



**Neighborhood Safety & Stability Subcommittee
Crime-free Multi-family Housing Workgroup
2/28/08**

This packet contains handouts that were distributed at the Neighborhood Safety & Stability Subcommittee, Crime-free Multi-family Housing Workgroup on February 28, 2008 and includes the following items:

- Charge to Workgroup (revised February 19, 2008)
- Handout submitted by Ida M. Jackson (Island Pointe Apartments) re: apartment complexes
- Presentation: *Non-police Recommendations for Neighborhood Violence Reduction*

Multi-Family Sub-Committee

Charge to the Committee

February 19, 2008

Revised February 27, 2008

Hand out

This document discusses the sub-committee's membership, task and discussion areas. Meeting dates will be established today.

Members:

- Ronnie Ferguson, Chair
- Joni Foster
- Suzanne Jenkins
- Charles Commander
- Vicky Murphy
- G.Troy Cook
- Jack Barnette
- Capt. Mark Bowen

Task: To develop recommendations for the reduction of crime in multi-family apartment communities.

The sub committee will discuss and develop methods of reducing crime in the city's multi-family housing communities without regard for cost or difficulty of implementation. Recommendations will be presented to the Neighborhood Safety & Stability Committee where the recommendations will be accepted or modified and passed to the Jacksonville Journey Steering Committee. The sub-committee will attempt to complete its task in two meetings.

Discussion Areas:

Owners/Management – huge opportunities for improvement in safety exist through the active involvement of owners and managers. The short-term costs of improvements should be recaptured through the long-term stability of residents and reduced vandalism and destruction.

- Environmental
 - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
 - Lighting
 - Doors, lock and windows
 - Attractiveness and cleanliness
- Leasing

- Development and enforcement of leases which prohibit criminal acts by lease holders and makes leaseholders responsible for their guests
- Participation in a citywide database showing the names and driver license numbers of all persons evicted in order to prevent these residents from moving from one multi-family development to another.
- Working with the court system to have judges understand the need for strong lease enforcement and the need to support property owners in maintaining crime free environments
- Services
 - Providing social service programs in low-income developments to enable residents to improve skills and transition to higher levels of housing
 - Partnering with health, education and social service programs and agencies to enable them to have a presence in the development. Space should be made available for these services to take place where possible.

Resident/Tenant Organizations – resident groups should be encouraged and supported. Strong resident associations can work cooperatively with management and police to assist in affecting a crime free environment.

- Develop resident organizations in all properties containing 100 or more units.
- Provide financial support so that resident organizations can conduct their business e.g. the Jacksonville Housing Authority provides \$25 per unit, per year for resident organization operations (stamps, stationery, phone etc.)
- Owners and managers should meet regularly with the resident organization to discuss crime, maintenance, services and other issues.
- Space should be provided, where possible, for resident organizations and their activities.
- A Neighborhood Watch Program should be a basic program of all Resident Organizations.

Policing – police can act as a deterrent through frequent patrols and neighborhood activities and programs.

- Provide frequent patrolling in high crime developments.
- Officers should knock on doors and get to know as many residents as possible.
- Encourage police personnel to attend Resident Organization meetings and discuss crime information.

- Encourage all apartment communities to participate in the Crime Free Multi Housing Program that is a voluntary effort designed for apartment owners.

Legislative Action – some legislation may be helpful in regulating and providing living standards for apartment complexes.

- Periodic inspection and licensing of apartment units
- Mandatory requirement for apartments with high crime rates to participate in the Crime Free Multi Housing Program.
- User fees for apartments with excessive crime to repay some of the costs for police and other city services.

Neighborhood Safety and Stability Subcommittee Apartment Complexes

Amended 021108

Following are some thoughts and possible steps that I feel could be taken to help alleviate some of the crime taking place in the various apartment complexes throughout the city.

Our young people all come from some type of "family", using the broadest definition. The adults in those households need to feel they have a stake in what happens in Jacksonville. The young people need a self-esteem boost and to be shown their potential.

Having raised three sons in apartment complexes (in their teen years and beyond), I can attest to the fact that most of the youth just need to know they matter – to someone. There needs to be access to after school programs including tutoring, self-esteem workshops and programs of that nature. The adage "an idle mind is the devil's workshop" is so true when it comes to youth.

