

Kupfrian Park PACE-EH Project
Meeting Minutes
August 21, 2006

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm. Those in attendance were asked to sign in. Twenty attendees were noted on the roster. Commissioner Young representing the district was in attendance. The meeting facilitator, Mary Beverly of the Department of Health introduced PACE-EH, "Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health".

Mary Beverly shared ideas of how PACE –EH can benefit Kupfrian Park. The definition of Environmental Health was stated, and examples of Environmental Health issues that may be addressed were listed; such as septic tanks, lighting, roads, flooding, and mosquitoes. It was made clear that these issues are just examples, but the reason that they were mentioned is due to recent complaints received from some residents through the Community Redevelopment Agency. A statement regarding the connection between a healthy environment and the health of citizens was addressed.

Folks in the audience were introduced that have helped make this possible:

Rosa Stallworth (Neighborhood Resident)
Jody Manale (Chief of Community Redevelopment Agency-County)
Jim Wilde (Manager of the Pensacola Retirement Village)
Tom Dawson and John Seymore (ECUA)

The reason for this meeting was addressed as a process or project that could be beneficial in addressing the issues that some residents have brought to the forefront, such as lack of public sewer and flooding.

The PACE-EH list of 13 tasks were outlined and identified as a basis to start.

Task 1 and Task 2 of the list were defined and stated as goals for the project at this point. Residents were asked to help determine the Environmental Health problems that exist in Kupfrian Park and assist in addressing them.

Kupfrian Park history and demographics were discussed.

A call for volunteers to serve as members of the Community Environmental Health Assessment Team was made. No official members were selected yet.

Jody Manale of the Community Redevelopment Agency spoke on behalf of her agency. She stated the complication of working in an area that falls into different redevelopment areas of the city and the county. It was stated that meetings with some residents near Avery Street have been held to determine what it would take to bring public sewer to the community. It has been determined that most folks have not reported their failing septic tanks to the Escambia County Health Department for either fear of fines, or lack of knowledge that the Escambia County Health Department could play a role in assistance. The funding required is being studied at this point. A need to partner with the ECHD and ECUA to develop a plan to try and get sewer into this area was realized. Funding has been a problem and continues to be a problem. CRA has

been working with many neighborhood agencies for funding but at this time there is not much more to go around. It was stated that there is a need to update a development plan and invite the attendees of this meeting to help plan for the capitol improvement program and determine ways of getting funds to the area. City and County collaboration is needed. A neighborhood watch organization was suggested as a way to unite the community and have them be part of the planning process for redevelopment.

Questions were raised regarding flooding issues and possible incorporation into the plan.

It was stated that the Redevelopment Agency does not normally address flooding issues since they do not have the ability to speak for the engineering designs needing to be addressed. The Engineering designs are being looked at by County engineering. Collaboration is needed between CRA, Baptist Hospital, ECUA and ECHD.

NAACP (Les King) expressed frustration that the government needs to be quicker to act than waiting for folks to complain over and over again. It has been determined through this meeting that data from the residents must be gathered to address the environmental health issues and also make a case regarding the issue of sewer availability.

Documentation through conducting a survey of the area was discussed as a viable tool. CRA stated that meetings have been held with Commissioner Young and the Community members regarding septic tank issues. Englewood Community meetings are routinely held and it was suggested that Kupfrian Park residents get involved. Due to the Escambia County Health Department, not having data from the residents regarding septic tank failures to prove that there is a problem in the area, it has been determined that documentation is needed to make the case for prioritization of sewer to be brought to the area. Commissioner Young stated that she will be looking into using the "Local Option Sales Tax" budgeting this upcoming year as a possible way to help the area.

ECUA (Tom Dawson) stated that the Board prioritizes sewerage areas based on need. They take information like septic tank problems, population density, proximity to water bodies, income level, etc. to make their decision. Just to install sewer in a 5 block area like Kupfrian Park is going to cost in the ballpark of \$800,000. It's important that citizens report septic tank problems so that the area can be prioritized. It was decided that the Escambia County Health Department will work closely with ECUA and the residents to gather the information needed to make the case for sewer prioritization.

It was stressed that if residents are having septic tank problems or any other environmental health issues, that complaints or concerns should be made to DOH through Mary Beverly at (850) 595-6727. It was stated that public health studies will be conducted to determine the need for sewer and to assess other environmental health concerns. It was stated that installing new septic tanks in an area that floods, is not sensible and poses a health concern. Limited lot size is also a factor due to more stringent rules of new septic tank installations and area required.

It was also stated that although the sewer expansion into the area will be very costly, some breaks are given to the homeowner. The impact fee is waived for the first year, and the tap is

provided. However, residents will be required to pay the plumber to make the connection from the house to the sewer line within 1 year of notification. Financial assistance is available to qualified individuals.

The question was raised by some residents as to whether a contribution from the property owner for a tap would make a difference in the ability to prioritize the area for sewer and get the process started more quickly. The answer was no. The procedure for sewer expansion according to ECUA and DOH is that the impact fee is waived for the first year after notification, and the tap fee is also waived. According to ECUA and DOH, the best way to get this area prioritized for sewer is to make a public health argument. It was suggested by DOH that a signed petition from residents who are in favor of sewer being brought to the area would be beneficial, and attendance at the ECUA Board Meetings would also be good. The property owner will be expected to pay for the plumbing costs of getting their house connected to the sewer line provided and for abandoning their septic tank.

Resident Rosa Stallworth, stated that she has attended ECUA Board Meetings and was told by ECUA officials that the neighborhood would not be prioritized for sewer and that there was nothing at that time that could be done. She said that she has been fighting this fight for a long time.

The issues were stated by the Kupfrian Park residents and ranked. The issues were written on a large message board in order of importance with 1 being the most important.

1. overflowing septic tanks
2. standing water
3. no sidewalks
4. poor lighting
5. overgrown lots
6. depreciation of property
7. stray dogs

DOH asked the residents to fill out a preliminary survey. A call was made to the residents for participation in critiquing the survey and helping to write additional surveys.

It was determined that this survey will be distributed in the neighborhood by DOH (Mary Beverly), Kupfrian Park resident volunteers and NAACP Youth Group members. A date will be set for this after discussing logistics. The goal is to have the survey results available for discussion at the next meeting.

Robin Woods (Communities in Schools) made a suggestion to consider studying the health effects of children in the area in order to help with further funding sources.

Mrs. Dean (Kupfrian Resident) expressed that she has been paying for a light pole that she is not benefiting from. She said her neighbor gets the benefit of the lighting, and she doesn't, but she is paying for it. Mary Beverly agreed to look into this issue.

It was decided among the group that an earlier meeting scheduled to start at 6:00pm would be better. The date of the next meeting was set at 6:00pm at the Pensacola Retirement Village-Village 3 on September 25, 2006. Meeting Adjourned at 7:55pm