



**City of Jacksonville – The Jacksonville Journey  
Neighborhood Safety & Stability  
Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing Work Group**

**Minutes  
Of  
NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY & STABILITY  
SUB-COMMITTEE  
CRIME-FREE MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING  
WORK GROUP**

**March 13, 2008**

**The Jacksonville Journey – Neighborhood Safety & Stability  
Sub-Committee  
Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing Work Group  
March 13, 2008  
4:30 p.m.**

PROCEEDINGS before the Jacksonville Journey - Neighborhood Safety & Stability Sub-Committee Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing Work Group taken on Thursday, March 13, 2008, Edward Ball Building, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor - 214 N. Hogan Street, Jacksonville, Duval County, Florida commencing at approximately 4:30 p.m.

**Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing Workgroup**

**Ronnie Ferguson, Chair**

**Jack Barnette, Member**

**Mark Bowen, Member**

**Charlie Commander, Member**

**G. Troy Cook, Member**

**Joni Foster, Member**

**Suzanne Jenkins, Member**

**Vickey Murphy, Member**

## APPEARANCES

### **COMMITTEE CHAIRS & MEMBERS:**

Ronnie Ferguson, Chair  
Jack Barnette, Member  
Mark Bowen, Member  
Charlie Commander, Member  
G. Troy Cook, Member  
Joni Foster, Member  
Vickey Murphy, Member

### **ABSENT MEMBERS:**

Joni Foster, Member  
Suzanne Jenkins, Member

### **STAFF:**

Jennifer Savage

### **OTHERS PRESENT:**

Tracey Arpen, OGC  
Matthew Stewart, HUD  
Thom Stephenson  
Julie (last name unreadable)  
Matt Galnor  
Joni Cusic  
Shannon Nazworth

### **PROCEEDINGS**

March 13, 2008

Neighborhood Safety & Stability Sub Committee, Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing Work Group 4:30 p.m.

**Call to Order and Comments.** Chairman Ferguson called the meeting to order at approximately 4:30 p.m.

**Purpose of Meeting.** Discuss the Mayor's crime initiative - The Jacksonville Journey - Take a Step - Neighborhood Safety & Stability Sub-Committee, Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing Work Group.

Chairman Ferguson called the meeting to order and explained the next steps for the work group's recommendations. He said the work group today will vote on the recommendations and they will then go to the Neighborhood Safety & Stability committee for its review and vote. He then thanked the members of the work group for their time and service. A motion was made to approve the minutes from the March 6 meeting, which was seconded. Work group member Vickey Murphy asked that a change be made to reflect that work group members G. Troy Cook and Joni Foster voted not in favor of approving point four under policing recommendations (supporting JSO's CFMFH program). Pending confirmation from Joni Foster, the minutes were approved, as amended, unanimously. Chairman Ferguson then asked for public comment. Joni Cusic voiced her concerns about the lack of police support in communities, the composition of the members of the Jacksonville Journey (she feels it should include SHADCO members and neighborhood leaders) and accountability for private homeowners. Next, Thom Stephenson gave an overview of the organization he represents - the Jacksonville Tenants Union - which addresses poor management and advocates for tenant organizations. He said that his group is supportive of JSO's CFMFH program. Next, Shannon Nazworth spoke and said the work group should consider whether or not JSO has funding to support these recommendations in a manner that will make a lasting difference.

Chairman Ferguson then provided an overview of the statement from Donald Freeman of Jacksonville Area Legal Aid (available online at [coj.net](http://coj.net)). He said these suggestions were helpful to the

work group and will be useful in clarifying the recommendations.

Next, the work group voted on its recommendations (see action items section below, as amended in the meeting).

After the voting was complete, Chairman Ferguson opened the discussion to public comment. Joni Cusic spoke and said she was impressed and approved of the work group's efforts. Chairman Ferguson then disbanded the work group and adjourned the meeting at 5:47 p.m.

## **2. Action Items**

The work group unanimously approved all of the following recommendations (shown here with amendments made in the meeting, original recommendations with out amendments may be viewed online at [coj.net](http://coj.net)):

### **Recommendations to the city and HUD**

- Support the JSO in the implementation of its Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing (CFMFH) program and encourage all apartment communities to participate in the effort.
- Develop incentives for property owners to implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) recommendations. Incentives would be available to property owners in high-crime areas who are certified participants in JSO's Crime Free Multi Family Housing program. Depending on the source of revenue, this program may be expanded throughout Jacksonville.
- Ask City Council to consider making resident services programs in properties located in high crime areas a priority for Public Service Grants, Community Development Block Grants or other City funds; Make a five year commitment for funding.
- Consistent with due process and contractual rights, work with the court system and Legal Aid to have judges and attorneys understand the need for strong lease enforcement and the need to support property owners in maintaining crime-free environments. Furthermore, call for an accelerated eviction process through the court system to better serve as a deterrent for criminal behavior, and call for expedited

service of writs of possession following judgment. JSO is currently working with judges to educate them on the Crime Free Multi Family Housing program.

