

Facilitator Pat Body

Attendees: Gerry Scott, John Meyer, J Won Lee, Katie Hansen, Caroline West, Joel Rinne, Jai Subedi, Olivia Sephumc, Katie Scott, Cali Khakoo, Chol Majok, Captain Richard Shoff, Connie Seem, Junghood Ryu, Jun Park, Taeyong Woo, Rachel Notte, Yunkee Kim, Haelee Clot, Daniel Ryu, Kim Morrell

Presentation: *Interfaith Works* Olivia Sephumc & Jai Subedi

The Center for New Americans provides resettlement and post-resettlement services to help refugee families in Syracuse reestablish their lives and overcome the barriers to successful integration in their new communities. Interfaith Works also offers other programs such as Senior Partnerships, a program that keeps seniors from being isolated and the Center for Dialogue which brings diverse people together and encourages dialogue to better understand each other. The current administration is affecting the organization; they are looking at ways to reinvent themselves.

Q. On the News, with everything that has been going on, there was a study on refugees opening new businesses and how they are creating jobs and moving into vacant properties.

A. Yes, you can find the article on Syracuse.com which was commissioned by Centerstate CEO.

Economically it makes sense for refugee resettlement. Usually refugees are on public assistance for 2.4 years, during which time they are learning English, getting certified for employment and learning the culture. This is compared to 2.8 years for the rest of the population.

Q. Where is your office located?

A. 1010 James St.

Q. Neighbors need to be together, New Americans are a part of our community. TNT would like to see Interfaith Works attend the meetings and participate in Task Forces to better help each other. Providing services for New Americans for 90 days is not enough.

A. People attending TNT and Task Forces is a valid point. Interfaith will have to think about ways to get people engaged. The fact that we serve people for 90 days is a myth. Funding allows up to 90 days, Interfaith is still helping people 1 – 3 years. They do not turn anyone away, and encourage people to look for resources through other agencies.

Q. There are many issues on the Northside that refugees have had to endure, some teens have come to a task force meeting and shared their stories. Some say they felt safer in refugee camps than here. We cant help them unless we can reach them. Language is a barrier and there are trust issues. We need help on how to reach them to help them. We are open to ideas. With new administration and federal government immigration ban, what kind of impact will that have on a sanctuary city such as Syracuse? What do you see in the future for you and refugees?

A. It is unclear what will happen in an environment of uncertainty. The flow of arrivals is disrupted. There will likely be a smaller ceiling, 110,000 now 50,000. We could start seeing the resettlement of different populations from different countries. Interfaith has had cut backs, 15 people were laid off. There is still a core team of 18 people. There is a harder time finding apartments for single people. Interfaith is working with the landbank to get a property for a Transition home.

Q. It's a great idea to have New Americans come to TNT, can Facilitators go to Interfaith Works events? It should go both ways.

A. Yes, this is a conversation we should explore more, how to engage people to make people feel they are a part of the conversation.

Q. There is a concern over the transition house: how long is temporary housing?

A. The transition house would be 1, 2 5 nights.

Q. As a homeowner and single mother, there is concern over the constant rotation of new single men.

A. There will be a steady face in part of the building.

Jai Subedi came to US as a refugee 8 years ago. He is the Housing Coordinator for Interfaith Works. When a family is about to come to Syracuse, he looks into securing housing for them. If there are concerns (such as clothes hanging on the fence) from neighbors he will address the call. Jai encourages refugees to purchase Landbank properties (more than 50 new homeowners on the Northside). Jai has recently opened 2 new businesses, a gas station and a homecare agency which employs 10 people.

Website: <http://www.interfaithworkscny.org/>

Presentation: *Building the Bridge USA* Jung

After bringing a young refugee home, Jung was inspired to improve the quality of life for refugees. The goal of Building the Bridge USA is to restore the refugee potentials for the communities, rebuild their cultural past and renew their spirits. There will be a focus on repairing houses and home ownership. The group is looking into turning vacant lots into 'We Play' fields. They are also pursuing the idea of an international library and refugee museum.

Q. 2/3 years back Bloomberg had a grant for international market, but the grant was lost. Investment wise, do you have permits, collaborations with the City, State or County governments?

A. Not yet, we need help to partner with other organizations and to obtain grants.

Q. Do you have specific geographical addresses for your projects on Lodi? Pat Body and John Meyer have done walk studies and could help you.

A. The targeted area is up and down Lodi st.

Anthony, a first time TNT attendee stated that he had come to Syracuse as a refugee and lived here in the early 90's. He then left to live in California for a while and recently returned. He stated that the neighborhood has changed and is not safe on the Northside.

Special Projects

The Northside Special Project Proposals.

- 1) Trash can for corner of Park and Turle \$1,000 Gerry 1st, Jai 2nd all were in favor
- 2) 12 Northside Plaques \$324 Gerry 1st, Jai 2nd all were in favor
- 3) 10 barrel planters \$550 Gerry 1st, Katie 2nd all were in favor
- 4) Trash can on corner of Pond and 1st st. \$1,000 Pat 1st, Katie 2nd all were in favor
- 5) Laminated litter signs \$700 Pat 1st, Katie 2nd all were in favor
- 6) Court Woodlawn Sign \$1,500 Gerry 1st, Katie 2nd all were in favor

Update from City-Wide TNT Board: Strategic Planning Proposal

TNT City-wide Strategic Planning dates March 30th, April 27th, May 31st

Announcements

- 1) March 21st Visioning Voices will be hosting an event on the Northside. The location is yet to be determined. More information soon to come.