



## FERGUSON ROAD INITIATIVE

### 2-Points Weed & Seed

### Meeting Summary

Thursday, July 9, 2009, 6:00 PM - 7:45 P.M.  
 White Rock Church of Christ Fellowship Hall  
 9220 Ferguson Road

#### Purpose

*To update the community on our progress and gather input on key issues and challenges.*

#### Desired Outcomes

- Approve Minutes from our previous meetings
- Understand the City’s new Gold Star Program for Apartments
- Meet and Understand the Role of Bob Curry, Director N.E. Code Enforcement
- Understand the Task Force for Multi-Family Housing in Lake Highlands Improvement District
- Understanding of Progress Reports and *Weed & Seed* activities
- Get an update on D.E.F.Y.
- Understand upcoming events
- Create a list of next steps and an action plan of who will do what by when

#### Roles

Facilitator, Susan Walker, Co-Chair  
 Scribe/Recorder, Gail Washington, FRI  
 Timekeeper, Vikki Martin, FRI

#### Decision Making

- Consensus: Fallback, majority vote

#### Rules

- Listen to and respect one another
- Honor time limits
- Share your experience & perspective

#### Sponsors

Councilpersons Carolyn Davis (District 7)

#### PARTICIPANTS

| 2- Points Steering Committee Members  | Graduated Steering Committee / Community @ Large | Guests/Staff   |
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| Susan Walker, Vice Chair<br>Kimberly Humphries<br>Vicki Sanger<br>Daniel Ryan, Dallas City Attorney’s Office – Community Prosecutor<br>Ellen and John Childress, Truett Community |  | <b>Guests</b><br>Barry Boyd, City of Dallas Code Enforcement Director<br>Herb Ashford, Lt. DPD Hdq<br>Cheryl Cornish, Sgt. DPD NPO<br>Rikicia Robinson, Sr. Cpl, DPD Hdq NPO – Gold Star Prgm<br>Charles Merritt |

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| <p>Danny Williams, Hillview Terrace NA<br/> Cherie McMillan, Conner Elementary<br/> Lauren Roberts, Truett Community<br/> Rev. Sergio Martinez, Shiloh Terrace Baptist Church<br/> Tom Lawrence, Dep. Chief DPD NE Patrol<br/> Alan Bull, 220 Sector Lt. DPD NE Patrol<br/> Stacy Thetford, City of Dallas Strategic Services<br/> James Berry, Eastwood Hills<br/> James Whittier, Dallas County Asst. District Attorney<br/> Mary Brown, Apartment Community Rep; DEFY Volunteer<br/> David Balyeat, STBC – No Mas Violencia</p> |  | <p><b>Staff/Consultants</b><br/> Vikki Martin, Ex. Director<br/> Kerry Goodwin, W&amp;S Coordinator<br/> Sgt. Keitric Jones, DPD<br/> Sr. Cpl. Ellena Perez<br/> Gary Lawler<br/> Gail Washington, Crime Prevention Specialist</p> |
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**Minutes**

The meeting began at 6:15 pm with Vikki opening for Susan. John Childress gave a motion to approve minutes from our last meeting. Danny Williams gave a second to that motion.

**Dallas Police – Understanding Gold Star Program**

Lt. Ashford stated that he would allow Officers Cornish and Robinson to outline and define the Gold Star program. He first mentioned that the program was voluntary and has been made available to multi-unit family homes in Dallas. He also went on to talk about the Crime Reduction Program and the fact that even though it is not mandatory, that many of the properties that participate choose to participate in the Gold Star program also.

Lt Ashford noted that Dallas’ Gold Star program is modeled after Houston’s Blue Star program.

**How Gold Star Works**

Dallas police department along with area crime prevention specialist get a 4 to 5 hour workshop four times a year. Property managers are required to attend this training. They must complete a security survey to outline problems (i.e., lighting, fencing, and criminal offenses). Training may take place in conjunction with a crime watch meeting. If a person has more than one property, they cannot attend multiple times. They must send someone different to additional meetings. During their visit they will get a signed certificate of attendance. The certification makes the property exempt from attending the crime symposium.