While raising my sons I took advantage of the Boys Club, YMCA and other programs. There were even courses offered at community centers on how to parent teenagers. It seems the entire focus now is on "education" which is, of course, paramount; however, we need to look at the social aspects of becoming a viable human being as well. I offer the following suggestions.

For some reason the general consensus seems to be apartment dwellers do not have as high a stake in the community as homeowners. I, personally, choose to live in an apartment and I like it. I make it a point to get to know my neighbors (at least in my building) and we look out for each other.

- In conjunction with the Apartment Council, ask that each complex have its own "Neighborhood Watch" which would meet regularly in a designated location. Signs would be posted throughout the complex attesting to that fact. Monthly or quarterly meetings could be held with suggestions coming from the tenants as to what needs to be done to keep up the aesthetics and cut down on crime. Do not assume everyone knows about the CPAC's. Some people would feel more comfortable meeting with just their neighbors from their complexes.
- There are usually convenience stores around apartment complexes which tend to be a hang out for the "bad" element. Those individuals managing the stores need to be pulled into discussions about cutting down on loitering and possibly closing at a reasonable hour. *The store closest to my complex closes at 10 p.m. – why can't they all do that? The owner/manager of the convenience store on Broward Road appears to take pride in his business and the customers seem to respect him. It is the one on the left on Broward Road when you're headed towards Lem Turner.*
- They have been cutting down trees on Broward Road (due to incoming development) and it has opened the area up more which is a good thing – cuts down on individuals hiding in the brush. *The Hyundai dealership is moving to land on Interstate Drive which will bring more lighting and that will be a plus.*

- Some type of award **incentive for complexes** which keep up their grounds and go for a quarter without a criminal incident. The Zone Commanders could possibly help with this. *Are there any multi-family complex owners on the CPAC's – there should be. The three on Monaco Drive appear to be the source of a lot of crime – do they have tenant associations?*
- **Police presence** more visible and, of course, the assigned officer(s) for that complex would attend the meetings. When Neighborhood Walks are done; do they walk through the complexes?
- **Gated Complexes** – For some reason, gated communities are viewed as more prestigious and safer although here lately they been invaded as well. The Apartment Council could look into this. I don't know the cost factors.

Comments

I was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois and at one point we lived in Altgeld Gardens, which was a project with townhouse type dwellings. They had a contest every month for the best yard and we won it several times. My father took great pride in his hedges and mom in her flower beds. I have very fond memories of that project.

My sons, all fine men; realize the importance of giving back to the community as I instilled it in them as my mother did me. My father died when I was 12 years old and my mom refused to let me and my sister become slack in our homework and chores. When I divorced, I was determined to not let my sons become statistics and was aided by my church family and friends. I knew all the kids in the complex as well as their mothers.

I am willing to assist in whatever way I can as my heart breaks when I hear of our youth being shot or incarcerated.

I will be more than happy to go into further detail and will continue to do research in terms of making our apartment dwellers feel they, too, are part of the journey.

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Non-Police recommendations for Neighborhood Violence Reduction

*Follow-up scanning and analysis based on January 22nd
meeting decisions*

February 26th, 2008

Review: Neighborhoods and Problem-Solving

Basic elements for success 1: Are we being SMART?

Specific

Has the problem been well diagnosed at a granular level?

Measurable

Can it be? Will it be? What then if the results aren't what you want?

Achievable

Realistic scope, realistic solutions (budget, expectation)

Relevant

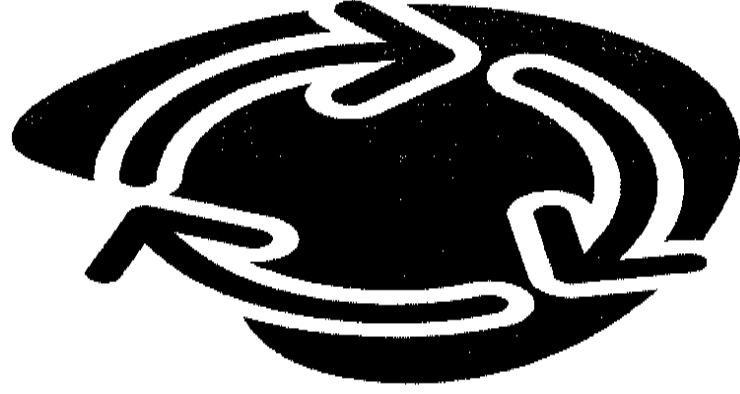
Do the key players have a common agenda? If successful, will the specific effort progress the overall intent?

