

National League of Cities

11/28/12 - 12/1/12

Summary from Sue's sessions

NLC new member orientation

- Delphi Solutions has a system for putting city financial info online. <http://www.delphi.us/>

Conversation with Madison alders

- Should Madison have a committee to oversee IT?
- *Governing* magazine reported that comprehensive annual financial reports do not reveal impending problems. I will ask Dave Schmiedicke for a memo re potential long term risks.
<http://www.governing.com/topics/finance/gov-are-annual-financial-reports-useless.html>
- We should have conversations earlier in the year regarding budget priorities, but we don't have a good venue.

Tour of Roxbury redevelopment

The Roxbury neighborhood was targeted for "urban renewal" and a freeway in the 1960's. Residents protested and it was stopped. However, buildings were demolished. Many lots are still vacant today. Community development corporations are finally rebuilding.

- We spent the most time at Madison Park Development Corp. <http://www.madison-park.org/>
- See also NeighborWorks America. <http://www.nw.org>
- Subsidized commercial development is harder than residential.

University Cities Council meeting

- Update from NLC's federal lobbyist.
 - Jan 1, 2013 – Fiscal cliff = 10% cuts in military and domestic discretionary spending + ending of income and payroll tax cuts + debt ceiling. Going over will cause a recession and possible 10% unemployment. He thinks Congress will blink first.
 - We should write to our Congressional representatives.
- Summer Commune
 - "Brings an assortment of people to a small town for two months, where participants collaborate and work independently to create new art, new media, new technology, and new ideas for a new society."
 - <http://www.summercommune.com>
- "One Health"
 - We should consider animal health along with human health.
 - Vets should report pets with lead poisoning or physical abuse so the pet owners get checked. I have sent an email to the health department asking if they do this.
 - <http://onehealthinitiative.com/>, <https://www.onehealthcommission.org/>,
<http://www.humananimalmedicine.org/>

Opening General Session – 3 speakers

- Bill Taylor – Embrace big ideas. Apply ideas from unrelated fields. Try to see your work as if you're an outsider. People are hungry for a heightened sense of humanity. <http://williamctaylor.com/>
- Jennifer Pelka, Code for America – Code for American was inspired by Teach for America. Programmers quit their (high paying) jobs for a year. They work for free a year to develop web interfaces for cities. <http://codeforamerica.org/>
- Wes Moore – Told his personal story about heading toward a failed life until his mother sent him to military school. “People believed in me before I believed in myself.” As a leader, you have to fight for those who need a champion; you can't cherry-pick. <http://theotherwesmoore.com/>

The Just City – Susan Fainstein, Harvard professor

- *City planning should strive for justice, not just efficiency.*
- Example: Newly rebuilt Yankee stadium has bars inside (killing local bars), knocked down houses, does not interact with the neighborhood, does not provide jobs. Yet the public contributed \$1B.
- Criteria: equity, democracy, diversity.
- Equity
 - New housing developments should have low income units.
 - No involuntary relocations for economic development or community balance.
 - Economic development programs should give priority to the interests of employees and small business owners.
 - New commercial development should provide public space and help small business.
 - Scrutinize mega-projects. Require direct benefits to low-income people and public participation in the profits.
 - Transit fares should be kept very low for travel from poor neighborhoods.
 - Planners should take an active role in pressing for egalitarian solutions and blocking ones that disproportionately benefit the already well-off.
- Diversity
 - Zoning should not be used to further discriminatory ends.
 - Boundaries between districts should be porous.
 - Ample public space should be widely accessible and varied but be designed so that groups with clashing lifestyles do not have to occupy the same location.
 - To the extent practical and desired by affected populations, uses should be mixed.
- Democracy
 - Consult with the target population when planning. Citywide considerations must also apply.
- <http://www.gsd.harvard.edu/~people/susan-fainstein.html>

Strong Multi-Sector Partnerships – Joe Garlick, NeighborWorks Blackstone River Valley

- Woonsocket, RI
- *The community input process created partnerships.*
 - 40 volunteers interviewed 150 neighborhood leaders individually.
 - Convened a group to prioritize ideas. At least one person had to agree to champion an idea for it to be included.
 - Final themes: civic engagement, economic development, health, life-long learning, safety, physical environment.
 - Community quality of life contract written.
 - 45 houses renovated, 110 apartments, playground, community center, artists-in-residence (free rent in exchange for teaching at community center)
- <http://www.neighborworksbrv.org/>,
<http://www.nw2.org/WinningStrategies/display.asp?strategy=1092&offset=6>

