

Project Narrative – anc1D 2008 Small Grants

anc1D
mount pleasant, dc

Title: In 15 words or less, give a title that describes the project's main beneficial result.

Oaklawn Terrace Forms a Self Help Work Group to Improve Life for Residents and Neighbors

Narrative: 500 words or less, all on this page. Label paragraphs - A: Group. B: Project. C: Benefits. D: Leverage.

A: Group.

Unincorporated Oaklawn Terrace Building Association
3620 16th Street NW, Washington DC 20010

B: Project.

Form an Oaklawn Terrace Self Help Work Group to Improve Life for Residents and Neighbors.

Many of us at Oaklawn Terrace wish to become more informed of our rights as tenants, and to avoid situations as in other buildings where the building is turned into condos, or there are management games used to empty the building of its current residents. We also wish to cooperate with management and collaborate on win-win improvements. While we do not want an adversarial relationship, as an incorporated group, we would invite guests from City Agencies, ANC, DC Council, and local experts to help forge needed solutions.

Many serious problems however are internal, such as residents working together to improve security. There is much work to do to create a sense of community and trust where we can begin to solve problems together, taking into account many considerations and diverse needs. There will be an inventory of the needs of residents, including their status with government programs so residents can work together to assure that the legally required services are being effectively delivered.

As part of self-help, we would also form committees on other vital interests, such as recreation. Many of our residents are young men who lost access to soccer when the community field at 16th and Lamont was closed. We may need to form a soccer league to help lobby for the return of lost recreational facilities.

C: Benefits.

We have 250 or more residents, many with extended generational families who spend time here. Many of our residents are Latino and not acquainted with all City Services and their rights as residents.

We are not so large that we cannot create a sense of community and be responsive to new problems as they arise. We want to be able to face problems such as gangs, bedbugs, disturbance of the peace before they become serious.

On many issues, we want to be in communication with each other, and if necessary hire someone to help inform us or conduct research, and then hold meetings to keep everyone informed.

D: Leverage.

We intend to make the city government more aware of the needs of renters, the majority population of the District. There are a large number of talented, generous and civic minded people in the building who could work with other groups in Mount Pleasant to help tackle serious issues affecting us all. By combining our efforts with other Building Associations, we could increase participation and productive change.