

Community Meeting #1 Meeting Minutes
5/28/19, 6pm, El Mercado/Nueva Esperanza 401 Main St
Issues raised by residents during presentation & meeting:

General Goals:

- Community work together for a successful project
- Design a safe, welcoming, inclusive environment
- Improve advertising for the future Community Meetings, door to door would be more effective than flyers and Facebook. More volunteers are needed to do this
- Residents need to be convinced it is worthwhile to attend community meetings due to the many meetings held over the years

Neighborhood:

- Prioritize new housing for South Holyoke residents
- Hire residents to do construction and other work
- Build the local economy

Parking & traffic:

- Shift the parking lot near Carlos Vega Park and reorganize with lots at Nueva Esperanza and Church to create another building lot near the park
- There are not enough parking spaces for residents and the general public
- Provide only the minimally required amount of handicapped parking. The current HC spaces are mostly not used
- Dedicated alley parking and general street parking are good
- Mark individual parking spaces on the street to maximize space efficiency
- Review whether all current emergency/fire lanes are required and necessary/recommended
- Study the effect of street directions on the overall neighborhood traffic and patterns

Streets:

- Speed bumps – good for slowing traffic, but causes damage when snow plowing is done
- Explore alternate ways to slow traffic, ex. curbs narrowing streets at intersections

Carlos Vega Park:

- Keep or enlarge existing park size, many kids use it
- Add tables, repair or replace benches

Bike lanes:

- Bikes are used in the neighborhood, including bike share
- Dedicated bike lanes are good on East St and in general
- Bike lane could be in the park, protected by the street curb

Security:

- Study street lighting requirements to ensure adequate coverage, street security
- Safety for children important

Clean Neighborhood:

- Grass strips along sidewalks/curbs are invite dog poo
- Dog owners do not clean up poo- on sidewalks, streets, and in the park
- A dog park would be good, could be located at the small curbed triangle at the west end of Carlos Vega Park
- Trash bins are needed in Carlos Vega Park

- Syringes are commonly left on the street/in the park. Add safe receptacles out of reach of children
- City maintenance of the above would be needed for success

Houses

- Single family house is good, like the Lawrence example project shown: 2 floors, good design
- Single floor or ranch style house
- A mix of 6-unit buildings and single-family houses to serve different needs
- Row houses provide enough light at only 2 ends of the building, shared long walls save on heating costs
- Provide sky lighting above interior stairs to bring light inside the building (eg: in row houses or 6-unit buildings)
- Mix of 1-, 2-, 3- & 4-bedroom apartments needed
- Elderly residents need easy access to their apartments with few or no stairs
- Adjacent apartments (side by side, up & down, front & back) good; to separately house families and their elderly parents who need regular care
- Home ownership important = financial and emotional investment in the neighborhood
- Maximize quantity of new apartments; to accommodate the large number of people in the neighborhood
- Prioritize housing homeless in the neighborhood
- Existing apartments tend to be over-filled with extended family members etc.

Yards:

- Having both front and back yards is good, they can serve different purposes
- Yards are needed for young children to play in, older kids can play in the park
- Elevator building type does not provide space for young kids to play