- Encourage HUD to:
  - Require its subsidized properties to participate in the JSO's Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing program
  - Stay in closer touch with its property managers
  - Request that HUD be notified of all criminal acts on their properties
  - Encourage or require properties to take advantage of HUD's Neighborhood Network Coordinator program

**Potential city legislative action:**

- Review the existing property safety code to ensure inclusion of CPTED & HUD housing quality standards within the existing inspection framework
- Enact legislation to impose a civil penalty or user fee on owners of apartment complexes with calls for police services over a threshold amount, similar to Section 168.104, Ordinance Code, concerning false burglary or robbery alarms. The penalty or fee would be waived for owners of complexes certified in and actively participating in the JSO's Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing Program. Owners cited for excessive calls for police services could elect to participate in the Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing Program in lieu of paying the penalty or fee established by this legislation, similar to the option in Section 603.302 for parents to attend parenting classes in lieu of paying a fine for children's curfew violations (see discussion section below).

**Recommendations to property owners:**

- Become certified in the JSO Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing Program

- Implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies
  - Place sign on all properties in visible entry area listing a number to call to voice concerns or complaints
  - Erect a clear and accurate site map at property entry way
  - Enhance lighting
  - Place locks on all doors and windows
  - Ensure clear and legible street signs and apartment numbers
  - Install useful peepholes (ie: wide-angle view, accessible by people with disabilities)
  - Register cars and issue parking decals for all residents. Include in lease agreement that tenants must have long-term guests display visitor pass in vehicle.
  - Improve attractiveness and cleanliness
  
- Property Management
  - Develop and enforce leases that prohibit criminal acts by leaseholders and make leaseholders responsible for their guests. The lease standards must be strict and uniformly enforced.
  - Allow a tenant organization to hear disputed cases of eviction to allow room for extenuating circumstances.
  - Participate in a citywide database showing the names and driver's license numbers of all persons evicted for violent crimes or drugs in order to prevent these residents from moving into another development. The JSO is working with a private party to take ownership of the database. Furthermore, property owners/managers should network regularly w/ adjoining communities to identify evictions.
  - Offer diversity training for property owners/managers

- Resident Services
  - Develop resident organizations in all properties in high-crime areas
  - Owners and managers should meet regularly with the resident organization and JSO to discuss crime, maintenance, services and other issues.
  - Provide financial support so that resident organizations can conduct their business where possible. (For example, the Jacksonville Housing Authority provides \$25 per unit for stamps, phone, supplies, etc.).
  - Encourage resident organizations to participate with other area community organizations such as CPACs and SHADCOS
  - Space should be provided by property owners/managers where possible for resident organizations and their activities.
  - A Neighborhood Watch program should be a basic component of all resident organizations.
  - Provide social service programs or partner with health, education, social services or faith based programs to enable residents to improve skills and transition to higher levels of housing. Where possible, space should be made available for these services to take place.
  - Encourage all CPACs, SHADCOS and the Jacksonville Tenants Association to assist in placing tenants in CFMFH-certified housing

#### **Recommendations to Jacksonville Sheriff's Office**

- Provide more frequent policing in high-crime developments during peak hours of criminal activity
- Ask officers to knock on doors and get to know as many residents as possible, with the knowledge and concurrence of property owners, managers

- Encourage police personnel, preferably the beat officer, to attend resident organization meetings and discuss crime information and crime prevention measure, as often as possible
- Provide statistics to property managers/owners about calls for service and crime on property and within the neighborhood (perhaps through the Crime Free MFH Program website that is being developed.)
- Encourage JSO to provide adequate resources to facilitate all recommendations in this section through additional funding and/or the re-allocation of existing resources.

### **Discussion Items**

The below recommendation will require further research on behalf of the city's Office of the General Counsel and Housing & Neighborhood's Department, along with the JSO to determine a reasonable fee, the fee threshold and the fee structure.

- Enact legislation to impose a civil penalty or user fee on owners of apartment complexes with calls for police services over a threshold amount, similar to Section 168.104, Ordinance Code, concerning false burglary or robbery alarms. The penalty or fee would be waived for owners of complexes certified in and actively participating in the JSO's Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing Program. Owners cited for excessive calls for police services could elect to participate in the Crime-Free Multi-Family Housing Program in lieu of paying the penalty or fee established by this legislation, similar to the option in Section 603.302 for parents to attend parenting classes in lieu of paying a fine for children's curfew violations (see discussion section below).

### **Adjournment.**

**Meeting adjourned at 5:47 p.m.**