

Table notes from facilitators

What is a neighborhood?

a sense of community
Mix of geographic and social connections
Mix of geographic and social connections; Theme of having no official voice within communities and want an outlet/platform to have more say in the neighborhood dynamics/decisions
Fossil Ridge Meadows - lots of contention

Any comments about the keypad questions? (be sure to include the number of the slide)

None
-Only - Housing - No real major artery that divides - socialization doesn't depend on neighborhood - Pushing to get 3 *Housing -Overwhelmed by numbers in neighborhood official numbers - want to condense it down - "I don't want to think about the larger number of homes around me - I want to think about my little block or street"
How is this question going for you? Not easy to answer (no right to answer); as boards go through changes, neighborhoods change; flux in what defines neighborhood
--is it how I define it or what it actually is? --one participant discussed social aspects of a neighborhood as incredibly important --Next door doesn't work, too much social media --Another answer should be: not on nextdoor, but want to be

Comments from the discussion about the neighborhood grant program
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- without the neighborhood grant program neighborhoods wouldn't do half of what they do-- financially, dues are too low- helps build relationships- less participation without grant program-- financial implication Facilitator: is \$500 enough? If more money per grant, the number of grants will go down-- how do we disperse them? <ul style="list-style-type: none">- any help is better than no help- smaller amount to more people is better- if major problems and people need more money there are other/better resources to use Facilitator: examples of events that money could be used for other than just a neighborhood party? <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Halloween carnivals- Community Garden Facilitator: are there any changes? <ul style="list-style-type: none">- redundant- more paperwork than needed- if all info is the same year after year, there may be a way to save it. (minor thing for a large benefit of money)- have heard complaints from other community members in the past who are not sure if the city should be doing this with just giving money out
They really like the concept of the grant program in general and some did not even know it existed.
The biggest complaint they had was there was no ability to go back to retrieve information already entered (like how many people they estimated would show up to an event). They wanted the ability to print or go back to retrieve information they had entered. There was also an expressed desire for wanting more suggestions of how to fill out the grant or what would be considered an acceptable turnout for new events when they had no previous experience to go off of.
A few people use it <ul style="list-style-type: none">- filled it out multiple times- couldn't get neighborhood behind it nor leadership/HOA-- used another grant process to get there- wasn't made clear on process because had one grant this year for party couldn't get neighborhood

clean-up-- not transparent enough in knowing this

- deadline for neighborhood night-- a little tight
 - haven't had to use it/private collected of money rather than grant
 - neighbors don't have resources/know how -- city needs to reach out to this
 - with neighborhoods without leadership-- if someone does something have city know that information.
- Nextdoor good for that- can tell what people do/don't do
- not enough hearing about Nextdoor- but not a 'City' thing-- needs them to push this out as a tool- can't advertise
 - hear about grant process through Nextdoor-- one of two have applied for it
 - Fort Collins housing to pushing Nextdoor- teach people how to apply for grants and to use Nextdoor so that people can stay in their neighborhoods
 - maybe young folks to teach older folks about how to use this teach/security big deal
- (note at the top of page): didn't get into grant much- most people don't know too much about it as they haven't used it or applied for it
- need training

-HOA not good at getting in on time. Then too late for NNO. How could neighborhood and City communicate better?

-Would social media help?

-Put on HOA

-Hardest is doing 1st time, then easier

-Some with Halloween party (in driveway). Chili bar, games - feed ahead of trick or treat

What works well?

-money

-haven't done in our neighborhood (near FCHS) no ringleaders - segregated by townhomes, patio homes, and single family homes

Ideas for areas that are less organized?

-If from HOA, people need direction to empower neighbors

-No HOA (identifies as Hispanic) wants more inclusive, wanted to build big structure in neighborhood - neighbors didn't want

Sierra: "have there been conversations?"

-Need more advertisements / no common area for neighborhood

-Like idea of using street

-Invite influential people to dinner (Historic District)

-What brings people together?

-Look for things that could be donated?

What is valuable about the current grant program?