Timed

Is it good only initially or will it have permanence? How will we know?

Review: Neighborhoods and Problem-Solving

Basic elements for success 2: Are we being led by SARA?



Scanning

Analysis

Response

Assessment

Selecting the area

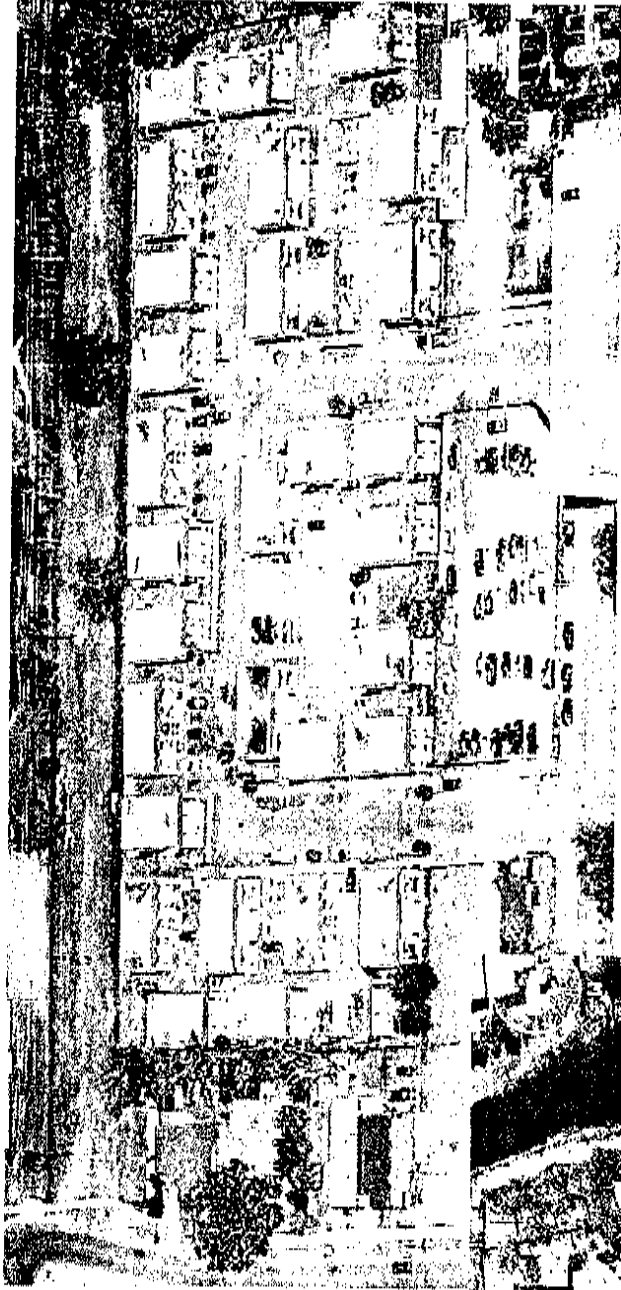
Looking at the area to select, start...

- **One single family neighborhood**
- **One apartment complex area**
- **Few major active operations/projects**
- **Among the worst (historically & currently)**