The Gold Star program will have all property information and will have a signature from DPD. Once training is complete apartments may use Gold Star logo as part of their marketing. DPD’s database lists 123 properties that have applied for Gold Star; 120 of those have qualified.

Q – What are the consequences that would exclude a property?

A – Cannot have a lot of offenses.

Q - What are the differences in crime reduction from those that have been excluded?

A – Exclusions can be due to criminal nuisance; code and fire violations; cannot be in a mandatory crime reduction program; prostitution and the crime index

Q – Are numbers generated by service calls?

A – No. They are generated by offenses.

Q – What apartments have applied in FRI's area?

A – Lt Ashford will email that list to Kerry Goodwin.

Apartments in crime reduction program must have crime watch meetings monthly.

Q – How do you prove they've had crime watch?

A- DPD has to attend to verify meeting has taken place.

Q- Would it help to have Shiloh Terrace Church host a crime watch meeting

A – Yes.

Q – Is it public record of those complying online?

A – Lt Ashford has a monthly report of all mandatory properties that exceed compliance.

Gold Star is a voluntary program. DPD hopes property wants to use as a marketing tool.

### **Understand Task Force for Multi-Family Housing Program in Lake Highlands**

Steve Wakefield informed committee of strategy Lake Highlands used to clean up their area. They were successful in getting people involved by including the apartment complexes and starting a task force. One apartment complex in their area saw 6 murders within an 18 month period. This property was a tax exempt property which had virtually been holding its residents hostage due to the high volume of gangs and criminal activity on the property.

The task force was formed and was approved by Chief Easterling and Lawrence. The City attorneys' office was also in attendance to their first meeting. Code enforcement was there to address issues and crime involving the multi-family units.

The task force coordinated efforts with apartments in the area. This prompted more patrols on properties.

Advice to Steering Committee from Steve was to

- Increase patrols on properties
- Lean on the City Attorney's office to be harsher on offenders
- Properties that repeatedly have criminal activity should get harder penalties
- Owners need to be held accountable
- Get an actual name and address of the property owner and be relentless in getting them to understand that you are not going to tolerate illegal or illicit behavior on their property

- Invite owners to meetings in Dallas; most do not live here.
- Be visible at court if a property is being sued
- Have a list of complains and pictures if you go to court
- Make sure deals are not being made to get property owners off
- Identify the slumlords
- Get media attention
- Understand that surrounding businesses are a problem too and identify the ones that are (normally quick cash places)

Q – How did you deal with properties that are falling apart knowing that code cannot touch them?

A – We’ve tried to work with the media as well as talking directly with the owners. Approach developers in the area to see if they are willing to help.

Q - How do you deal with home health issues (i.e., boyfriends and people not on lease living in apartments)?

A – That’s a hard call. Most lease agreements do not allow people to stay past a certain amount of time who are not on the lease. Managers can do a check of the apartments. Cars should be checked also.

Q – Why should FRI create a task force? What would it do that working with our Community Prosecutor, current committees and crime watches can’t?

A – There’s no one way to do it. You’ll have to experiment with different methods. The main thing is to put pressure on the apartment owners.

Being able to embarrass owners and have a presence will make a difference. Code has been a key factor in helping and don’t forget to take pictures.

Q – Turnover of apartments makes it hard to keep up and stay in touch with apartment managers. How do you handle that?

A – That must be factored in when applying for programs. It shouldn’t be easy for them to flip a property.

Q – Give examples of where you submitted a letter to speak on behalf of your task force.

A – A letter was signed by the Lake Highland Improvement Association and sent as a review to deal with a property owner.

### **Executive Director Report, VikkiMartin**

Our focus continues to be on “sustainability”. We are continuing to seek funding. We have received \$217,250 since 2009 for programming and staffing. \$53,000 worth of requests have been declined. We currently have over \$1M in grant requests pending. \$35,000 is schedule to be mailed out in August.

Our other focus is “visibility”. We have formed an advisory council of members who are financially stable and are able to guide FRI toward fundraising events and other forums for wealth building.

Our DonorBride fundraiser allowed us to raise \$13,475 in donations.

We have a fall volunteer fundraiser planned for November. Details are to follow at a later date.

Ann Bagley is assisting FRI with an Area Land Use Study that will help with improving the 2-Points community.

