

MWPHA Health Disparities Committee
Meeting Minutes, July 17, 2008
Thurgood Marshall Academy

1. **Present:** Nina Brown, Jana Baldwin, Reneto Wilkins, Jimmy Hall, Courtney Alpert, Lesley Feng, Linda Green, Ron Harris, Big Scott, George Kerr, Aisha Moore, Dianne Quinn, Noraine Buttar, Cornelius Gaskins, Pete Tucker, Tracy Tilghman, Ana Maria Puente, Karyn Pomerantz.

2. **Overview of the Health Disparities Committee**

Mission: *To increase awareness of inequalities in health status and participate in joint actions to reduce disparities in health status in the metro Washington DC area*

Goals: *Increase awareness of the effects of social and economic factors (jobs, housing, etc.) on health. Engage in struggles to change these factors, especially related to HIV.*

Activities: Street outreach, community health advocates, community meetings, advocacy and partnerships.

Reports and Discussion of Ongoing Activities

3. *Follow up on our June 21st rally for "housing - not stadiums"*

The rally for "housing-not stadiums" drew 50 people who leafleted and marched around the community surrounding Malcolm X and MLK Avenues SE. All agreed that this was a useful event for raising awareness about housing as HIV prevention. We had a lively discussion about the various ways to secure more community involvement (working with youth, churches, ANC groups, City Council, doctors, street theatre, soccer players) and about the community's position on the proposed publicly-funded soccer stadium. We agreed that there are different views on community development that largely reflect people's class and socioeconomic interests. However, most agreed that the development would not include the amount of affordable housing needed. We need to "raise awareness about the lack of community benefits and teach about greed." SEE BELOW FOR statement on economic benefits of a soccer stadium.

ACTION ITEM

Committee on Community Mobilizing (Targeted Outreach)

Aisha Moore, Noraine Buttar, Courtney Albert, Big Scott, George to contact Metro Teen AIDS. Next steps: committee to call a meeting.

4. *Youth Event Committee*

The Committee was not represented. It is planning an event in September to attract young people to learn about and advocate for HIV prevention. Big Scott will contact its members to discuss coordinating the event with the Stand Against AIDS block party.

5. *Community Health Advocates Report*

Ron reported that 6 people have been chosen as community health advocates to teach community members reliable information about HIV and to help us organize. Advocates from Max Robinson will help distribute information in the Big Chair area. All will join us for outreach and meetings, and organize health information workshops with friends and neighbors. Training is scheduled for July 19th.

6. *HIV Video Challenge*

All are welcome to enter the HIV video challenge, a contest to produce a 2 minute video tying the social determinants of health, such as housing and jobs, to HIV prevention and care. See <http://www.youtube.com/user/MWPHADCFB>

Upcoming Activities and Plans

7. *Outreach on July 19th and August 16th*

We will conduct community outreach on July 19th and August 16th. Meet at the Washington Highlands Library at 11:30am to circulate in the neighborhood from noon til 2pm. We establish tables at Atlantic and South Capitol and at Malcolm X and MLK, walk around the neighborhood and the Eastover Shopping Center. We focus on the same areas in order to develop a presence in the neighborhood.

ACTION ITEM:

Nina Brown will organize outreach in August. There will be reminders posted on the listserv.

8. *Community Dialogue*

DC Fights Back has organized a Community Dialogue with City Council candidates on Saturday, August 23, 1-4pm, at 1725 I St NW, DC CARES. Come out and ask the candidates what they are DOING to stop HIV and raise our demands for housing, jobs, drug treatment and youth programs.

9. *Stand Against AIDS (September 20-21)*

The Campaign Against AIDS is organizing caravans throughout the US to descend on the first presidential debate in Oxford, Mississippi on September 24th and demand that the next president develop a national strategy to fight AIDS, including science based prevention, care, harm reduction, global funding, etc. The Northeast caravan will arrive in DC on September 20 and leave the next day. The following events are planned. *MWPHA will organize an outreach event on Saturday, Sept. 20th. The Youth Committee is asked to help with the block party.*

Outreach Event on September 20 – Action ITEM:

Volunteers are needed to plan the activity. Suggested ideas ranged from extending our regular outreach with a march to a car caravan throughout all of DC wards, wearing HIV Positive t-shirts, a youth “lock-in,” and more. **THIS NEEDS YOU TO HAPPEN.** RSVP to kpomeran@gwu.edu

Block Party – multicultural event tentatively planned for Mt Pleasant. Volunteers needed.

Sunday Service and Caravan Send-Off – September 21

Meet at the Westminster Presbyterian Church at 400 I St SW

NEXT EVENTS:

July 19th - Community Outreach

August 16th - Community Outreach

August 21st - Committee Meeting, location to be announced, 6:30 to 8:30pm

Sept. 20 - Stand Against AIDS Outreach Event

Sept. 21 - Stand Against AIDS Caravan Send Off

From DC Fiscal Policy Institute, www.dcfpi.org:

Economists’ Statement on the Likely Impact of a Professional Soccer Stadium in the District of Columbia, Tuesday, June 10th, 2008

Economic research on the impact of professional sports stadiums suggests that the proposal to provide between \$150 million and \$225 million in public funds to build a new professional soccer stadium in the District of Columbia likely will not generate notable economic or fiscal benefits for the city. Most studies find that new sports stadiums do not increase employment or incomes. Some even find that stadiums have a modest negative effect on local economies. The reason appears to be that sports stadiums do not increase overall entertainment spending but merely shift it from other entertainment venues to the stadium.

Research also suggests that a soccer stadium alone will not revitalize a neighborhood in DC. Because sports stadiums are not used most of the year, they do not stimulate much development outside the stadium.

A new soccer stadium cannot be expected to generate a net increase in economic activity in the Washington metropolitan area, but it may shift some entertainment spending from the Maryland and Virginia suburbs into the District. Nevertheless, the economic benefits to the District are not likely to outweigh the large proposed stadium subsidy.

In short, it is dubious to justify the use of public funds to subsidize construction of a new professional soccer stadium in Washington DC on economic development grounds.