Resilient Springfield Advisory Council
Minutes
**2/**17/2021

Present:

Audrey Jenkins, Awilda Sanchez, Karon Tyler, Mark Dorsey, Nicole Coakley, Robert Hassett, Tina Quagliato-Sullivan, Lan Nguyen, Megan Freedman, Andrew Smith, Zulma, Tanisha, Catherine Ratte, Dounia Nouf, Emily Thibault, Samantha Hamilton, Sarita Hudson,

The meeting started with introductions and an icebreaker.

**Update from Bloom Works**Megan gave an update on Bloom Works communications efforts to date. The goals are to improve and document understanding of what the city is doing to communicate with residents including where residents are getting your information from the city as well as to come up with action steps to help city bridge the gaps in order to build more trust, reach residents more effectively, and improve emergency preparedness and help residents vulnerable to storms.

Bloom works has sent Interview requests to city staff, Neighborhood councils, and residents and will be reaching out to everyone in this meeting. They are also reviewing communication examples and how city is using the platforms

They have done a few interviews so far and have heard

* City staff say they use faith communities, press releases, to reach out to residents
* Range of resources/outreach through neighborhood councils
* And how landlords critical to reaching residents.

## **Discussion of homework assignment #1**

### Sources that residents trust or rely on for local information

Residents mentioned a wide variety of sources that different people turn to — telephone, TV, neighbors, faith communities, social media, apps, the city, newspapers, cell phone alerts, robocalls

### Information gaps and obstacles

* **Access to information**
	+ Some people (like older adults) don’t have cell phones
	+ People who rely on TV for information — like homebound folks — get more isolated when the power goes out
	+ There are residents who aren’t aware of neighborhood councils and others who don’t or can’t attend meetings
	+ Some people have trouble with written information, either because it’s not translated into their primary language or because the information isn’t presented clearly or directly enough
* **Where to go** — Some people mentioned that they don’t know where to go if they need to leave their homes
* **How to get around** — Many older adults live alone and don’t drive, and there are others who don’t have transportation either; can prevent them from getting to a shelter/safety even if they know where to go
* **Lack of confidence or trust**
	+ Residents mentioned negative impressions of how the city treated them and cleaned up (or didn’t clean up) after previous disasters
	+ A lot of miscommunication and slowness like clean-up after a storm — for example, depending on where you live, it can take a long time to get plowed out
	+ When you call the city, you MIGHT get thru to someone to take your information and it could be a week or longer before they respond
	+ Folks are also frustrated with the limitations and functionality of 311
	+ Some residents have learned not to rely on the city or other government because of previous experiences getting turned away for not being qualified for services

### Suggestions for the city

* Would like a **central number** to call during an emergency and find out what to do
* Have a **siren** to alert people that there’s an emergency — would need to make sure people know what the siren means and test it once a week or so at a consistent time to make sure people remember and know what it means

### Other feedback

* Some residents were glad to know that the city is interested in helping them

**Review of Next Steps**

* Follow up to get paper copies of the information gathered
* Schedule interview with Megan and Lan
* Collect examples of information from the city
	+ What do you see as good/effective?
	+ Megan/Lan will share a form to fill out
* Continue to talk to others if you wish

**Plus /Delta**

* Thumbs up from several participants
* Some comments:
	+ Important that the city take steps and not have a meeting just to meet
	+ This feels like a start and this is a process—real conversations, voices might be heard
	+ Concern that those who need to hear, are not here

**Next meeting:**

 ***PLEASE NOTE: the next meeting has been postponed and the new date is March 17, 2021. Another meeting will be scheduled.***