On June 29<sup>th</sup> FRI was invited to a Town Hall meeting to help Casa View started with forming a committee to help them move toward the possibility of applying for a *Weed and Seed* grant. Forward went very well.

#### **Sgt. Ketric Jones**

Part 2 crimes in the 2-Points area are down by 51.7%. BMV's still need to come down. Lock & Hide signs need to be visible. There were 39 arrests in the area; all were related to possession, and drunk & disorderly conduct.

The Crime Watch Summit will be held July 14<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Crime and Gang Prevention Specialist Report, Gail Washington**

Gail touched on the graffiti issue and noting that it has increased since school has been let out. She also mentioned Facebook and Twitter training to be hosted by FRI July 30<sup>th</sup> at 7PM in the YAC room.

#### **ExxonMobil Intern Report, Mariellena Marquez**

Mari talked about FRI's partnership with the Highlands Apartments. She spoke about the apartments pending health awareness/block party and her efforts to start a Jr. Crime Watch at that location.

Mari explained that her internship would be ending at the end of July so anyone wanting to volunteer their time for upcoming projects should see her immediately.

#### **2-Points Weed & Seed Coordinator Report, Kerry Goodwin**

Kerry introduced Letourneau student evaluator, Carlos Merritt, to the committee and spoke of Letourneau's on-going work with FRI.

We are waiting on a decision about the Edward Burne grant. This will allow funds for our *Weed & Seed* moms as well as law enforcement to be expanded

Kerry mentioned our pending grants for mentoring children whose parents are or were previously incarcerated and breaking the cycle of domestic abuse.

Kerry announced our conference in Tampa, FL. He also mentioned the economic development taking place on John West & Buckner.

Q – Any progress on getting house turned loose on Williams Way?

A – No. Kerry will check on it when he returns from Tampa.

Q – If 2-Points neighbors draft a letter regarding multi-family units and their issues will FRI send it out to those in authority?

A – Yes. We're thinking about enlisting the CPTED program to take on an apartment as a pilot.

#### **Code Compliance Report, Barry Boyd (standing in for Curry)**

We are being successful at driving crime down. Thanks for calling in issues.

Q – Shanonna apts have an 8 foot privacy fence which backs up to a residential fence. They are throwing stuff over the fence which has piled up and may be on a personal property line. Who’s responsible for cleaning that up?

A – Possibly the private home owner especially if it’s on their property line.

Q – Who’s responsible for cleaning foreclosed houses?

A – Sometimes the bank. Sometimes citations need to be given out.

Q – What can we do about junk man neighbors?

A – Litter notices can be sent out if the items that are not traditionally stored outside can be seen from neighbors yard.

Q – What about properties with privacy fences and rodent issues that are affecting their neighbor?

A – Not much can be done. If code can’t see into the yard nothing can be done. Try calling the health department.

Q – Who keeps track of who how many additions can go onto a house?

A – Building and development. Notice can be issued for permit.

Q – Do I have to have a permit to add to a house?

A – Yes. Any structure over 200 square feet needs a permit.

**Bond Committee, Susan Walker, Chair**

Still need park committees to participate. Those participating can be put o the next bond. Ferguson Park has a committee. St Francis Park does not.

We’re asking up to \$60M for parks and programs.

Susan could not participate in the AreaLand Use Study meeting due to a conflict of interest.

**Action Plan**

| What   | Who        | When    |
|--|------------|---------|
| Email number of apartment communities who have applied for Gold Star to FRI  | Lt Ashford | 7.25.09 |
| Check with the U.S. Attorney’s office on the status of FRI obtaining the proceeds on the sale of the ICE house on Williams Way | Kerry      | 7.25.09 |

**CALENDAR**

July 14<sup>th</sup> ..... Quarterly Crime Summit (Dallas 1<sup>st</sup> Assembly of God/11000 E. NW Hwy @ 7PM)

July 26 – Aug 1 ..... DEFY Camp (Joint Reserve Base/Fort Worth)

July 30<sup>th</sup> ..... Facebook/Twitter Training/YAC Room 7PM \$10 donation

Sept 14<sup>th</sup> ..... FRI Steering Committee Meeting/ White Rock Church of Christ

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.