

## ***PUBLIC SAFETY***

Violent crime in Asylum Hill has decreased significantly since 1990, as is true with the City of Hartford. However, during September and October of 1997, the Hill has begun to experience a resurgence in violent crime evidenced in five murders, increased drug and prostitution activity. Two of the recent murders appeared to be drug turf related. Additionally, quality of life crimes are also on the rise; panhandling, illegal parking, loitering, noise pollution and traffic violations. It is a community consensus that lack of police presence and poor resident selection policies of local landlords are significant factors.

### **POLICE PRESENCE**

While Hartford Police have a community sub-station located in Asylum Hill, this is not sufficient as police visible presence is needed throughout the community. This presence must include: patrol officers to park and walk, bicycle police and increased foot patrol. Some residents are reluctant to report crime in progress, fearing their personal safety due to poor response time and a lack of sufficient officers stationed specifically in Asylum Hill.

### **LANDLORD RESPONSIBILITIES & SUPPORT**

Many local landlords rent to anyone who, seemingly, has the ability to pay. Once problem tenants are under an annual lease some landlords feel trapped, not knowing how to deal with the problem, while others do not care as long as they are collecting the rent. Many landlords only initiate eviction proceedings for non-payment of rent, as grounds for material non-compliance are difficult to prove. This is a critical issue as material non-compliance eviction is the statute used for lease violations due to illegal activities, excessive noise or nuisance, property damage, etc. Also landlords need a referral network to prevent undesirable residents renting from property to property, within Asylum Hill. Asylum Hill Organizing Project (AHOP) is organizing a landlord association to address these and other landlord issues. This association will give local landlords a forum to share experiences, give support, use peer pressure when needed, and receive landlord training specific to managing inner-city properties.

### **COMMUNITY & POLICE COLLABORATION**

It is necessary to foster a collaboration between the police, community residents, local corporations, small businesses and churches by utilizing existing neighborhood associations and AHOP block watches and landlord associations.

#### **GOAL I. ENSURE RESIDENT SAFETY BY REDUCING CRIME.**

**Strategy A:** Work with AHOP to establish Block Watch on all residential streets.

**Start Up Target Dates**

- Actions:**
1. Conduct community anti-crime rallies. 10/97
  2. Organize block activities on every block. 10/97  
(marches, picnics, parties, meetings).
  3. Receive daily arrest reports from police and circulate to block watches. 12/97
  4. Give residents public safety training. 02/98
  5. Teach residents who and where to call for help. 02/98

**Strategy B:** Work with AHOP to increase police presence and visibility in Asylum Hill.

- Actions:**
1. Have community meetings with police. 10/97
  2. Have police participate in block watch training. 11/97
  3. Retrieve police staffing schedules. 11/97
  4. Lobby Police Chief, City Manager, Mayor and City Council to increase police staffing and visibility. 11/97
  5. Lobby to have police park and walk. 11/97
  6. Lobby for bicycle and foot patrol. 11/97

**Strategy C:** Promote the direct contact of Corporate security officers with police, each other and AHOP.

- Actions:**
1. Organize meetings with police, corporate officials residents and business owners. 12/97
  2. Create formal system of communication between corporate security and Hartford police department. 12/97

**Strategy D:** Improve lighting both on public streets and private property.

- Actions:**
1. Identify streets that need increased lighting. 11/97
  2. Work with AHOP on "Light Up the Neighborhood" 11/97

**Strategy E:** Work with AHOP to establish a landlord association.

- Actions:**
1. Organize landlords to form an association. 01/98
  2. Hold monthly landlord association meetings.
  3. Conduct landlord training sessions.
  4. Give property management information and training referral.
  5. Encourage landlords to set Asylum Hill resident selection standards.

6. Encourage landlords to establish a resident referral and screening network.
7. Assist landlords in effective eviction processes.
8. Encourage landlord peer support and pressure.
9. Encourage and train landlords in developing resident associations.
10. Hold landlord/block watch collaboration meetings.
11. Establish "Doorman Enterprise".

Note: The doorman enterprise is a security measure, and a tool for building a sense of neighborly spirit within each property and creating an economic development opportunity.

**GOAL II: IMPROVE TRAFFIC SAFETY AND CIRCULATION.**

**Strategy A:** Form an AHRA committee to analyze street safety and present traffic patterns particularly on Asylum Avenue.

- Actions:**
1. Make recommendations to the City based on the effects of previous street changes (late 1970's) and traffic calming efforts.
  2. Evaluate the need for more STOP signs and traffic signals.

**Strategy D:** Aggressive ticketing of illegally parked cars.

- Actions:**
1. Ask corporations to warn employees who park on street all day.
  2. Target worst streets.

**Strategy E:** Lobby for police to target streets with speeding problems.

- Action :**
1. Identify worst streets and give data to police.

**Strategy F:** Remove unnecessary light and telephone poles (Sargeant, Ashley, Huntington).

- Actions:**
1. Identify exact locations.
  2. Contact appropriate company.

**GOAL III: IMPROVE COMMUNITY RELATIONS WITH POLICE.**

**Strategy A:** Ensure that police assigned to Asylum Hill continue to attend block watch and community meetings.

- Action:**
1. Confirm this support with a formal written request to the Dep. Police Chief.

11/97

**Strategy B:** Report any significant police behavior to superiors 527-6300 Ext.604.

Examples: Good response time, thorough work, courteous behavior, responses beyond the call of duty, rude or inappropriate behavior, improper, brutal or inadequate behavior, poor response time, officer in trouble, crimes in progress, tips on potential illegal activities, identification of suspects.

**Strategy C:** Lobby for increased sensitivity training for all police.

**Strategy D:** Monitor and improve police response time.

**Strategy E:** Work with police to strengthen enforcement of quality of life issues (noise, loitering panhandling, public drinking, etc.).

**GOAL 1V: SUPPORT COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP EFFORTS AND STRENGTHEN THEM.**

**Strategy A:** Support establishment of Community Court.

**Strategy B:** Target illegal businesses, especially sale of alcohol to minors and after hours alcohol sales.

**Action:** 1. Identify suspected violators to police.