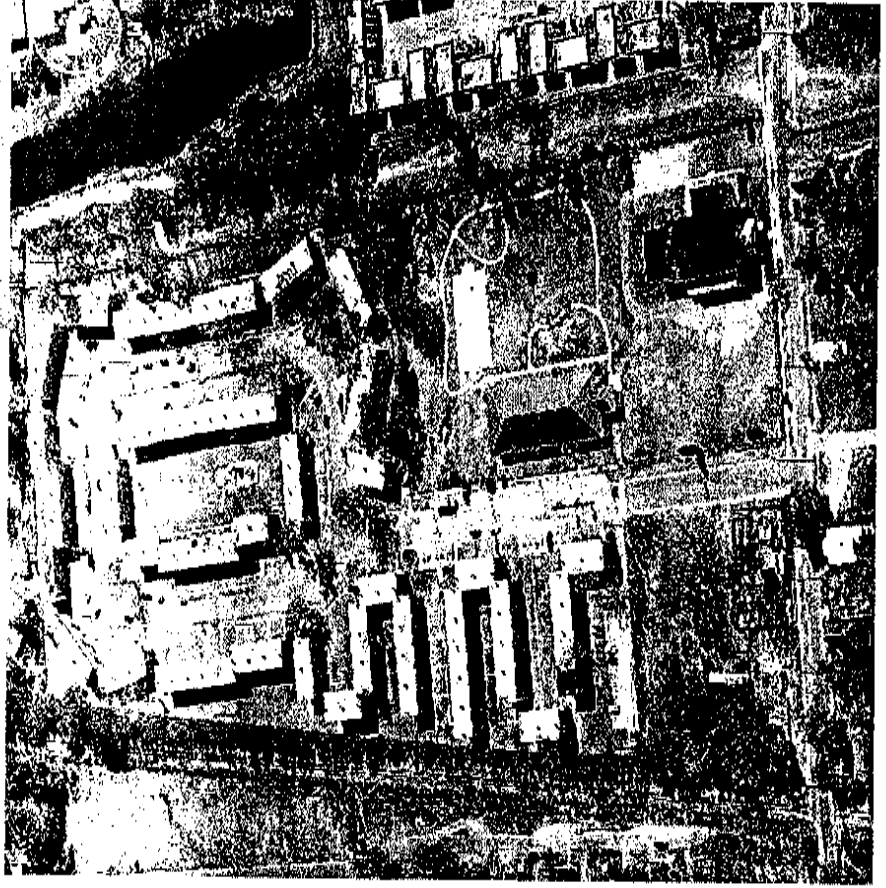


Apartment complex area

Lincoln Court & Venus-Mars
(Roosevelt Gardens area)




Venus-Mars



Lincoln Court


What police are saying...

.... Difficult area to be proactive in, no community cooperation, becomes a free-for-all at night with no management or security presence, lots of domestic-related violence, lots of drugs and guns, lots of disputes due to different groups loitering, some prostitution, most of the people hanging out don't live there, difficulties evicting, common to find stolen vehicles, tough to do useful surveillance due to design/layout, easy for look-outs to warn of police arrivals or activity, lots of vehicles coming and going, hang-out for people from all over, foot traffic between complexes, to railroads and other paths.




What you would see...

...Barron landscaping, no security, fencing with gaps/holes, high levels of loitering, drinking, lots of suspicious activity, disputes, etc., suspicious vehicles coming and going, arguments, abandoned vehicles (stolen cars), transition in evening into exceptional levels of suspicious traffic, loitering, drinking, etc once management leaves.



What the data says...

...In density terms, the most violent (and most consistently violent) area of Jacksonville over the past decade, exceptional number of criminals citywide have historical ties to presence in this area, among top vehicle recoveries areas of the city, rent roles of historically near 90% female (and kids) with few adult males on leases, but about 90% of the exceptional arrests/field interviews/investigation totals involve males.

