

MWPHA Health Disparities Committee
Meeting Minutes, October 11, 2007

Present at 1407 S St location (17): Rebecca Barasky, Elizabeth Anderson-Hoagland, Noraine Buttar (GWU, Save Lives! Free the Condoms), Larry Bryant, Tia Younger, Mary Arnold, Jared Shenk, Ron Harris, Naomi Long, Ed Gadsen, Janice Dandy, Aisha Moore, Jeremy Ogusky, Linda Green, Kazumi Inden, Habeba McCormack, Karyn Pomerantz.

Present at Elizabeth Taylor building (5): George Kerr, Geno Dunnington, Jimmy Hall, Brandon Sturdivant, and Suja Shunmugavelu. *We missed you!! :(*

The meeting opened with introductions and welcomes. The main purpose of this meeting was to plan responsibilities for the march and speakout (SO), discuss the format of the day, and plan desired outcomes and followup.

PLEASE NOTE: Our next meeting is 6:30pm on THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25. Bring poster board and markers to make signs. Place to be announced.

Overall goals of the March and SO:

- ◆ Organize a movement for social change that will improve community health and reduce the HIV epidemic by demanding improvements in jobs, housing, drug treatment, and youth programs
- ◆ Recruit people from the community most affected to lead and organize the movement
- ◆ Unite working class residents, health activists, professionals, and students to overcome divisions based on race and social status

We are building on the issues identified by residents through outreach and past SpeakOuts; we are not coming in with the answers or the programs. We want to push the political and financial powers to serve regular people, and not themselves and the developers.

RESPONSIBILITIES: (look for your name or volunteer to help)

1. Outreach: join us each Saturday at 11:30 at the Washington Highlands Library to canvas the neighborhoods and churches (Ron and Claudelia). RSVP to Karyn.
2. Outreach: we need people to leaflet the Anacostia and Southern Ave. metro stations on Friday evenings (October 26 and November 2).
3. Outreach at meetings:
 - ◆ Suja and Lorraine Braxton with Ron's help will staff a table at the DC Fights Back Resource Fair on October 16th. TELL EVERYONE ABOUT THE SO.
 - ◆ Karyn will distribute fliers at the MAPHTC training on October 16.

- ◆ Jeremy will distribute fliers at the Fair Budget Coalition ... Youth Advocacy Day on October 20.
 - ◆ Jared will cover the HIPS and Americorps members.
4. Radio outreach: Norraine will contact WPGC.
5. March logistics:
- ◆ Karyn will invite Marion Barry to the SO and follow up on police permits
 - ◆ Larry Bryant (with GENO?) will greet marchers and welcome people to speak about their reasons for participating, etc.
 - ◆ Claudelia will help develop chants – everyone can help.
 - ◆ Erica and others will help marshal.
 - ◆ Jared and APHA friends, Suja, Erica, Claudelia will leaflet along the march route.
 - ◆ Karyn will drive in the march; ED will try to secure a 7 or 15 passenger van – others will solicit churches to bring their vans.
 - ◆ Claudelia, Mandy, Jennifer will make signs; SAVE LIVES! will bring their banner.
 - ◆ Larry will bring C2EA signs
 - ◆ Tia and Mary will bring sign making materials to the march for people to make their own.
 - ◆ Ron and Mary will arrive at 9:30 am at the march site with trash bags to clean up. Others?
 - ◆ Norraine and Linda will provide bullhorns; Karyn will ask Maria for hers.
 - ◆ Karyn will ask Dr. Johnson to ask Ballou's band to participate.
 - ◆ If anyone knows a go-go band or drummers, please invite them.
6. SpeakOUT purpose and logistics:

We discussed whether to invite politicians to speak. Most agreed that they would deflect attention from the community groups and use us for their purposes. However, they and their staff members are welcome to attend and listen. The new director of HAA should be invited (by those at the Resource Fair?) Our primary focus is community members; we want to hear their ideas and recruit them to lead the fight.

As Larry said, “we want to write lyrics that everyone can sing – bring all the voices together.” As Naomi explained, we want to be *intentional about recruiting people as leaders*. This means securing people's commitment, following them up with visits and/or phone calls. We will invite people to join our next outreach that will include more planning.

We need a convener to welcome the group to the SO – Naomi if she is available, Geno? Others?

Greeters: Tarsha, George – bring a sign in sheet

Condom art: Save Lives! coalition will set up condom art in the Library

Breakout leaders:

Jobs: Karyn, Ed, Geno
Housing: Habeba, Larry
Drugs: Jared and ____
Youth: Jeremy with D2K

George and Alex will bring the SpeakOUT demands from May (including all the demands in these 4 areas).

The convener will set the stage and introduce the May 17th SpeakOUT demands on housing, jobs, drugs, and youth. He/she will explain that this event is to involve more residents in organizing and leading the fight for health.

Groups will meet to discuss the demands, prioritize them, and primarily plan how to fight for them.

At Report Back, we will identify our major priorities and discuss how they are all linked together. We will choose leaders from each group to organize follow up meetings.

7. Save Lives! Free the Condoms

The coalition continues with new student leaders from the GWU MPH program: Elizabeth, Norraine, and Rebecca. It will focus on pressuring CVS to create national policy that mandates open access to condoms in their stores. The group will develop a postcard or sign on letter that residents can sign and send to CVS. They will continue creating condom art, perhaps under the name, Rock Your Rubber. The team will provide condom pin supplies at the SO. Other ideas to promote open access to condoms at CVS?