- When HOA cuts down my neighborhood budget, Grants help me fund social programs in my neighborhood

- Grant process gives us an additional way to interact with the city and our neighbors

- Grants fund very important social functions in neighborhoods like neighborhood night out, ice cream socials, etc.

What should be changed?

- Clearer rules from the city, its isn't clear if you can apply for a grant more than once, or for the same thing more than once, or for consecutive years

- City should do a weighted system, points based on the way questions are answered to pick which grants go to which people

- Participation should be a criteria looked at, but it should be measured in percent, not just raw numbers

- Can't leave out the small neighborhoods

Should other criteria be added?

- More info on how the city determines dollar amount per grant

- More info on what the current system is for grant evaluation

- More transparency on the general process/criteria already in place

- More info on what can be covered with the grants

-Money Provided

-Incentive to do a cleanup for neighborhood

-problem solving

-awareness - didn't even know this was a possibility

-application has no way of giving you a summary of what you filled out on application

-have to apply too early to remember information

-when putting on new event don't know how many people will show up - need a resource page for housing/population count. statistics page on how many other events like this have had successful participation rates - access to helpful advice/statistics page

-more coherency between both beginning and after applications - separate forms so individuals who contribute can fill out forms and be collected for paperwork after

-can we have dumpsters in street? why can't we close street for clean up?

-communication between cities and HOAs?

-special events permit process needs to be refined

-broader application requirements - issue with projects on private property - change wording and make it clearer

-clearer requirements and descriptions

Values about current system (Grant)?

-We like the grants; always apply for the max (\$500) but usually give half

-usually work with undeserved neighborhoods

How can we make the Grant program better?

-Haven't heard too much - where can I look for info?

-Need to remember when grants are due - could use alert system - remind those who have applied in the past

What could be a good tool to implement?

-you really only want one person to apply - email/specific to committee

Do you typically have these committees?

-participation is variable

-hard to sort what is important and not

-informal word of mouth - not everyone trusts social media

-they always ask that you send receipts which is challenging when multiple people will buy stuff

--Response to above comment: need more understanding behind that's why its so critical - it's taxpayers money

highlights:

-how to get it out to people - alert system and deadlines

-streamlining receipt process

-communication must be challenging - takes dedicated people

-finding/delegating team - constant battle of training and supporting people - gratitude

-people are very busy - informal methods of communication take over

-Mixed feelings, I like getting property tax back, but I don't like the city being involved in social activities.

City is too involved, that worries some folks. Why does the city care?

-Why is the city willing to pay for these events?

-Grant makes neighborhood clean-up possible, otherwise it's not affordable

-helped supplement the cost although not covering entirely

-many neighborhoods use grants for cleanup

-Some neighborhoods use grant money for "ice cream and lemonade" - not useful in that persons neighborhood

-In other neighborhoods, use grant money for the socials and it builds community

-"Nothing is going to be ideal for every neighborhood" Neighbors need to know neighbors

- Sometimes social events are good for that.
- Overall, grants help with neighborhood engagement because the social aspect is helpful in keeping neighbors involved and active in the community
- Some folks don't appreciate that their money that goes into the grant program for social meetings they didn't enjoy, but acknowledge it was probably beneficial for younger members of the community
- grants program is great for low-income communities. process is incredibly user friendly
- Some folks wish their neighborhood would apply for grants

Neighborhood level engagement - Question A: What is the state of community in our neighborhoods?

- strong because 50% of neighborhood is Hispanic
- hard to fit in, include both neighborhoods
- less social now- parties aren't attended (story of party the group member put on for her neighborhood and no one came)
- friendly and welcoming- cross communicating with neighborhoods, pets
- community welcome wagon packet and they add cookies and give to new neighbors

Facilitator: why are people less social now?

- because technical world
- do not talk as much face to face
- access to constant news- creates lack of trust

There was a common theme that it was informal and a more formal setting was needed.

