

Neighborhood Group Leaders Association
February 19, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.
Longmont Senior Center

Meeting was called to order by Jerry Kreutzer at 7:00
Meeting agenda for February: motioned & approved
Meeting minutes for January: motioned & approved

Police Updates:

Cmdr. Tim Perkins of the Longmont Police Department gave an update on crime issues in the city and brought 2010 Beat maps for NGLA members.

*Crime down 12% January 2010 compared to January 2009.

*City will be rolling out Crime Free Multi-housing in March. It's been a successful program nationwide. The program creates a partnership with managers and owners of rental housing and the city to help provide information when tenants have been involved in crimes.

*The Parks beat program is up and running.

*Four officers are currently in training and will be out in the field in April.

*A "call history" of the crime activity for any location in the city can be obtained by calling 303- 651-8502.

Emergency Preparedness:

Dan Eamon, Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, City of Longmont was unable to make tonight's meeting to talk about the City's plan for emergencies and how neighborhoods can be prepared.

Surviving a disaster:

Tim Ellis, Survivor of Hurricane Katrina and owner of French Quarter Photography

It had been 40 years since a major hurricane had hit New Orleans (Hurricane Betsy, 1965). People had been prepared in various ways for hurricanes but had become complacent in recent years. There had been hurricane warnings but nothing had really materialized. People had taken to picking and choosing which warnings to take seriously.

In August 2005, the warning was issued and Tim had packed his family and sent them to a hotel in Texas. He had stayed to board up house, etc. By Saturday mid-morning conditions were rapidly declining. He packed what he could in the car and left for Texas.

He had at least 3.5 ft of water in his home for more than 2 weeks. Almost everything that was left in the house was ruined. By the end of August, he had his family had moved in with relatives in Colorado because they had no where else to live.

Tim warned the group to "Keep in the back of your head that something can always happen".

Be aware that phones may not work during or after an emergency. You may not be able to contact family members. Keep in touch as often as you can.

Listen to experience – people that have experienced issues in the past can help you learn how to protect yourself. For example, 40 years ago the people of New Orleans kept axes in their attics incase they got trapped in their homes. Many people drown in their attics during Katrina because they were trapped in own homes.

Longmont Mediation Program:

Baldwin Ransom, volunteer

A mediator is a neutral person that works with multiple sides with the goal of resolving a conflict. The final agreement is binding and enforceable by those who sign it.

The Mediation Programs takes an array of cases and only refuses to mediate cases that involve weapons, drugs/alcohol, domestic violence, divorce/child care issues.

One or both parties call wanting mediation or referred to by the police department.

The mediator helps both sides look for common interests and a solution that is agreeable for all.

The process is confidential and can not be held against them if a future lawsuit, etc arises.

75-80% of mediations resolve the conflict. Getting over the antagonism is always the biggest hurdle.

Contact Susan Spaulding at 303-774-4384 to set up a volunteer mediator to work with both parties and schedule the meeting. Program is free if set up through the city.

Code Enforcement:

Michelle Cogswell, Senior Code Enforcement Inspector has been with the city for 20 years and Code Enforcement for more than 12 years.

Questions from the group-

*Horders - First responders usually get the city involved or the hording has turned into an external problem. The home can be unfit for human occupancy. She is currently tracking 12 condemned homes that must be improved before residents move back into the property. Not all are horders, some are former meth labs.

There is a listing of what corrections have to be made before occupancy is resumed but there is no time line for those corrections

*Status of the Flour Mill – A building official is currently working with the property owner but she wrote up the initial condemnation.

*A particular home on 9th Ave – The property has been condemned and had a destruction order.

*18 wheelers parked in HOAs – Violation depends on where it is parked. If it's a Public right of way and the distance is too close to ally or intersection, then the city may be able to resolve the issue. HOA's may have stricter property restrictions.

*How are codes enforced? – Criminal summons are issued if there is a property violation. Notice of violation is issued and certain number of days to correct. Most are corrected that way. Normal policy is 10 days until the issue is inspected again, after 10 days then a summons can be issued. A judge can issue fines if found guilty.

*How does she tell if it's a Meth residence before she enters? Hopefully due diligence has been performed or sometimes it's just gut instinct. Smell is not a benchmark.

*Snow removal – Tag in left reminding resident of the code to remove the snow or ice within 24 hours after the snow stopped falling. They have until noon the next day to remove.

*Is there a published list of violators? – The work that they do is part of the public record so if there is a legitimate reasons to find out then she can share that information with the individual.

*Property owner of record - In Longmont, 70% of multifamily living is owned by someone living outside of Longmont. More than 20% of Single Family homes are owned by someone outside of the city. The city is considering having rental property owners in the city have a responsible party (Agent of Record) if there is an emergency or violation.

*Longmont does not have a rental inspection program.

*Time frame of notification to property owners – sometimes abatement is a quicker resolution than a summons. Weeds and graffiti are the top abatement issues. Weeds taller than 12 inches are a violation. A violation letter is sent, owner is given 10 days to correct the issue, if the issue is not corrected, then a contractor is sent to cut the weeds. The city sends a bill for the service. If bill is not paid then a tax lien is issued.

*What is the neighbor's role? The possibility of volunteer patrol to help with proactive work can be considered.

*Can a neighbor enter someone's property to mow a yard – Code enforcers are peace officers so they can not violate the property rights. A neighbor should get permission from the property owner before they enter a property. There is legislation being considered about neighbors entering vacant/ foreclosed property to take care of property.

*How many people are allowed to live in a home – There is no limit if they are related. Unrelated people can be regulated. Definition of family is broad.

*Voicemails left to Code Enforcement are usually anonymous but if a name is give she keeps it for her records and it is rarely brought up. The accused does have the constitutional right to face their accuser.

Staff Updates:

Clarification letters sent concerning the NIPS Grants – look at this as an opportunity to make your grant more successful

2010 meeting agenda is partial set but Jon is still working on it.

Agent of record – City needs a local person to contact, doesn't have to be a property manager. Questions were put to Jon and Michelle concerning details. Information will be presented to City Council in a communication format to this Tuesday. Document will be posted on the city's website this Saturday.

Adjournment: Motioned & approved unanimously at 9:05. **Minutes recorded and submitted by Jennifer Hakanson, NGLA Secretary. For questions call Jon Clarke, Neighborhood Resources Coordinator at 303-651-9721