



**New Albany Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Action (IDEA) Implementation Panel
March 9, 2023 Minutes**

The IDEA Implementation Panel met for the Panel’s regularly scheduled session at the New Albany Village Hall, 99 W. Main Street, New Albany, Ohio and was called to order by Panel Chair Dr. Johnson at 7:03 p.m.

Those answering roll call:

Panel Chair Brianna Johnson	Present
Panel Vice-Chair Connor Berry	Present
Panel Secretary Precious Singo	Absent
Panel Member Kirubel Aklilu	Absent
Panel Member Marie Alvarado	Present
Panel Member Eric Duerksen	Present
Panel Member Nwando Olayiwola	Absent
Council Member Marlene Brisk	Present
Council Member Andrea Wiltrout	Present

Working group members present: Sandra Solano, Pat Huddle, Dehnie Fong, and Christina McBride.

Staff members present: Adrienne Joly, Director of Administrative Services; Abbey Brooks, Community Program Administrator; and Chelsea Nichols, Planner.

Dr. Johnson asked if there were any corrections to the minutes from the February 9, 2023 IDEA Panel meeting.

None were noted.

Panel Member Duerksen moved to approve the meeting minutes from the February 9, 2023 IDEA Implementation Panel meeting. Seconded by Panel Member Alvarado and the IDEA Implementation Panel voted with 4 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 0 abstentions to approve the meeting minutes.

Dr. Johnson asked if there were any additions or corrections to the agenda.

Director of Administrative Services Joly stated the only change is to remove the Festival Update from the agenda. The city staff are not ready to give a full update at this time.

Dr. Johnson asked if there were any visitors requesting to speak on items not on tonight’s agenda.

No visitors were present requesting to speak on items not on the agenda.

Business

Director of Administrative Services Joly stated the city staff would like to play a new Boards & Commissions training video; however, the video was not working so they will try again at the end of the meeting.

Dr. Johnson moved to adjourn into working groups at 7:08 p.m. Seconded by Panel Member Berry and the IDEA Implementation Panel voted with 4 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 0 abstentions to adjourn into the working group.

Welcome Receptions

Director of Administrative Services Joly gave an overview on where things stand with the welcome receptions and explained the intent is to have three welcome receptions this year. One of the three receptions will be a happy hour event and another will be a community open house of Taylor Farm.

Festival

Community Program Administrator Brooks stated although the city staff does not have much to share on this item in terms of an update, the city staff can provide a brief overview of what was discussed at the last meeting. A recap of last month's discussion was provided. The planned dates are September 22nd & 23rd. The event would be Friday evening and Saturday afternoon. The theme is story telling and the hope is that part of it can be story telling through dance.

Neighborhood Ambassador Program

Director of Administrative Services Joly stated the city staff would like to review the concept of the Neighborhood Ambassador Program. The Block Ambassador Handbook was distributed and an overview was given, including the case studies highlighted in the document.

Director of Administrative Services Joly gave an overview of how the Ambassador program falls within the IDEA Panel framework. The top three projects identified are the welcome receptions, the festival, and this ambassador program.

Director of Administrative Services Joly asked the panel members and working group members to provide their thoughts on what this program could do for the community.

Working Group Member Dr. Solano stated Nottingham Trace already has its own ambassador type of program and explained how they operate as their own community within the larger community of New Albany. Their neighborhood has things like a personal welcome for new residents, a mailing list/directory, receptions, a singles group, a couples group, and so forth. Everyone in the neighborhood can plug in and get connected in some fashion. There are major benefits to how they operate. Their neighborhood is made up of a diverse group of people and does a great job of proving a forum for solutions to any issues that may be going on within their community.

Councilmember Brisk asked how new residents of the neighborhood get on the welcome list and asked if there is a Facebook page for their neighborhood. Dr. Solano answered in the affirmative.

Panel Member Duerksen asked about the case studies in the Block Ambassador Handbook, asked about the city that won the award, and how that is setup.

Director of Administrative Services Joly explained that the cities in the case study section of the handbook all have a strong web presence. Their webpages are robust and include a formal process.

