connect to other initiatives past and present that have or will impact East Nashville. **Robin Veenstra-Vander Weele from the Martha O'Bryan Center**, provided an overview of one of those initiatives, the Promise Neighborhood Planning Effort. The effort is in its second year of working with its 27 partners to develop a strategy to improve educational outcomes by creating a cradle-to-career continuum of services for children and their families living in the Stratford High School cluster in East Nashville.

Debbie Frank then described the community engagement strategies and efforts the planning team will undertake. Rhae Parkes provided an overview of the planning process and schedule, which will continue through the end of 2012.

**Hunter Gee, of Smith Gee Studio**, provided background and context on Cayce Place, including an overview of the neighborhood and the current zoning regulations. **Randall Gross, of Randall Gross/Development Economics**, described the work he will conduct to assess the market potential and housing needs that will support a revitalized Cayce Place neighborhood.

### **CAG Comments/Questions:**

After the formal presentation, CAG members had an opportunity to provide comments and suggestions for the planning team. Key points made by CAG members include:

- The importance of maintaining access to the Martha O'Bryan Center as the lifeline to Cayce residents and stressed the need to make sure services and supports will not be taken away from residents.
- Include representation from the faith-based community on the CAG.
- Given MDHA's search for a new Executive Director, MDHA may want to consider delaying the planning process until new leadership is selected.
- The time is right to move ahead now. Don't wait indefinitely [for an executive director] for such an important effort. The area is currently a food desert and that residents don't want to wait any longer to bring key services to the neighborhood.
- Engage the Dpt. of Public Works and the Sheriff's Department, since both have buildings located on land that would be the "front door" of the neighborhood. A CAG members had heard that the Sheriff's Department is looking to relocate.
- Need to think about land value in addition to relocation phasing when assessing land use. For example, the Dpt. of Public Works land could provide a place to build on to reduce the number of moves residents would have to make. However, the proximity of that land to the riverfront and views of downtown makes it very valuable and could have more strategic uses than putting replacement public housing there.
- One participant warned of past difficulties (10-15 years ago) in trying to build low-income housing in Edgefield.
- It is difficult to relocate families while maintaining continuity with children's schools. With the Sam Levy HOPE VI project, when families moved to HUD-eligible "viable" neighborhoods, key services like transportation and public health became a challenge. There can never be enough services dedicated to the relocation effort.
- Neighborhood attitudes toward affordable housing may have changed with time and the resident association in Edgefield is perhaps not as organized as in the past.
- Need to spend time thinking about the replacement options for Cayce families.
- There appears to be limited resident representation at the CAG meeting. It is important to maintain an integrated rather than a separate planning process with Cayce residents.

*Response:* Rhae Parkes explained that several Cayce Place residents were invited but were not in attendance and the planning team would follow-up with those that could not attend.

- How many residents usually return in comparable revitalization efforts?

*Response:* Rhae Parkes responded that past HOPE VI efforts typically saw about 20% of original residents return, but that the number varied depending on a variety of factors, including housing choice voucher availability, return criteria, the number of

public housing units available, and the extent of relocation and case management counseling provided.

- Research national case studies that have achieved similar goals – e.g., Huntington Gardens in Portland, OR or another in Birmingham, AL.
- Reach out to TDOT as they have been doing work to redesign the clover leaf patterns of interstate interchanges that could help to provide more opportunities for development and better pedestrian access for the neighborhood.
- We must consider how to address poverty within the context of mixed-income redevelopment. The education component is critical to addressing poverty, but when you deconcentrate poverty in projects like these, how do you deal with the fact that residents' support systems become dispersed as well?
- Need for a cohesive plan to make the process of applying for funding more seamless and effective.
- Include representation on the CAG by the Shelby Hills Neighborhood Association. The Councilman is a resident of Shelby Hills.

*Response:* Rhae Parkes explained that an additional representative was invited.

CAG members also suggested several neighborhood amenities needed in the Cayce Place neighborhood, including:

- The Martha O'Bryan Center indicated they could likely double the size of their day care center because of strong demand if space were available. They currently have 80 slots but often run a waiting list of 300 families.
- A community garden and other amenities that would get more people walking around or gathering at a central meeting place.
- Preserve the old trees currently in the neighborhood.
- To get more commercial amenities, the neighborhood needs more rooftops. So the team may need to consider acquiring surrounding areas to increase the amount of land available to build on and increase the zoning allowance.
- Other recommendations include improving walkability, bringing a supermarket to the neighborhood, and ensuring job training and continuing education opportunities are available for neighborhood residents.