

Steeles/L'Amoreaux Local Immigration Partnership

Community Engagement in Settlement –

Meeting Minutes April 26th 2010

Location: ANC Steeles/L'Amoreaux, 331 Glendower Circuit – Unit 6

Time: 9:30am – 11:30am

Attendees: Rezwan Karim (S/L'Am LIP), Lucy Ren (S/L'Am LIP), Malsan Gananendran (ANC S/L'Am), Cyleta Gibson-Sealy (S/L'Am LIP), Mani Mahadeva (S/L'Am LIP), Grainne O'Donnell (TDSB), Glen Gifford (SHHC), Edmond Crosbie (resident), Deluxshan Pathmanathan (S/L'Am LIP), Tony Berth (Centennial College), Michelle Davis (S/L'Am LIP)

1. Group Introduction

Mani introduces agenda for the meeting and participants introduce themselves

Edmond Crosbie, resident of Glendower, will be the second Steering Committee member for Team 2

2. Name Change for Team

Proposed names:

- Enabling the Community to Play a Valuable and Coordinated Role in Settlement
- Coordinated Community Support in Settlement
- **Community Engagement in Settlement** – Final name

3. Revisit the “Focus Areas” and Identify Missing Elements

Focus areas of Team 2

- Consider the various stages of newcomer process
- Clarify what community does (relative to government and settlement agencies)
 - Community capacities – a baseline of what community does - dialogue between communities and their involvement in the newcomer settlement process
 - Be aware of the services that are already available - what services already exist to fill in the gaps - build on what's available
- What kind of outreach has already happened? – outreach strategy may vary from community to community – in response to individual needs
- Collectively review the wishes of newcomers – expected from community groups/ grass-root organizations
- Create awareness about newcomer's services and service providers - Important to know who has what level of awareness – all stakeholders looking at all needs of all parties involved
- Link community groups, service providers and others – Who, why, how, and when? - place focus on service providers or community? – maximize the use of

- skills and time of both parties (Priority) - linking should not be limited to just service providers but expanded to other stakeholders
- Identify different community needs and build community capacity - making connection with different communities – open communication to create better involvement
 - What can be done to help people in their circumstances and make services more inclusive?
 - Areas where community can support newcomers – orientation to the neighbourhood (resources), referral - mentoring, counselling, crisis support – crisis to be defined, what type of support , educating residents on their rights, language – interpretation, networking, orientation to living in Toronto – weather, transport, benefits, tax, education, health, housing, employment, etc.
 - Community ownership and trust building
 - Information referral – level of capacity to build?

Proposed Approaches:

- Community to approach newcomers - community group awareness, keep them informed
- Neighbourhood gathering – cultural events, other places people go to fulfill social needs
- Build a sense of inclusiveness – not exclusion of any groups
- Outreach to the various neighbourhoods within Steeles/ L'Amoreaux to establish strategies, catered to each individual neighbourhood's needs
- Transfer of knowledge from member of services to community member, and then among community members, which will require continuous education – establish leadership skills to battle turnover - train one member on several issues facing newcomers
- Acknowledge the challenges of getting newcomers involved and building resident capacity
- Acknowledge negative experience of some communities with service providers

Expectations:

- Newcomers know at least one place to go – it will be a good start
- Addressing the reality of newcomers and residents involvement
- Correct information is very important – to build credential with newcomers as well as solidify trust in service providers
- Establishing core activities and support

4. Other Stakeholders to be involved

- Police - Cyleta
- Toronto Community Housing
- Faith based
- Toronto Public Library
- Businesses/employers
- Grassroots organizations
- 2 Newcomers within S/L'Am - Grainne

- Legal Council - Glen
- Community Residents – Glen

5. Next Steps

Outcomes or proposed strategy of this cluster have to address one or more overall project outcome. Overall project outcomes are:

- *To improve access to and coordination of immigrant integration services (Education, Language training, Employment, settlement and labour market integration)*
- *To improve labour market outcomes for immigrants. This may include initiatives such as engagement of local employers, mentorship initiatives, coordination of local employment services and non-paid internships*
- *To strengthened local awareness and capacity to successfully integrate immigrants*

Intention or vision of this team would be:

- Community groups* support newcomers for initial settling stage (housing, schools, daycare, Health services)
- Community groups provide right direction to access the appropriate service providers and services (education, employment, labour market information)
- Service providers and community groups work together to support newcomers

To be discussed:

- Developing a number of outputs for the proposed key activities
Ex: community groups are capable of providing orientation to newcomers and appropriate referrals

Then Team 2 has to produce answers to the following:

- How are we going to achieve these goals (how to execute - process/activity)?
- Whom do we have to consult and how?
- Existing resources and required resources
- Expected Output & How do we measure the impact?
- Required funding (staff, equipment, space, and time)

Team members expected to come up with a number of outcomes and answers to the above questions.

6. Next Meeting

June 1st, 2010, 10:00am – 12:00pm, Scarborough Housing Help Centre, 2500 Lawrence Ave. East - Unit 205

*** Community groups include Residents associations, faith-based groups, parent groups, etc.**