Director of Administrative Services Joly showed a couple of the example webpages to the group.

Councilmember Wiltrout stated it will be critical to have a lead person to see the project through.

Working Group Member Dr. Solano agreed and stated it would be beneficial to have a mentoring program. This would help because it will be a big job.

Community Program Administrator Brooks stated there will likely need to be more than one ambassador per neighborhood depending on the size.

Community Program Administrator Brooks explained how some neighborhoods already have social groups; for example, the Windsor subdivision.

Councilmember Brisk stated the framework and structure of the case studies give specific ideas and this is very positive.

Director of Administrative Services Joly gave an overview of the Cuyahoga Falls case study and showed their website and pointed out that the website defines “ambassador”.

Director of Administrative Services Joly explained how the ambassadors will receive ongoing support from the city, explained the impact of building the program out, and reviewed a sample list of projects called out on the websites of the case study cities.

Director of Administrative Services Joly pointed out the fact that the city does have a lot of activities already going within each neighborhood, which could be documented and used as part of the framework for the program.

Councilmember Wilttrout explained how some neighborhoods are small and it is easy to know everyone. Councilmember Brisk agreed and stated it is not as easy for larger neighborhoods to be as connects. That is why having an ambassador would be helpful.

Working Group Member Dr. Solano suggested the city could work with realtors to get information into their clients closing documents when they purchase a home.

Director of Administrative Services Joly discussed the birthday card activity shown on one of the case study city’s websites.

Working Group Member McBride stated that is a great example of how the neighborhoods can pull in people that like to do certain things. Everyone has different talents and interests and it would be good to take advantage of that.

Panel Member Alvarado agreed and explained how nursing homes sometimes have folks that write letters and cards to their residents.

Panel Member Duerksen stated having best practices on the neighborhood front is good but asked how will they will connect new residents to the city and not just their neighborhood.

Councilmember Wilttrout answered by stating it will be important to identify specific people to help give it structure and that will be the city’s job.

Councilmember Brisk stated an important aspect of keeping people engaged is holding gatherings of the ambassadors and give them updates on the city.

Panel Member Alvarado asked if the city has a map showing the different neighborhoods. Director of Administrative Services Joly answered by stating the city could make a generalized map.

Community Program Administrator Brooks stated some areas of New Albany are not necessarily defined neighborhoods. Director of Administrative Services Joly agreed and gave Harlem Road as an example. Councilmember Brisk concured and stated not everyone lives in a subdivision.

Director of Administrative Services Joly explained how some subdivision will need to be subdivided; the Links for example, and it could be difficult.

Councilmember Wiltrot asked if they could work with the HOAs to help subdivide the neighborhoods as needed.

Councilmember Brisk explained how the focus should be on making people feel welcome and included. Councilmember Wiltrot agreed.

Working Group Member McBride explained how page 12 of the Block Ambassador Handbook was important because it explains how to keep the momentum. Community Program Administrator Brooks agreed and stated they will need to continuously invite ambassadors back every few months to help keep them on track and interested.

Working Group Member Huddle asked for clarification on the scope of the project. Panel Member Duerksen also asked if the idea is to welcome people to New Albany or welcome them to their neighborhood.

Councilmember Brisk stated she thinks it is a combination of both. Nottingham Trace has commonality as it is a new subdivision and all the residents that live there are new to the neighborhood. In addition, the community is designed for residents 55 and over. Not all subdivisions have that advantage. It will be important to have a city person keep people engaged.

Councilmember Brisk suggested that the neighborhoods take advantage of already planned New Albany events and make them into a neighborhood activity. For example, there is one subdivision that stakes out spots together for the 4th of July.

Panel Member Duerksen pointed out that some neighborhoods might not want to participate. Some neighborhood might not have a single person volunteer to be an ambassador. Councilmember Brisk agreed. Councilmember Wiltrot also agreed and stated it will be a heavy lift getting ambassadors.

Director of Administrative Services Joly explained that the city is to layout the framework for the program.

