HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS WORKING GROUP
Meeting #2

Tuesday, June 12, 2012
2:00PM – 4:00PM
Cansler YMCA, Community Room
616 Jessamine Street, Knoxville, TN 37917

Welcome and Introductory Remarks

Gary Drinnen, Housing and Neighborhoods Working Group Chair and Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Loudon County, introduced himself, thanked meeting attendees and asked the group to introduce themselves.

Parties Present

Heather Bailey, East Tennessee Development District, Susan Burgess-Parrish, Habitat for Humanity of Anderson County, Tara Davis, City of Knoxville – Community Development, Rogers Doughty, City of Knoxville – Community Development, Kevin Dubose, Emerald Youth Foundation, Ed Ellis, Knoxville HUD Field Office, Kahla Gentry, Oak Ridge – Community Development, Kaye Graybeal, Knoxville Knox County MPC, Chris Hamby, City of Alcoa, Joe Hultquist, Volunteer, John Lamb, Blount County Planning Department, Claudia Lever, Oak Ridge MPC, Rebecca Longmire, Knoxville Knox County MPC, David Massey, City of Knoxville – Office of Neighborhoods, Jackie Mayo, Knoxville Housing Partnership, Alvin Nance, Knoxville's Community Development Corporation, Christopher Osborn, Knoxville Housing Partnership, Grant Rosenberg, Knox County – Community Development, Linda Rust, Knox County – Community Development, Emily Woodle, City of Knoxville – Community Development, Chairperson: Gray Drinnen, Habitat for Humanity of Loudon County, City Staff: Sherith Colverson, MPC Staff: Jeff Archer, Mike Carberry, Mark Donaldson, Jeff Welch, Amy Brooks, UT Staff: Gene Fitzhugh
Rob Kerns (WRT- PlanET Consulting Team), Ann Coulter (PlanET-Consulting Team, A. Coulter Consulting-Facilitator)

Where we are now?

MPC Executive Director Mark Donaldson provided an update on recent PlanET activities and accomplishments:

- Work accomplished and activities conducted to date: Existing Conditions Report completed, Livability Report Card completed, dozens of Meeting In A Box sessions held throughout the region, online town-hall tool, MindMixer, launched and used extensively, social media outreach underway, Community Forums I and II completed, and UT's Community Survey completed/results reported

- Identification of regional strengths and challenges has been a core goal to this point in planning process

- There is general agreement on regional issues, verified by Community Forums, UT survey and MindMixer

- Regional dialogue priorities identified for economy and workforce development, transportation and infrastructure, housing and neighborhoods, healthy communities, and environment

Regional Drivers

Ann Coulter, PlanET Facilitator explained the purpose of Round 2 Working Group meetings. Participants will review regional drivers as described in the Livability Report Card and make any additional comments relative to the focus area of the Working Group. It will be important to consider the relative impact of each driver on the focus area in order to determine how to focus policy based discussions in later meetings. If a driver is considered to have a high impact on the focus area, in this case housing and neighborhoods, then policy recommendations will more intensely consider how to change or influence that driver. In the second part of the meeting participants will consider and comment on regional input about desired visions for the future.

The group was asked to identify any missing drivers of importance to the environment, or to elaborate or edit any existing ones. Numbered drivers 1-8 were identified by the Livability Report Card. Drivers 9 and 10 were added by the group. The bulleted points below are comments from the group regarding each of the drivers.

