

**3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Planning Committee of  
Los Angeles Citywide Congress of Neighborhoods  
As accounted for by committee member Lewis Wong**

My Ref: NC Melvin Canas, Plan Com [3] g. Priority topics [82]

The meeting was held on Friday, August 26, 2008 in Maryknoll Catholic Center at Little Tokyo to discuss the contents of sessions of the Congress, namely, the breakout sessions.

The contents to be discussed are to be divided into three groups of issues or subject matters, as in below TRACKS Numbers ONE TO THREE. Department staff M. Canas acts as facilitator or moderator. Department Staff T. Soong takes the notes. General Manager Kim sits with stakeholders. Committee members sat in a L shaped tables arrangement facing the stakeholders. Meeting began at 6:30 pm. The gist or general idea of the dialog of the participants are as follows.

**Re: Track One**  
Neighborhood Councils Alliances

Stakeholder--Are Department of Water and Power concerns crop, Planning Department's concerns group, transportation's concern group typical neighborhood councils alliances?

Several Committee Members –Yes.

Member M--Siegal: The committee should inquire with those alliances about what they want to present as issues in Track One.

Stakeholder-- As each alliance group to introduce issues. There are eight slots for the 8 discussion sessions for issues raised by the alliances.

General Manager Kim-- suggest that the leaders of the alliances may want to project what they see in their alliances 5 year from now. For example, would they foresee possibility of the establishment of a Citywide Congress Regional Network?

Department Staff M. Canas: The sessions on Track One will be open-end discussion where do we see alliances in 5 years from now.

Member M. Siegal—The sessions are to be a presentation by a specific topic, to be followed by discussion in the form of question and answer.

Department staff M. Canas—Group all alliances in one session. 15-15 presentations followed by moderators conducting discussions. The participants will engage in continued talk, in depth, on the alliance topics by going to the 10<sup>th</sup> floor meeting room of the City Hall.

Member T. Gomes—The topics of alliances should address to three levels of knowledgeable audience, that are, beginning level, medium level and advance level, from introducing the “Scope” of the issues to decide what “Public actions” are appropriate.

Member M. Negrete: That “Action to be taken” is the same in context as “What will the be seeing in 5 years from now?”

Member R. Simon: In the South Area, our alliances have trouble in getting an alliance, to agree on what issues as common issues or concern.

Department staff M.Canas: (Instead of grouping all alliances into one session) Let’s make it two sessions for the alliances. One will be introductory level’s session and the other will be advance level session.

### **Re: Track Two Best Practice**

Stakeholder: Best practice, to me, means “How to get the best result through the system”, for example, (What is the best way) to prevent strip club from operating.

Stakeholder: This best practice works through a system that includes also non-governmental agencies such as neighborhoods partnership programs besides government agencies.

Stakeholder: Best practice, to me, is about marketing of the neighborhood council system, making the neighborhood council system a one-stop center.

Member T. Gomes: Best practice can be concerning how to work with council members. That subject matter about best practice is related to another track’s (Track three) about “Open Space.”

Stakeholder: Best practice is how to have continuous or sustained effort (Public actions are often not geared to continuous effort) to resolved social problems. Street gang problem is one of those problems.

Member L. Wong: We can talk about problems in relaxed atmosphere because we can air our views to one another here. Stakeholders have no opportunity to air their pant up feelings. They are therefore tense (Easy to blow up). Our number one concern (Best policy) in public relationship is not to “Baby talk” to the stakeholders. Stakeholders can be resentful of us and not come back to the next Congress, if we offend their pride (More, see fn).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Try not to go simple on them. Rather be at fault for being complex and not immediately understandable (And that can be overcome by passing out flyers for take home reading) than to “Baby talk” to them. The reason for our being so mindful of their dignity is that many of the stakeholders are highly educated. Even if not highly educated, they are heads of households. Many have transplanted themselves to strange cultural societies to make it. Those are challenges they have undergone and many of us have not.

Successive Comments: By three (3) more members, besides Wong, give comments to show how one should be mindful of the dignity of stakeholders in order to be successful in community affairs.

Gen. Manager Kim: "...I can agree to that."

Member M. Negrete: Best practice is to develop ad hoc committee for establishing policy and procedure on how to prepare and file "Community Impact Statement" (CIS).