Working Group Member Huddle suggested using Nottingham Trace as a model that is working.

Director of Administrative Services Joly explained how the city will provide training for the ambassadors, will provide an ambassador directory, and host gatherings for the ambassadors.

Panel Chair Dr. Johnson suggested they provide something to the ambassadors, perhaps for their yard or on the outside of their house, to signify to their neighbors that they are an ambassador. Working Group Member Dr. Solano agreed and suggested that they provide incentives for those that volunteer to be an ambassador.

Panel Member Duerksen asked if the city has mailers that get sent to new residents. Director of Administrative Services Joly no. Community Program Administrator Brooks stated that could be something the city works on with the realtor group.

Working Group Member Huddle stated that it reminds her of the Welcome Wagon model from the 1950s and 1960s; explained how that worked and stated the program is still around but folks have to buy into it.

The working group discussed ideas such as:

- Partnering the ambassador's group with the welcome receptions;
- Having a checklist for new residents of things they should know or be sure to do as a new member of the community; and
- Potentially provide a packet left at the doorstep of new residents as step one and then step two could be an in-person meeting (for example meeting for coffee).

Director of Administrative Services Joly outlined tasks for the city: 1) city to provide post card; 2) provide tools; and 3) provide the framework and structure of the program.

Community Program Administrator Brooks explained how some neighborhoods do not need help with social aspects but will need help getting residents connect to the city.

Councilmember Wiltrout stated the first step should be figuring out the neighborhood and then picking the ambassadors. Working Group Member Dr. Solano agreed and added that they also need to establish a mentorship and best practices that can be shared between ambassadors.

Director of Administrative Services Joly stated getting the website right is important. Panel Member Alvarado agreed and stated it shows the program exists and gives proof. Panel Member Duerksen concurred and stated the website can also be a resource for those that do not want to necessarily want to be an ambassador.

Councilmember Wiltrout stated the overall ambassador website is important as well as individual websites for each neighborhood.

Director of Administrative Services Joly went over the next steps. The city staff will develop a map and put together a draft structure of what the initial outreach would look like and outline ideas on roles. They will bring all of that back to the working group to discuss. They will want to have everything up and running before the program is promoted.

The working group discussed social ideas such as:

- Neighbor 4th of July floats;
- A field day; and
- Pickleball tournaments.

Panel Member Duerksen asked if the welcome receptions could eventually be quarterly as opposed to just three times a year. Director of Administrative Services Joly answered in the affirmative.

Community Program Administrator Brooks stated the Farmer's Market is another good opportunity for promotion. The city staff has received information on open dates and they will provide those dates to the panel at the next meeting. Councilmember Brisk agreed that it would be a good event to hold recruitment for ambassadors.

Community Program Administrator Brooks stated recruitment could be in the form of identifying fun things to entice people to volunteer. The semi-annual meetings should be fun events.

Councilmember Brisk expressed interest in having information on the website for each ambassador. Community Program Administrator Brooks agreed and stated they will also have pictures.

Panel Chair Dr. Johnson suggested having the neighborhood map and a city map at the table when the Farmer's Market booth takes place. Working Group Member McBride agreed and explained the important of not only the neighborhood map but also the city map as a lot of residents do not know

where things are located, do not know where to go for information, and there are individuals who think they live in the city but might not.

Panel Chair Dr. Johnson moved to reconvene the IDEA Implementation Panel meeting at 8:29 p.m. Seconded by Panel Member Berry and the IDEA Implementation Panel voted with 4 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 0 abstentions to reconvene and report back.

Reconvene & Report Back

Director of Administrative Services Joly stated they did not need to formally report back since everyone was involving in the working group discussion.

Director of Administrative Services Joly played the Boards & Commissions training video.

At the conclusion of the video, Panel Member Alvarado stated it would be great to have a similar training video for the ambassador volunteers and that it could be tied to a flyer that has a QR Code.

Other Business

Dr. Johnson asked if there was any other business from staff or panel members.

Poll Members for Comment

None.

Dr. Johnson adjourned the meeting at 8:56 pm. All panel members were in favor.