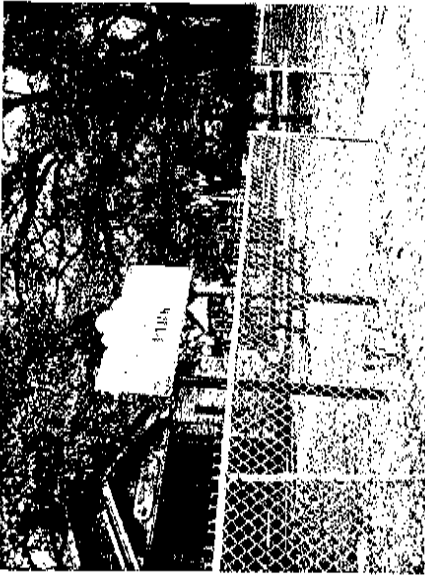
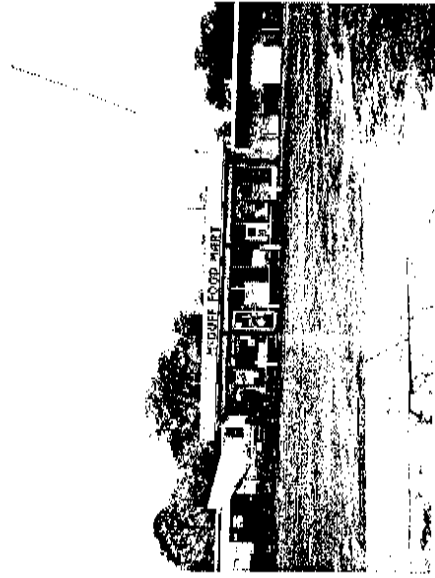


Non-Police Responses...

- Pressure into adoption of 'Crime Free'
- Assert strict controlled access – Management practice
 - Must make traffic (vehicle and foot) subject to control mechanisms, and deterrence for those with drugs, guns, etc. Several options & strategies possible
- Deal with informal paths and fencing issues more permanently


Single family neighborhood

Westbrook & Creek Area
(Robinson's Addition)




What police are saying...

.... Rough area infested with guns and drugs that had a memorable double-shooting/murder late last summer. Known as an area where the "Creek Boys" are & that the area is known for drugs as well; crime relating to some drug houses of note, but more often victims are those involved in street trade who's houses got shot up in tit-for-tat territorial and respect circumstances. Lots of gun shots fired and plenty of suspicious activity. Drug-dealing, drinking in park where it's dark at night, convenient stores issues with drinking/drugs and loitering as well as serving of minors.



What you would see...

...Extensive trash strewn streets, dumping (in yards/lots/woods/ditches/gutters), lots of recent evictees junk on curbsides, dogs spilling trash, heavy public drinking (carrying alcohol from nearby distributors), partially and fully boarded homes with varying levels of accessibility, park with suspicious adult activity in dim lighting around playground at night, graffiti ('Creek Boys') on businesses and vacant homes, extensive foot traffic in streets that increases as the day goes on and into the night.



What the data says...

...Largest violence hotspot for 2007 when only looking at single family housing incidents, steady crime problems for years, aggravated battery is most common crime doubling any other, youth/drug related violence with high rate of non-domestic gun incidents such as shooting into occupied dwelling, disproportionate number of liquor licenses (as many as blocks in neighborhood), clearly definable 'Creek Boy' territory, Activity around vacant houses. Most frequent non-traffic calls were suspicious persons, disputes, and drugs, difficulty with cooperation (low arrests, convictions).

Summing it up...

Initial scanning & analysis

- High localized violence – primarily territory based (localized market)
- Central area has too many liquor sales businesses
- Problems with management at liquor sales businesses
 - Alcohol to minors issues
 - Loitering and public drinking tolerated
 - Alcohol dominant sales
- High visible rate of public substance abuse
 - in front of businesses
 - on front porches
 - in yards
- High rate of abandoned homes/buildings
 - Many not well secured
 - Several multiple-in-a-row boarded situations
 - Close proximity to multiple liquor sales businesses
 - graffiti
- High rate of rental homes and vacant Habijax
- Creek area adds dynamic as area for ditching guns, hiding things, etc
- Significant code issues
- Drainage issues
- Park drug-dealing
- Lighting issues
- Disproportionate shooting into dwellings
 - Youth violence issues (Creek Boys)

Non-Police Responses...

- Liquor Licenses
 - Reduce the volume & adjust the nature of establishment's sales and practices including addressing the CPTED issues at establishments
- Lighting
 - *Improved lighting, if maintained, can reduce/deter openness/level of drug business and drinking in park and streets, and can make identification of persons on vehicles involved in shootings easier for residents and victims.*
- Target youth for after school programs, etc
 - *More time in activities is less time in this environment for up and coming 'Creek Boys'*
- More aggressive junk & trash pick-up schedule
- Code Enforcement
- Drainage issues attention
 - *These last three target livability and will improve the quality of those who find area acceptable to rent or own here*

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