Disparities in Access to Critical Goods and Services

- “Healthy Corner Stores” brings healthy foods to convenience stores
 - Used SNAP Education grant to build demand. Enforcement is hard.
 - Consider health in all policies—transportation, land use planning, etc, etc.
 - <http://changelabsolutions.org/>
- Bank On Louisville encourages low income residents to use banking services
 - increase access, remove hassle, change attitudes, target kids as savers
 - high touch program (not high tech)
 - <http://www.louisvilleky.gov/CSR/BankOnLouisville/>
- Broadband Opportunity Plan will connect *everyone* to broadband in a neighborhood.
 - <http://www.novationbroadband.com/>
- Single Stop USA clarifies and collates all social services and offers them in one location.
 - <http://www.singlestopusa.org/>

Financial solutions roundtable

- Housing and mortgages – Roger Williams
 - Resources: NLC pamphlet. Milwaukee foreclosure prevention initiative—meeting every 2 weeks with all stakeholders. Builds relationships.
 - Who owns the vacant house? County holds the records.
 - The city has the power to strong arm the banks.
 - Watch out for bulk sales. Bulk buyers are bad news.
 - Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)
http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/communitydevelopment/programs/neighborhoodspg
- Violence prevention – Jack Calhoun
 - Clear leadership by mayor and chief.
 - Must include human services. Cops cannot do it alone.
 - Make a plan. Single intervention is not effective.
 - Need a group to monitor the plan and collect data.
 - 1. Know the nature of the problem. 2. Partnerships are key. 3. Then get funding.
 - 10 cities are part of the AG’s National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention.
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/newsroom/youthviolenceforum.htm>
- “Social impact bonds” – Navjeet Bal, Nixon Peabody
 - Better name would be “Pay for success contract.”
 - Parties: state, social service provider, funder, outside evaluator
 - Example topic: Youth recidivism.
 - State figures out how much it would pay for lower recidivism among a specific group (lower prison cost, etc). Signs 6 year contract. Funder pays social service provider. Provider does the work, collects data. At year 6, outside evaluator decides whether recidivism has been reduced enough to meet the contract.

Protecting infrastructure, promoting resilience – disasters

- The purpose of government is to translate resources into community health.
- Resilience is how well you are able to absorb a shock and recover what you value.
- Efficiency has driven out redundancy. We are vulnerable.
- Develop a disaster/resiliency plan. (Does Madison have one?)
- Rockefeller Foundation, Nancy Kete, <http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/what-we-do/current-work/developing-climate-change-resilience>

- FEMA, FIMA, Doug Bellomo, <http://www.fema.gov/what-mitigation/federal-insurance-and-mitigation-administration-fima>

Public/Private Partnerships in Boston

- Boston Private Industry Council (PIC), Neil Sullivan
 - What happened to start the partnership? Choose partners with interest in the topic.
 - Who does what work to maintain it? Professional management is necessary.
 - Who measures the progress?
 - How do partnerships work among themselves? Do they cover a range of issues to improve life?
 - <http://www.bostonpic.org/>
- Adult workforce training – SkillWorks, Loh-Sze Leung
 - Goals: 1. Train low skill, low income adults so they can get a job. 2. Assist employers in finding workers.
 - Boston Foundation support is key for credibility, office support.
 - 19 funders. It works best when funders are in the driver’s seat.
 - <http://www.skill-works.org/>
- Academics and athletics, high school – Boston Scholar Athletes, Rebecka Splaine Salwasser
 - Academic achievement through athletics. Classroom in high schools for tutoring. SAT training, scholarships. Good equipment, coaches academy, recognition banquets.
 - Advisory board: universities, pro sports. Working board: schools, union, athletic directors, city.
 - \$1m funding from Suffolk Construction.
 - <http://www.bostonscholarathlete.org/>
- Corporate summer jobs for teens – John Hancock, Tom Crohan
 - The mayor wants 10,000 summer jobs for Boston high school students citywide.
 - John Hancock gives \$1500 per student for 650 students (\$975,000) to nonprofits. Nonprofits hire teens for the summer.
 - <http://www.mlksommerscholars.com/>
- Boston Moves for Health – Blue Cross Blue Shield, Yvonne Tang
 - Gets people to use pedometers.
 - Gives employees 2 days paid time to volunteer.
 - <https://boston.fivi.com/>
- Youth workforce development – Brigham & Women’s Hospital, Wanda McClain
 - Hires 135 Boston high school students.
 - Goals: 1. Create a career ladder to employment in health/science field. 2. Put money into the community, especially for the young.
 - Students tutored if their grades drop below B-. College scholarships.
 - http://www.brighamandwomens.org/about_bwh/humanresources/WFD/youth_internship.aspx

Closing General Session – Mark Halperin, Time Magazine

- Fiscal cliff. He thinks Congress will blink first. This is a make or break moment for Obama.
- “Freak show politics”: It’s harder to vote against your own party than your opponents.
- Key traits for municipal leaders:
 - Be willing to take on special interests.
 - Must be willing to lose your job.