- Good- less formal. 1) network of social activities, 2) 2-3 neighbors really care about others- started a culture of taking care of one another
- mid-60s- starting to turn over-- professors/young families
- HOA- good old boys club- authoritative, key switch of caring for shared space to caring for peoples needs
- brand new development: issues between fencing HOA allowances and not getting to know each other. Then
- co-housing deliberately decided to go for. relationship rather than rules- we will do it for someone else- together for so long

Skyview South Neighborhood

- 10% or 5% of neighborhood knows each other well (Skyview south) (geo defined area-soft borders-residences and businesses)
- some behind - blocks/half blocks - starting to do more
- long term (25 yr residents) - still no deeper relationships/friendships. Try to knock on doors with flyers for Halloween party, people offer to help/bring food
- concern about costs going up
- people say they like neighborhood - like quiet and keeping to self
- homogeneous and peaceful
- Halloween - 60 people at party, lots of trick or treaters

Andersonville

- Empty nesters - kid activities and parks won't draw
- New residents
- face to face interaction builds relationship, then start to offer to help
- community events - not always inclusive - low income doctors, etc.
- petitions about traffic, meetings about parks, development

Near FC High

- lots of retirees senior citizens
- HOA does mowing and snow - harder to build community because people stay inside
- he shovels for some neighbors, 1x/year

Dakota Pines

-HOA meeting, tried doing food event, would like more engagement - tries to help people with cars, etc.

- Large neighborhood --> Hard to have a sense of community with 500+ people
- small things make a difference like yearly newsletter, bulletin board on neighborhood clubhouse, common meeting places
- Small neighborhood --> Easier to connect
- fewer problems communicating
- easier to bring people together/coordinate schedules
- can be more difficult to resolve disputes when everyone knows each other well
- can be hard to resolve conflict without getting personal

-private community that maintains all common properties

-large demographic change - age demographics need to be addressed - considering rental cap to focus on supporting demographic

-community is informal

Neighborhood does annual garage sale but that's about it

-ones that don't want to be involved aren't

4th of July bike parade and BBQ

-very friendly

local is still neighbor to neighbor communication

-they will request info

-community garage sales/ infrequent newsletters

-very inconsistent

-shared responsibility/lots of challenges

-confusion (internal and external) in using open spaces

challenges with annexation

-contention about projects and differing interests

-not well informed about annexation

-2 way conversation needed

-Not a lot of events in neighborhood, more focused to specific streets and parents with children

-HOA is unique- 22 units who are very friendly. 2 new folks moved in and neighbors are planning welcoming events. Have trouble getting people to serve on the board

-3 social events a year (22 units in neighborhood) Open to all, but participation is not expected.

Everyone is friendly and know each other well, but folks keep their distance. Wish there was more participation. Many excuses for not being involved, still involve folks who don't join.

-Next door software helped a new resident get excited about community engagement. Neighborhood is more involved than other neighborhood lived in prior.

-4/10 in terms of "community"

-Some coffee parties, but disappointed in level of involvement, would like to have more folks involved in the events

Neighborhood level engagement - Question B: Why is engagement important and what does it look like? How would you ideally engage with your neighbors?

- increase awareness- help people if necessary, socialization, build relationships

- be active, communicate

- new people- create good ideas

- must have a balance of engagement- not a one year (or more) commitment, something less timely. But if energy is surrounding it already will jump in to help

- Door to door or call people- phone trees, each board member gets a list and the lists rotate (only having to call one person per week), but yet people still don't want to do it

The common theme was that engagement usually occurred revolving around a negative event or atmosphere and they wanted more ways to come together in a positive setting.

- communication: w/ management company, community board-volunteers/Nextdoor turned into griping people
- changing mindset from community/coming to the table with problem but also bring solutions—re-shift to positive, Nextdoor affirmation-- change tone, that's what leaders do, start acting/coaching with Nextdoor/positive framing to help people rather than piss and moan
- accepting people that won't be like you- it's ok, doesn't have to be love relationship
- enlisted kids/kids are more malleable so getting there-- train young
- wont be involved in negative so knowing

-Try to find activities more want to participate in?

