

FORT SMITH POLICE DEPARTMENT

PRESS RELEASE

Date: September 10, 2009

From: Public Affairs Office, Sergeant Levi Risley **Telephone:** 479-709-5141

Re: Follow-Up Neighborhood Problem Solving meeting for the Belle Grove Historic District

On Monday, September 14th at 6:00 pm, there will be a follow-up Neighborhood Problem Solving meeting for the Belle Grove Historic District Neighborhood and Homeless Service Providers. The meeting will be held at the River Park Events Center – West, 121 Clayton Expressway.

A meeting was held at the Convention Center on August 3, 2009, to discuss the homeless issue and its impact on residents of the Belle Grove Historic District. Problems identified prior to our August 3, 2009 meeting were:

- Congregating / loitering
- Littering
- Profanity / obnoxiousness
- Trespassing
- Petty theft
- Homeless urinating in people's yards and property
- Cannot enjoy our property due to being overrun by homeless
- Property values have eroded due to homeless situation
- Proposed dormitory would increase number of homeless in neighborhood
- BGHD residents did identify homeless clients from CRM as being part of the problem

The August 3rd meeting centered on the above listed problems residents are experiencing with the homeless presence in the neighborhood and the proximity of several service providers in the immediate area. Since the problems experienced in the Belle Grove Neighborhood were widely known, prioritization of the problems was not necessary. Instead, a list of 29 possible solutions to the problem was developed.

The top five solutions identified by meeting participants include:

1. Providing more housing for homeless persons
2. Installation of public toilets in neighborhood
3. Creation of a Task Force to study, recommend and implement solutions to long-term problems
4. More police presence in neighborhood
5. Creation of a campus for provision of homeless services

Representatives from various departments will be available to report on progress toward implementation of these solutions.

When: Monday, September 14th, 2009 at 6:00pm

Where: River Park Events Center (West), 121 Clayton Expressway

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