**Re: Track Three**  
Open Space

General Manager Kim: The term Open Space is an advance technology or social process from a book titled "Open space technology". Open space is a space as flexible and large enough for a large group to work together.

Stakeholder: I barely have an outline for the alliance. I am lost without an outline of the issues.

Member A. Abrams: Any issue important to the stakeholder can have 2 or 3 minutes to present the issue. It is not necessary to have an answer for the issues.

Stakeholder: "Open space" seems to be "Open slot".

Department staff M. Canas: "Plan check LA" "Clean Money", etc. are examples of Open Space meeting's discussion topics.

Stakeholders' and Committee Members' further input:

Other issues are such as:

"Interpersonal relationship" "Dispute resolution" "Rare resources" "Our parliamentary procedure" "How the city works" "Best Practice Of Inclusive Or PARTICIPATORY CONDUCT" "Media relationship". Above are related to neighborhood council best practices.

There are Open Forum issues such as "Talk to your council member", "Best practice component for a talk or session", "DIALOG WITH The Neighborhood Councils", "START A PILOT PROGRAM<sup>2</sup> To Improve Quality Of Life" "DWP restructuring" "Conservation, Green Power" "City budget" "Introducing the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment"

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Therefore, you offend their dignity if you "Baby talk" to them. Respect for the stakeholders is best practice in outreach. Past Congresses had not been aware of this--- (Simple rule is) Speak to the stakeholders as if you are speaking to your boss.

<sup>2</sup> (The block letters are added here for special attention or emphasis because they appear to be the whole scope of the NC's possible achievement, namely, participatory, responsive and humanitarian, the very objects an idealist, social reformers or statesperson will work and fight for.)

Stakeholder: Pass out information to all NC's to tell them about the Citywide Congress.

Department staff M. Canas: That is where the SUB-COMMITTEES (Or, Workshops) are formed. Now that we have some ideas about the topics of the breakout sessions, we can create WORKSHOPS and the department will create the FLYERS. The subcommittee will perform OUTREACH with printed material as mode of outreach focus. Department will pay for the printing of flyers. Also get free community activities calendar listing with news media.

General Manager Kim: All "WORKSHOP TRACKS" (That is, Track 3 "Open Space") to be in one sub-committee (One workshop) instead of one workshop for each discussion topic.

Member R. Simon: "Can I be in the Outreach workshop for "Clean Money" issue (To be presenter on the subject)?"

Other committee members: Some chose "Open Space" (Track No. 3) Workshop to be presenter in one of its sessions about "Open space". Others chose "Open Space" Workshop to be presenter on the subject of "Outreach" in one of the sessions of Open Space.<sup>3</sup>

Two committee members and one stakeholder volunteered to work on the "Display Booths" of the Citywide Congress. The Booths will be set up for the city's departments and will be located on the bridge walkway in the City Hall's buildings.

### **Concurrent Program**

#### **Re Budget Day**

Stakeholder: Is the city budget a done deal?

Committee Member: Yes, already approved and set.

Department Staff M. Canas: Audience can remain in the Budget Session or go to the Break-out sessions.<sup>4</sup>

### **Budget/Fundraising**

Department staff and members: The cost of printing, food, etc will be raised from the funds of the NC's individually as contribution to the cost of the Citywide Congress.

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<sup>3</sup> There are 8 sessions (talks) for each Track. Open Space is Track No. 3. The other two Tracks are NC alliance and NC Best practices.

<sup>4</sup> During 9:30-10:30 the Budget Day program is held at the same time as the 1<sup>st</sup> breakout Session (which will talk about citywide issue, DWP, City Planning, Transportation)

During 11:00-12:30 the continued Budget Day program is held at the same time with the 2<sup>nd</sup> breakout Session (Which will talk about the subjects of three separate Tracks, namely, NC alliance, NC best practices, and Open Space) The three tracks are held concurrently, similar to a 3-movies cinema. One can choose to see one of the three movies. Here one can chose to participate one of the three tracks, although there is no restriction to staying only in one track.

12:30-1:20 pm is Lunch

During 1:30 -3:00 p.m. is the 3<sup>rd</sup> breakout session (Budget Day program had finished at 12:30 p.m.)

Department staff M. Canas: Next meeting will be on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, a week from now, to (1) DEFINE SOME OF THE TOPICS IN THE SESSIONS (2) Decide whom do we contact in the NC alliance and who will do that.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Most participants, including department staff and the GM remain to chat.