**Notes from Chew and Chat session July 25, 2017**

**Housing in Buffalo WNY**

**Issues and Problems**

* Lack of homeownership
* Inequity
* Linking programs and services to needs
* Misuse of service
* Affordability
* Waiting for section 8
* Quality housing
* Lack of community awareness
* Discrimination
* Quality - Livability
* Segregation
* Accessibility for special needs
* Gentrification
* Not to code
* Accountability
* Developers
* Bad policy
* Homelessness
* Quality affordability
* Can’t afford rent
* Corruption/ misuse of funds
* Old housing stock
* Vacancy
* Progress in Buffalo not for everyone
* Support for home improvements

**Assets/Resources**

* State Attorney General
* Buffalo Urban League- first time home- buyer programs
  + 250-2418 -> awareness sessions in community
  + Beverly Smith -> transform mindset re: financial “fitness”
  + Credit repair
  + Relationship with banks
  + Certificates and programs- access
* Friends of the Night people
* Transportation assist
* NY housing service. Gov
* Rent assistance
* Heart of the City
  + List of affordable housing providers
  + Emergency rental assistance
* Social Services
  + Security agreement
  + But landlord not obligated
* Catholic Charities 525 Washington
  + Basic services
  + Emergency assistance
  + Rapid housing programs
  + Section 8 vouchers for preventing foster care
  + (housing affects custody)
* FEMA funds for first month's rent and 1 month past due (don’t know if will be sustained)
* 211 announcements availability of FEMA funds (won’t be helped if received in past 5 years)
  + 211WNY.org check website or call 211
* HEF forum on invisible population (homeless)
* Shifting dynamic broad policy level
  + PPG, PUSH, CEJ and others
  + Inclusionary zoning policy
  + (ensure % of housing is affordable)
  + 10 units; 30% @ 60% of area median income
  + Equitable to other units
  + 50% below/above poverty line
  + City of Buffalo office of strategic planning
    - 2000 new units, market rate vs. affordable
    - City wants to focus on specific zones
    - Community wants it all over community
  + Formation of auti-gentrification coalition (summit on Sept. 30)
* Red-lining
  + Banks and city have not offered resources to home owners in designated regions
  + Land trust
  + Ensure people do not get pushed out of neighborhoods by development property taxes etc.
* PUSH
  + Tenant advocates
  + Deal with slum landlords
  + Housing court and follow up
* Incentive programs (e.g. Hamlin Park)
  + Don’t have a choice about who to work with
  + Excluded from help in National Historic landmark
  + Landmarking results in higher cost

**Pros**

* PUSH is out there advocating
* Learned about gentrification
* Getting together with variety of agencies (collaboration)
* Informative
* Bringing different people together
* Big turnout
* Solidarity about importance of housing (housing first)
* Reassuring to know about forces for social justice
* About segregation
* Community resources and direct services
* Social determinants
* Forces of good out there
* Sharing ideas
* Comfort of environment
* Working together
* Work is continuing with CHW NB

**Deltas (or future discussion)**

* Discussion of access for special needs and disabilities
* How to better network and share information with families
* Discussion of resources for BPS students who are homeless
* Hear more from healthcare professionals (housing -> sickness)
* PUSH in other areas of city
* Enrich housing program information (elderly, low income)
* More sharing of programs for women and children
* Bring someone who is in this situation
* Discussion of utility costs (public hearing next Tues., 2pm and 6pm)
* Knowledge of districts (boundaries)
* Real homesteading process
* Break into 2 parts (do a part 2 to the housing discussion)