

A NEIGHBORHOOD IN TROUBLE: RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF AREA 4

The residents of area 4 -- and particularly Washington Elms / Newtowne Court -- have called on the city to respond to the crisis in their community. The recent murders make it impossible for any of us to ignore the reality of this crisis.

It is the responsibility of the city to respond to the problems in this neighborhood and find lasting solutions. The problems are serious and the solutions will not be easy.

Addressing this challenge will require a comprehensive plan: the plan will have to meet short term and long term needs; it will have to be developed and implemented by the coordinated efforts of every city department that has a role; it should involve community participation, and it should establish an ongoing process to respond the needs of neighborhoods in crisis.

It would seem to make sense for the city to work towards three broad goals:

- 1) Improve security in the area so that people feel safe outside of their homes during the day and night.

Some ways of working on this might include:

- a. Increasing foot patrols to three people a night in the developments and more in the rest of Area 4.
- b. Working with neighborhood more intensively to create a crime watch and train people to work in it. Find a way to improve qualitatively the Police Department's capacity to work with communities in developing crime watch and resident cooperation in public safety.
- c. Making drug-tip line a live person not machine.
- d. Identifying one person who's major responsibility is to set up a crime watch for the area. Consider hiring a consultant if necessary.

- 2) Make available additional resources for young people over and above current human service programs. Our goal should be to make sure that by the summer every child has opportunities available to spend her/his time doing something constructive.

Some ways of working on this might include:

- a. Opening the gym.
- b. Hiring street workers to reach out to most troubled youth. Consider implementing a peer leadership program.
- c. Supporting PBH summer program and Work Force program.
- d. Establishing more comprehensive job opportunities for young people.
- e. Work on after-school programs
- f. Develop a coordinated response, reflecting City Council priorities, to requests for "proposal for funding" of programs, for example the federal OSAP funds.

3) Improve the conditions of the housing (specifically the public housing).

Some ways of working on this might include:

- a. Fixing lighting and make certain it is adequate everywhere.
- b. Putting locks and/or intercoms on outer doors.
- c. Being willing to open up for community discussion the question of the best use for open space.
- d. Looking for funding to increase CHA security.
- e. Providing full information to tenants of renovation schedule.

Finally, we will need ways to measure our success. We should develop an evaluation program. In the short term, we will know that our efforts are effective if people in Washington Elms and Newtowne Court begin to feel that they and their children can walk and play in the neighborhood safely. We will know that our efforts are effective if by the summer every child in the neighborhood has the opportunity to participate in constructive programs or to work at a job. We will know that our plan is working in the short term if physical improvements are made in the Housing Projects -- if lighting is improved, if locks are fixed and intercoms are installed.

We also need long term goals. Part of the process of developing a plan should be to set long term goals. These should be established by the city departments and political leadership working with members of the community. We should develop specific long term goals on reducing the crime rate; increasing employment opportunities; keeping kids in school; driving drug dealers out of the neighborhood; providing day care for young children, and opportunities for young mothers. The long term goals should be spelled out clearly, and the city should establish a procedure for determining whether we are meeting our goals.



City of Cambridge

9.

IN CITY COUNCIL

March 19, 1990

MAYOR WOLF
VICE-MAYOR REEVES
COUNCILLOR MYERS

- WHEREAS: Concerns regarding safety, drugs, and children and youth issues are of special concern in the Area 4/Washington Elms/Newtowne Court area because of fears and hopes expressed by residents and recent violence; and
- WHEREAS: The City Council is committed to responding to these issues now and for the future; therefore, be it
- ORDERED: That the City Council adopt the approach of developing both a short and long-term strategy for meeting the needs of Area 4 as described in the attached recommendations; and be it further
- ORDERED: That the City Manager is hereby requested to develop the plans with the appropriate department heads and agencies for adoption and to include adequate funds in the budget to meet the needs; and be it further
- ORDERED: That the City Manager report back to the City Council within one week's time on the progress of the report.

In City Council March 12, 1990.
Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.
Attest:- Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph E. Connarton".

Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.

3) Improve the conditions of the housing (specifically the public housing).