-Engagement centered around HS? Hoy much, but neighbors given keys to use HS track, etc

Skyview:

- parties: way to start relationships to develop more later
- Halloween - start w/ party, expand from there
- Sierra: how could you get everyone together?
- older crows - more "hokey" - bunko, bingo, player elsewhere

Dakota:

- may be have broader event with these themes
- without a strong person wanting to plan engagement hard to get something started - a couple neighbors can be a catalyst

Engagement is important for:

- communication
- conflict management and resolution
- feeling like you are part of a community
- feeling safe --> especially important to the group, watch each other's houses when gone, keep an eye out for their kids or pets

Ideally Engage with Neighbors:

- Thru outside events, reach out to new people
- inside events, dinners, potlucks, game nights

-right now engagement isn't high - initiation is key

-adversity brings neighbors together - fighting off development - that is not ideal - ideally want a culture that comes together over positive engagement

-more social opportunities

-right now development issues bring together engagement, but there is not a good way to address these. this produces constant negativity

Management Committees

- send out mass emails
- vary on involvement

How do you get word out on engagement?

-really important to recognize if/when we have more extreme events - neighborhoods become increasingly critical as first responders

How is this important?

- meetings: talking about safety plans - provide support
- build relationships first - block parties good at this

Coollest thing you've done as a neighborhood?

- 4th of July parade
- Garage sales

-earth day clean up and neighborhood garage sales

-getting to know neighbors is important, especially in elderly communities so folks are more willing to ask for help.

-Community engagement can be; trash clean up, events, soup parties, block parties etc.

-for some social media is an important aspect. nextdoor aids in engagement

-engagement also requires more folks moving into the neighborhood as well.

-bringing neighborhood group leaders together to address involvement issues

Neighborhood level engagement - Question C: Think about the biggest issue your neighborhood has faced in the last 10 years. How would you have dealt with that differently if your neighborhood was already connected?

- traffic- in and out of neighborhood

Honestly this was a hard question for them to really get at. They kept coming back to wanting more help/ monitoring from the city so they would not have to be the "bad guy" when reporting violations from their neighbors. Really there was an overarching expression for more city involvement.

-People adhering to bylaws -- not knowing and then ignoring it-- how do we handle this better? - no idea

- one trash vendor for entire community- so much pushback-- took away personal freedom

- how do we deal with extremists/too big of a neighborhood-- capacity that can't grow past certain number

- outliers are louder-- will stand out if concerned, getting a representative as a mediator- someone with gain

-barn on HOA park - historic landmark now

-more engagement with research, not just action

-has to be a way to avoid uncomfortable confrontation

-hard to address neighborhood outliers

Too much engagement across neighborhood

-people use it who are a part of the neighborhood

-no sense of boundary - belong to city/use everything in it

-but not paying HOA dues for that neighborhood

Burned grass issues, because of the water restrictions-- HOA had an irrigation but what not using it because of lack of communication-- this could have been remedied if the neighborhood was more connected. Loss of information was the biggest issue.

-Signed neighbors up for google apps

-Communication is vital

-getting up to 75% residents for HOA meetings in order to pass ordinances, getting people involved is nearly impossible when you have to physically be there

-Snow removal is the biggest issue.

-only meet with HOA once per year

-More communication would help, social media.

Neighborhood level engagement - Question D: How important are these issues to you? How important should it be to the City?

Didn't make it to this question

They all commented that these issues were very important to them. However, there was a range of answers of how much the city should care about these issues from moderately to answers that the city should care just as much as they do.

Few higher 3-4-- most here

how important are these issues to you?

-very important to all

how important should it be to the City?

-3-5

-mix; some think city should be neutrally involved to very highly concernsd/involved with these issues

City does things that affect us - very important

Very important when they're engaged/getting along

-makes safer city/easier for city

-benefits the city

Any notes about potential neighborhood leadership training options?

"Hot topics -> Next Door"

What does future planning look like?

-financial planning

-neighborhood improvement (landscaping, etc.)

-Infrastructure

- making sure we introduce new people neighborhood- give HOA website- welcome baset

- trying to get city park established- land set aside

- ways to build community

- starting neighborhood watch/what do dues fund?

