

Narragansett - URI Coalition

“Building a community of mutual respect”

Meeting Minutes Tuesday – December 12, 2006 7:00PM Narragansett Community Center

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

The following subcommittees met prior to the full Coalition meeting:

- Communications (Chair: Jim Hurton)
- Realtors/Neighborhood Association (Co-Chairs: Kim and Kara Churas)
- Programming (Chair: Leslie Williams)
- Common Ground (Chair: Nancy Devaney)

Moderator Ryan Battis opened the meeting at 7:00pm and introduced Dean Frances Cohen. Dean Cohen stated that the University is organizing a workshop for students who will be moving off-campus next fall and asked for input from those in attendance this evening, particularly the residents. The three focus areas are: mutual respect (living responsibly) involving oneself in the community, and safety. A number of ideas were offered:

- Better educating students about local laws/ordinances
- How to live in a residential community
- How to choose a neighborhood
- Consequences for egregious behavior
- Role playing scenarios of living in a family community with loud noise, traffic and disturbances into the wee hours
- Familiarity with the landlord/tenant act
- Locking up houses (especially during holidays)
- Keep track of the people invited into their homes
- Use face book to post messages
- How to work cooperatively with the police department

She thanked everyone for their contributions.

Steering Committee Report

Presentation in Bonnet Shores - update

Steering Committee member Paul Haas informed the membership that the Bonnet Shores Fire District Council had prioritized the list that was brainstormed at the meeting in October:

- Better educating students about local laws and ordinances
- No parking any where
- Assignment of community service to violators of ordinances
- Enforce 25MPH speed limit
- More communication regarding outcomes of enforcement, i.e. fines, university action, etc.
- Make arrest when apparent underage drinking
- Estimate needed dollars and personnel to effectively control situation
- Supportive of ombuds team but looking for concrete format
- Support more complete landlord registration process
- Increase preventative type patrols

Ombuds Team

Paul stated that information was available on a table in the back of the room and volunteers were requested.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

COMMON GROUND – ANNIE FAIRLIE (URI GRAD STUDENT) REPORTING:

- Upon review of the meeting with the Town Council and University last evening, all felt it went well and was a step in the right direction.
- The group will look into how to make the Keg ordinance more effective.

COMMUNICATIONS – DORIE LAWSON REPORTING:

- Subcommittee will help the university obtain students addresses as able; 400 received from realtors to date. Tom Dougan added that students who live off campus will receive an e-mail from the university co-authored with the student senate requesting their off-campus information.
- Looking to find additional ways to publicize ombuds team
- Considering a Coalition newsletter
- Given that the Coalition does not have any money, writing letters to the editors is a good way to get information into the papers for public reading
- The website continues to be updated

PROGRAMMING – LESLIE WILLIAMS REPORTING

- Updated police reports on the table in the back.
- The fall food drive (December 9th) collected and donated 1200 pounds of food to the Johnny Cake Center.
- 4 entries were submitted for the holiday lights competition and 40 Melville Lane was the winner.

REALTORS/NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS – KIM CHURAS REPORTING/CAROL STUART ADDING ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- Protocols for sticker process was reviewed
- Residences are looking for feedback as to what happens after an incident has been reported and there has been police and university intervention- what was the resolution
- Some residents feel that their concerns are minimized and that they are not on equal ground with other stakeholders in the Coalition
- There was a plea for the police to intervene with crisis streets as there are some in different neighborhoods

OPEN FORUM

- Joe Little, Deputy Police Chief, filling in for Chief Smith, introduced Pat Dwyer who has replaced Ron Lepre, Community Zoning Officer. He is a retired lieutenant from the State Police and is looking forward to working with the community.
- Deputy Chief Little also publicly recognized Jim Campbell and his staff from the URI Counseling Department for their much appreciated work with the high school and the community following a tragic suicide of a Narragansett resident who was also a freshman at the university.
- He stated that he would speak directly with Bonnet residents regarding an incident on Maywood.
- He will do his best to accommodate Ms. Stuart's request regarding feedback on police actions.
- Community Officer Storm answered many questions about the orange sticker process.
Notification: the property owner is notified by registered and regular mail and by phone, URI is notified (if the house is rented by students) – written police report, and the realty company (if there is one) by mail and phone and all tenants by mail and in person. Depending on the incidence, there will be a group meeting with all parties. The university at a minimum sends the students a letter and depending on the incident determines the application of the code of conduct. The realtor sends written notification to the tenants, if students, to the parents, and if an athlete, to coaches.
What constitutes getting a sticker: police judgment regarding the house itself, past incidents, the number of people, the loudness of the incident, the demeanor of the tenants, parking, trash and general behavior
Fines: Realtors assess a fine and many students have stated they think twice because they don't want the embarrassment of the sticker or the financial penalty.
- Resident Bob Shields suggested that it might be helpful to students and others to have a written standardized protocol detailing university, police, and realtors' action when there is a violation of local ordinances or disturbance. Fran thanked him for this suggestion will look into this further.

CLOSURE/NEXT MEETING

The meeting adjourned at 8:05pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 23, 2007 at 7:00 pm in the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula Santos

Coalition Coordinator