



Morristown United for Healthy Living

April 23, 5:30pm - 7:30pm, St. Margaret's Church

Agenda

Minutes in blue

5:30 **Welcome & Introductions**

5:40 **Updates Since Last Meeting**

- Spring Clean Up recap
 - This year's Clean Up was a big success! We had 9 crews out in the neighborhood and approximately 80 people attended the lunch
- Morris Blue respite slots (applications open now at www.morrisblue.org; use "MUHL" in comments section for applicants from our neighborhood)
- Training/Education Group
 - Michelle reached out the Morristown Housing Authority; waiting on the hiring of the new Executive Director for a meeting
 - Jessica reached out to the Town Planner re: the housing plan for the Town. Much of the new development will focus on rentals
- Built Environment Group (NJHNC grant, Little Libraries)
 - The building of the libraries will be completed this week, and we are getting close to finalizing the locations. We still need to come up with a plan for decorating them. Ideas include pairing artists from Morris Arts/the Arts Council and youth from the Art Honor Society at the Morristown High and youth from the Alternatives to Violence Program at Wind of the Spirit

5:50 **Upcoming Events/Activities**

- Morristown United Mini Grants are open for Spring 2018! **DEADLINE MAY 15**
- Community Voice Survey – Last Push! **Send out the link to everyone you know!**
<https://goo.gl/2DqhJ6>
- Morristown United Calendar for 2018 - send any events to morristownunited@njhealthmatters.org
- Diversity Day – July 8th
- Other events?
 - Annual Homebuyer Expo – Housing Partnership; April 28, 10:00am – 2:00pm
<https://www.housingpartnershipnj.org/events/2017-homebuyers-expo-2/>
 - NJ Hardest Hit Portal just opened and is accepting applications for the HomeSaver program, which helps homeowners who are behind on their mortgage
 - Strolling Thunder; May 21st – NJ Statehouse, Trenton; advocacy day to call for an increase in vouchers for programs that serve infants and toddlers



- Free Zumba classes – Neighborhood House; Tuesdays from 6-7 starting April 24th for 12 weeks; first 25 families registered get free fruits and vegetables and nutritional info (call 973-538-1229 to register)

6:10 **Joint Learning and Action Opportunity: Community Organizing**

- Frank McMillan, Lead Organizer, *New Jersey Together*
- Frank shared his background in community organizing (in places like Northern Ireland, Virginia, and Jersey City) and shared how he was invited to explore the potential for organizing in Morristown by the Clergy Council. He then led us in an activity to share what we see as the biggest opportunities/issues are for organizing in our community and to identify people/stories that exemplify these issues.
- We learned about the difference between “problems” and “issues.” Problems are broad and hard to “sink your teeth into;” never fully able to be addressed; and the only reaction one can have is protest or be apathetic. Issues are specific, immediate, broad-based, winnable (or losable), and personalizable (there is someone who is responsible for saying “yes” or “no” to your solution). For example, bad landlords are a problem; addressing the 140 properties and 1,5000 violations for Trendy Management Company is an issue. To figure out your issue, you need to talk to people who are directly affected, find out who is responsible, and come up with an “ask” or demand.
- The group agreed to brainstorm potential issues for our community and work on plans in upcoming meetings, recognizing that not all members are able or willing to be involved in advocacy activities.

6:30 **Break-Outs by Group**

- Those interested in working on “trainings” will meet together
- Built Environment/Sense of Community group will meet together
- Open to new sub-groups!

7:20 **Report-Backs by Group**

- **Built environment/Sense of community group:**

- Little libraries – need to come up with a plan for maintenance
- Wellness Boulevard/Community Family Day – current idea is to see if we can work with the Town to close MKL between Spring St. and Flagler St. or Bishop Nazery Way. Activity ideas include movie screening (Grow it Green has an outdoor projector; we would need to rent a blowup screen), water games (Greenwood Farmers Market has a water day; Shaun will look into how they do it), planting and composting activity (Grow it Green), mini soccer or other sports. Organizations could host or sponsor other activities.

- **Education/Training group:**

- Working on talking points for the conversation with the Housing Authority once the new director is in place.
- Developing a plan for outreach to the neighborhood; working with the post office to send out mailings before events.



- Idea to host a walking meeting in May or June – could be a walking focus group with residents with dinner and ice cream after.

- Plan to hold an additional Tenant Rights Workshops in June or July

7:30 Close

Next meeting: **May 28th, 2018**

Meeting Goals:

- Catch up on the ongoing activities of the coalition
- Share your vision for policy/advocacy work; learn about a potential community organizing opportunity in Morristown/Morris County
- Make progress toward our action plan

Our Impact Statement: We will improve the condition of existing homes, increase access to affordable housing stock (rented and owned), and improve the built environment/community infrastructure via resident education and outreach, policy change/advocacy, improvements to the physical environment, and oversight of existing protections for all people living in 435 with a particular focus on equity.

Morristown United for Healthy Living: Impact Model