- family inst. leadership—youth

Notes from the question we added about how they currently do future planning in their neighborhoods

- North Site Neighborhood Planning Committee- discussion over playground and transportation

What did that mean? "engaging in future planning?" (50% said their neighborhood does this)

-HOA started thinking about open space on undeveloped area

-Off street bike trail near Trilby (Skyview to Mason Bike Trail)

(College has a bike lane, but is intimidating to many)

-beautifying

Registry Ridge: money (enough in reserve)

-budgets

-Neutral environments: pool, clubhouse, park

We'll type up the notes from the polarity management worksheets, but any thoughts you want to share here about the discussion (about the topic)

My group really disliked how the sheet was presented. They disagreed with the "formal" vs "informal" language, and seemed to have the impression that "formal" meant government regulation and they were not pleased with this. It was hard to get them to talk about it because they were so upset. Very surprising to me.

-Neighborhoods/Neighbors WANT to plan

-informal

This sparked a lot of discussion at our table... too much actually. We didn't have time to finish the big sheet.

Facilitator thoughts about the polarity management process here. Did the formal v informal work?

People were very confused at my table about this. I think having clearer verbiage on their sheets itself would be good. While you were explaining the process I think people understood it in those terms, but when the term were changed to "formal" and "informal" it confused people. Maybe adding in "structure" into the sheet would have really helped.

Not enough time for this process. It had really good potential but was too rushed.

It took them all a minute to understand it, but after I re-explained it and showed them the powerpoint slide with the examples on it again, they seemed to understand it better. The conversation time really helped as well, because once they started to hear other's ideas, they started snowballing off each other and had some really good conversation about the positives and negatives of each side. They seemed to relate better to the example shown in the PowerPoint than the one we were actually discussing (formal vs. informal)...I can't remember which one was in the PowerPoint but it was similar.

No! Not for my group. Trace and I tried to explain to them what polarity management is all about and how we've learned about it in the CPD, but maybe our explanation wasn't clear enough because it didn't really work.

Formal may not have been the best word to use. But the discussion was still rich.

Any of your own thoughts about neighborhood engagement? (on the issue)

The issue of safety seemed way more important to the group than I had expected. The group stressed that getting to know neighbors was most important so people could look out for your house when gone or on vacation, or your kids or pets when you are away at work or out for the evening.

I've noticed in the neighborhood I babysit in that a lot of engagement happens at the bus stop in the mornings and afternoons. The people in this neighborhood seem to know each other through their children and the activities their kids are involved in. Also, a lot of neighborhood engagements seems to occur in the parks/greens spaces and pool in this particular neighborhood.

Any additional notes that don't fit anywhere else?

- one of the attendees at my table saw Nextdoor scrolling on Facebook, clicked on it, joined and saw her neighborhood had one. That is how she found out about this event! (pretty cool, I thought)

Any of your own thoughts about the process we did to explore neighborhood engagement? (on the process)

Honestly I felt like the discussion portions were too rushed. People really wanted to engage and talk about this issue, but when we were really getting into good discussion we would already be moving on to the next presentation.

communication seems to be the major issue

Honestly, there was not enough time to cover all of the content we had in the packet. I know that's an issue with processes often times, but this one in particular seemed more rushed than it should have been. We had some really good points brought up and I just wish we had been able to get through all the sections with enough time to at least jot down a few things.

The event overall seemed a bit information heavy at the beginning. I think we lost a lot of people by the discussion section. I wonder if it would have been better to have the block party and Next-door presentation towards the end of the forum. The man who presented the Next-door information was at my table and after his presentation everyone wanted to talk to him and ask him questions about his presentation. I had to remind everyone that we didn't have much time and had to stay on track. Overall, for the first forum I think this went very well. The information gathered at my table was all very interesting. I just wish there could have been more time for certain discussions (especially during the polarity section).

What did you think of your facilitation of the event? Any interesting exchanges to share?

This facilitation did not go as smoothly as I planned, though I think everyone really enjoyed it. I was the facilitator and had a City employee as my note taker. She tended to step up and ask question to the individuals, give her stories, answer questions and it was really hard to facilitate and get to the heart of the questions Amanda wanted. It was still on topic for the most part and fine to talk about,

though I feel it wasn't as productive as it should have been. I tried to bring it back to the questions on the sheet, but she kept jumping in. I think I would have been better off doing it myself because the questions and topics to discuss were so specific that taking notes and facilitating would not have been too hard.