Some ways of working on this might include:

- a. Fixing lighting and make certain it is adequate everywhere.
- b. Putting locks and/or intercoms on outer doors.
- c. Being willing to open up for community discussion the question of the best use for open space.
- d. Looking for funding to increase CHA security.
- e. Providing full information to tenants of renovation schedule.

Finally, we will need ways to measure our success. We should develop an evaluation program. In the short term, we will know that our efforts are effective if people in Washington Elms and Newtowne Court begin to feel that they and their children can walk and play in the neighborhood safely. We will know that our efforts are effective if by the summer every child in the neighborhood has the opportunity to participate in constructive programs or to work at a job. We will know that our plan is working in the short term if physical improvements are made in the Housing Projects -- if lighting is improved, if locks are fixed and intercoms are installed.

We also need long term goals. Part of the process of developing a plan should be to set long term goals. These should be established by the city departments and political leadership working with members of the community. We should develop specific long term goals on reducing the crime rate; increasing employment opportunities; keeping kids in school; driving drug dealers out of the neighborhood; providing day care for young children, and opportunities for young mothers. The long term goals should be spelled out clearly, and the city should establish a procedure for determining whether we are meeting our goals.

A NEIGHBORHOOD IN TROUBLE: RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF AREA 4

The residents of area 4 -- and particularly Washington Elms / Newtowne Court -- have called on the city to respond to the crisis in their community. The recent murders make it impossible for any of us to ignore the reality of this crisis.

It is the responsibility of the city to respond to the problems in this neighborhood and find lasting solutions. The problems are serious and the solutions will not be easy.

Addressing this challenge will require a comprehensive plan: the plan will have to meet short term and long term needs; it will have to be developed and implemented by the coordinated efforts of every city department that has a role; it should involve community participation, and it should establish an ongoing process to respond the needs of neighborhoods in crisis.

It would seem to make sense for the city to work towards three broad goals:

- 1) Improve security in the area so that people feel safe outside of their homes during the day and night.

Some ways of working on this might include:

- a. Increasing foot patrols to three people a night in the developments and more in the rest of Area 4.
- b. Working with neighborhood more intensively to create a crime watch and train people to work in it. Find a way to improve qualitatively the Police Department's capacity to work with communities in developing crime watch and resident cooperation in public safety.
- c. Making drug-tip line a live person not machine.
- d. Identifying one person who's major responsibility is to set up a crime watch for the area. Consider hiring a consultant if necessary.

- 2) Make available additional resources for young people over and above current human service programs. Our goal should be to make sure that by the summer every child has opportunities available to spend her/his time doing something constructive.

Some ways of working on this might include:

- a. Opening the gym.
- b. Hiring street workers to reach out to most troubled youth. Consider implementing a peer leadership program.
- c. Supporting PBH summer program and Work Force program.
- d. Establishing more comprehensive job opportunities for young people.
- e. Work on after-school programs
- f. Develop a coordinated response, reflecting City Council priorities, to requests for "proposal for funding" of programs, for example the federal OSAP funds.



City of Cambridge

9.

IN CITY COUNCIL

March 19, 1990

Mayor Wolf
Vice Mayor Reeves
Councillor Myers

- WHEREAS: Concerns regarding safety, drugs, and children and youth issues are of special concern in the Area 4/Washington Elms/Newtowne Court area because of fears and hopes expressed by residents and recent violence; and
- WHEREAS: The City Council is committed to responding to these issues now and for the future; therefore, be it
- ORDERED: That the City Council adopt the approach of developing both a short and long-term strategy for meeting the needs of Area 4 as described in the attached recommendations; and be it further
- ORDERED: That the City Manager is hereby requested to develop the plans with the appropriate department heads and agencies for adoption and to include adequate funds in the budget to meet the needs; and be it further
- ORDERED: That the City Manager report back to the City Council within one week's time on the progress of the report.

City Council MAR. 19 1990
Adopted by the affirmative vote
of 9 members

Joseph E. Coniston City Clerk

Order # 9 F- 128

Mayor Wolf, Vice-Mayor Reeves and Councillor
Myers re: issues of safety, drugs, children
and youth in Area 4/Washington Elms/Newtowne
Court.

In City Council,

March 19, 1990