1. **Demographic Shifts**
2. **Dispersed development and separation of land uses**
    - *Housing regulatory controls or lack of them are a driver of the location of housing.*
3. **Loss of agricultural land**
4. **Few transportation options**
5. **Locations decisions**
    - *Quality of schools and perception of area crime are big determinants of housing choice.*
6. **Rising energy costs**
    - *Rising energy costs is huge. Can be beneficial in encouraging alternative.*
7. **Low educational attainment, low wages, and limited job advancement opportunities**
    - *Even for college educated, jobs are scarce.*
8. **Food, activity and lifestyle**
    - *Culture should be considered here as a driver.*
9. **The Economy (added by the group)**
    - *Housing financing options are uncertain or unavailable due to the economic downturn.*
    - *Cost of college education has students going into debt and having to postpone housing purchase.*
    - *Availability of housing assistance is a driver.*
10. **Political Factors (added by the group)**
    - *The region is conservative.*

Using a dot voting exercise, meeting participants evaluated how the drivers ranked in their impact on the environment. Results are below.

RATING	Total Score
Number of Points	
1. Demographic shifts	41
2. Dispersed development patterns	57
3. Loss of agricultural land	18
4. Few transportation options	65
5. Location decisions	38
6. Rising energy costs	40
7. Low educational attainment, low wages, and limited job advancement opportunities	57
8. Food, activity, & lifestyle	43
9. The economy	52
10. Political factors	23

The results of the exercise noted that the top three drivers of housing and neighborhood trends were:

1. #65 Few transportation options
2.   #2 and #7 – Dispersed development patterns and Low educational attainment, low wages, and limited job advancement opportunities (tied)
3.   #9 – The economy

Review of Forum 2 Themes Summary

Participants reviewed the overall results of input from the Regional Forum Series 2 handout and vision/themes about housing and neighborhoods in particular. (PlanET Regional Forum Series Handout) Housing and Neighborhood vision/themes are shown below and the sub-themes are numbered. The bulleted/italicized points following them are the comments from the group regarding the themes or sub-themes.

More housing options that protect the distinct character of urban, suburban and rural neighborhoods

1. More housing choices with respect to location and quality

2. More housing choices for people in different income brackets – especially in the middle

3. Housing that allows people to age in place including a disability condition

4. More single-family housing in rural areas; areas to live in with lots of land and rural character

5. Offer mixed-use housing with blended neighborhoods, including increased housing support designed for seniors

6. Freedom of choice to live where you want

More integrated, walkable communities in which people can choose to live

1. More connected communities (school, jobs, housing)

2. Healthy, livable neighborhoods with residential and commercial services

3. More town centers to facilitate walkable communities

4. Neighborhoods with sidewalks and nearby trails for walking/hiking/

More affordable housing

1. I want my children and grandchildren to be able to live where they want in what they can afford

2. Need for accessible and affordable housing for middle-income people

3. Increase affordable housing (don't neglect the lower-income population)

4. Affordable housing options integrated in all regions

- *Affordable housing is a housing choice and should not stand alone*

- *Overall cost of housing (include transportation and energy cost)*

- *Broader definition of what affordable is not what government agencies use as affordable definition*

- *Healthy and stable housing markets for all markets and all kinds*

- *Reduce barriers to equity for housing (ex. Use to be red lining)*

- *Understanding of generational view – making the city cool, younger generation wants to be in lively neighborhoods*

- *Equity in education impacts housing choice*

- *Rising energy cost is not necessarily a given*

- *Cost of affordable housing is rising with energy efficiency mandated with funding versus private sector*

- *Loudon County– Mushroom production large Hispanic population and the size of family impacts housing choice*
- *Perception of certain areas and perception of safety*
- *No statement about desegregation, integrated should relate to race, religion, ethnicity – preservation of culture is also important- housing choice is the bottom line*
- *Mixed use development versus mixed use housing – need to be changed*
- *Better mixed use development*
- *Economic segregation (materials/size) and racial (attitude)*

Outreach Methods and Next Steps

Chair, Gary Drinnen closed the meeting and thanked participants for their contributions. He also asked them to help identify people in the community who can be champions for this process. He assigned attendees some homework to complete before the next meeting: commit to holding at least one Meeting in a Box before mid August, identify community projects in line with PlanET goals, and try to identify PlanET champions.

The next Housing and Neighborhoods Working Group meeting will probably be the week of the 20th of August.