For some reason this was my hardest facilitation to keep participants on topic. They seemed to view this as a gripe session instead of a potential to better their neighborhoods.

I was very pleased with my group. They were all very friendly and eager to talk. Although they had some different views, they all listened and were interested in each other's experiences. Something I found interesting was that I had a potential HOA member and a past HOA member at my table, as well as a lady who was very against her personal HOA in her neighborhood. It led to some interesting comments- and I'll be honest, I think that the potential HOA member realized how much he would be in for if he joined the HOA. The only discussion that my group wasn't 100% engaged in was the neighborhood grant program. They didn't have much of an opinion on it besides how subjective evaluating the grants seemed to be. Besides the grant discussion, it felt like we didn't have enough time to discuss everything! They were very open and made me feel so at ease facilitating. Lauren also was wonderful to have as my note taker and did a great job with some additional comments and questions. She helped me feel at ease because I knew if I needed help she was right there!

The older couple at my table was extremely tricky to work with, because they seemed like they weren't there to listen or converse, but simply to complain. I was very grateful that everyone at my table was caucasian and at least middle class, because they made several racist comments as well as derogatory comments about lower-class individuals; it would have been a much more tense situation if there had been any racial or economic diversity at my table. As it is, their comments still created a tense atmosphere a few times. Luckily, the younger couples at my table were all very easy going and seemed to just overlook the comments made, and carried on with the conversation. The biggest frustration in this couple's neighborhood was the fact of a cultural divide, because there was a large hispanic population with whom they had a hard time connecting. They would go off on long tangents about it, and whenever people did respond directly to their frustrations, they would just shrug it off and say they'd deal with it on their own, but then they would still bring the conversation back to their own issues all the time. They were extremely unwilling to accommodate to the other cultures represented in their neighborhood, and seemed to want more engagement but only under the condition that the others in the neighborhood accommodate to them. When someone at the table suggested throwing a Cinco de Mayo block party to engage the hispanic culture in the community, they said that the hispanic population needed to cater to their culture, and that they didn't want to encourage them to flaunt their hispanic culture. This was an interesting situation that I hadn't dealt with before. I tried to help them realize that maybe beneath that cultural barrier, they might have more in common with their neighbors than they thought, but they were extremely stubborn. The man even made a comment about how he "knew people with guns", in reference to ways he could deal with the problem, that I chose to overlook. Apart from this particular couple however, I think that the meeting went very well, and all of the younger couples at my table seemed very encouraged by the conversation that happened.

Well it was my first time facilitating. I thought it was a good first event to facilitate myself because of the way it was setup with the worksheets and activities. One issue my table had was the participants got angry with the polarization worksheet because they felt like we set them up so that they would be governed more. They did not appreciate that activity. I tried to get them to think about it from an objective point of view but they refused. Even after trying to reword the prompt they still did not want to participate.

I really enjoyed this event. This is probably one of my favorite events so far. I wish we had more time for discussion though. I felt like there wasn't a lot of time to hear everyone's perspectives. I was surprised and happy at the turnout. I think events where a lot of people show up are the best because I get to hear about what community members are passionate about.

The table I was at was made up of a pretty diverse group of people (in terms of their neighborhoods). Everyone shared how they are connected to the process which helped the discussion by creating a dialogue between those with experience and those with little experience in the engagement of neighborhood.

I am really excited to see where Amanda goes from here. I would like to be involved in the next steps.

Any additional thoughts you want to share with me?
I know there was a lot to discuss and try and tackle during this forum. It just seemed like three hours was a little long. I could really tell that people were starting to burn out after even the first hour. Maybe we could split it up next time? Not sure how to do that...but maybe just to lessen the load on people.
I really liked the process, but next time I think the presentations could be cut down on time in order to allow a fuller and more in depth discussion to take place.
I thoroughly enjoyed the event. The only additional thought I have is that there really wasn't a lot of discussion until the end and I wish we broke it up a little more between the slideshow and the discussion.