

OTR RAP SESSION I

Thursday October 19, 2006

At the outset of Rap Session I, 3CDC asked those in attendance to begin by sharing with their facilitators any thoughts, questions, comments, or concerns they may have had in regard to 3CDC before the meeting. Below is a summary of the feedback 3CDC received from facilitators from this portion of the Rap Session.

Housing

- A common concern in my group was that the cost of housing (owned or rented) in OTR not be only high-dollar (so far the condo prices have been too high for most people, they said). They would like there to be at least some property priced in range of a first-time homebuyer (\$80,000-120,000 maybe).
- Several people pointed out that these properties are very expensive to rehab, though, which means it's really hard to sell them for moderate amounts or rent them at moderate rates.
- The group wants to avoid having all the current residents of OTR be pushed out to Westwood, Price Hill – they suggest being aware of what rental rates are in these close neighborhoods and keep OTR rental rates comparable, if possible.
- What has 3CDC identified as the alternatives available for transitional housing in OTR?
- Where are the "people" who have been displaced from OTR while 3CDC purchases large numbers of buildings/When buildings are purchased by 3CDC what are their plans with displacement?
- Is there a focus on mixed-income housing development and is there a specific plan for follow through?
- What demographics do 3CDC want to attract back to OTR ... will it only focus on market-rate housing and leave out the rest?

Communication

- There has not been enough communication from 3CDC about what we are doing. It has not been clear how closely 3CDC is following the OTR Comprehensive Plan.
- Several attendees would like to know more about how 3CDC selects its partners for development projects.
- Many citizens feel that 3CDC is being "secretive"- they don't know what you are doing or what your purpose is for doing it.
- Most of the group didn't know what 3CDC's role was.

- Could 3CDC have more disclosure and who is benefiting from their directives?

Representation

- Several residents commented that there did not seem to be enough low income resident representation at the session. They commented that 3CDC needed to keep trying to get the residents to the table until they find a way that works.
- Several people stated that their perception was that 3CDC was controlled by the big business execs/white males who think they know what is right for the neighborhood.

General

- Some people are a little nervous about 3CDC making plans without their involvement, although they stressed that many people are there is excited about the new developments. However, they would like more regular communication.
- It was mentioned that 3CDC is viewed by many as the CDC for OTR, so therefore receives many of the available funds for the area, and then focuses them all on only one portion of the neighborhood. People were concerned that that may have a detrimental effect on the other areas of the neighborhood.
- 3CDC needs to in some way continue to acknowledge/validate the work of the other organizations and the importance of the other areas in OTR. For instance, one group asked that 3CDC just support their projects (verbally or in writing, not financially) to assist with their attempts to gain funding through other sources.
- There was general consensus that 3CDC needs to assist neighborhood developers with "gap financing".
- 3CDC needs to follow the OTR Comprehensive Plan.
- What is the Master Plan that 3CDC has for OTR and where in the process are they and what is the timeline for their objectives?
- Where is the money coming from to fund 3CDC?
- What is 3CDC doing to address the Trust and Public Welfare issues?
- One participant described 3CDC's initial entrance into OTR's community development affairs as "ignorant arrogance" -- whereby it came into the neighborhood without communicating with (soliciting the opinions/ideas of ...) critical OTR stakeholders.
- Where is 3CDC's development ... is it all expensive housing projects ... how will 3CDC help to bring new businesses into the neighborhood business districts -- both Main and Vine Streets?

- Another participant sees a lot of improvement, but realizes there are no consistent standards regarding historic and/or preservation requirements (in terms of costs vs. value of properties after rehab) ...believes 3CDC can and/or should play a more active role.
- 3CDC Board goals are incongruent with neighborhood's goals.
- How will community dialogues (rap sessions) impact 3CDC decisions?
- What metrics will 3CDC use to measure progress in OTR?