



Overcoming NIMBY Opposition

Tuesday, May 7th, 2024

1

Advocacy

**Youth
Housing
Initiative**

**Race
Equity**



OHIO

Balance of State
Continuum of Care



COHHIO

Training and
Technical Assistance



COHHIO

Coalition on Homelessness
and Housing in Ohio



COHHIO

Homeless Management
Information System

Housing Ohio
conference

**SOAR
Ohio**

**Fair Housing
& Tenant
Information**



Healthy Beginnings
At Home

Milo Trauss, Managing Partner, GCA
Strategies



Nick Turner, Director of Strategy and
Engagement, The Nord Family Foundation



Overcoming NIMBY opposition

Strategies and tactics to win approval
for supportive housing in OHIO

COHHIO Housing Ohio Conference

May 7, 2024



contents

I. Approach

II. Implementation

III. Mobilizing Supporters



I. Approach



The Balcony

Dynamics Depend on the size of your jurisdiction

Coalition (Participatory and Issue Outreach)

- Other Service providers, housing community,
- campaign donors

Elections

```
graph TD; A["Coalition (Participatory and Issue Outreach)  
• Other Service providers, housing community,  
• campaign donors"] --> B["Elections"]; B --> A;
```



The Balcony

Zoom out to consider the whole Landscape

- + Include all the stake holders
 - Often opponents like to paint themselves as the MOST affected, the MOST important voices
 - Neighbors, city wide interest groups, education community, sustainability folks, Major campaign donors, etc.
- + Consider context – elections, other developments, city priorities, Budget issues, Education Issues

This will help inform your *Community Engagement Plan*



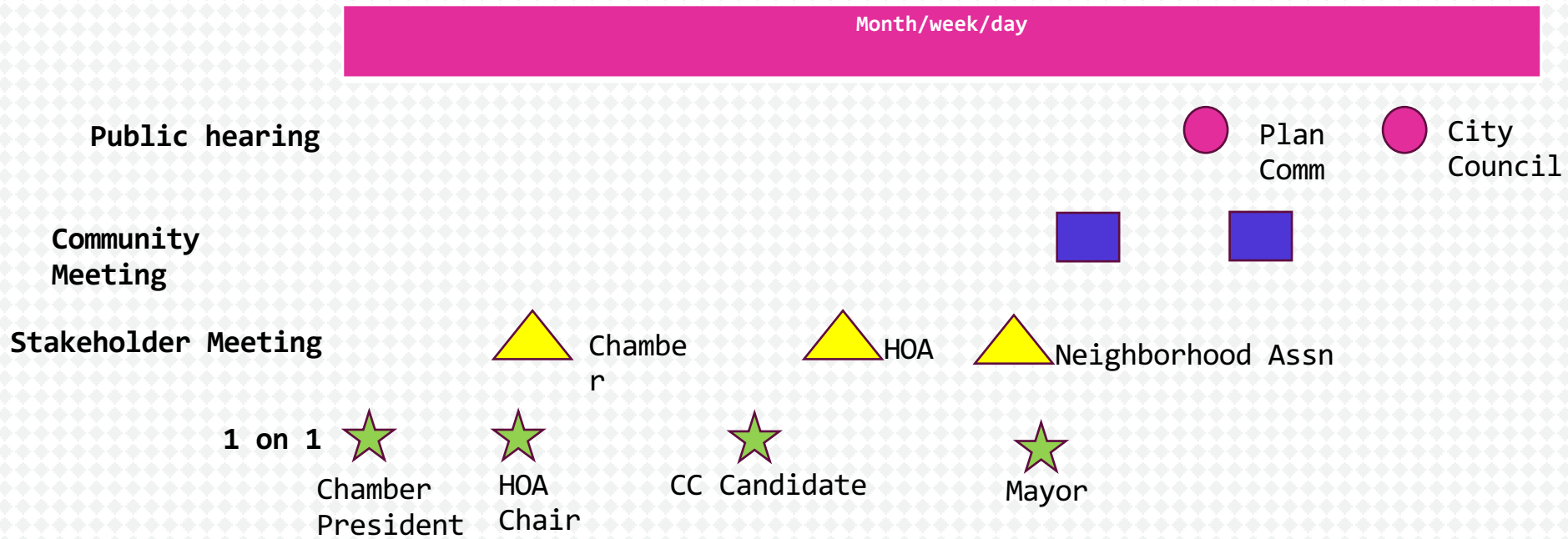
Developing your Community

Engagement Plan

1. Critical Path to approvals
2. Tiered Decision Makers
3. Influence mapping/Tier 1 relationship building
4. Scope of outreach
5. Messages and materials
6. Understanding your opposition and overcoming misperceptions
7. Mobilizing support
8. Public hearing management



Critical path to approvals



Tiered Decision makers

- Tier 1 - Electeds and City officials
- Tier 2 - Influencers
- Tier 3 - Constituents

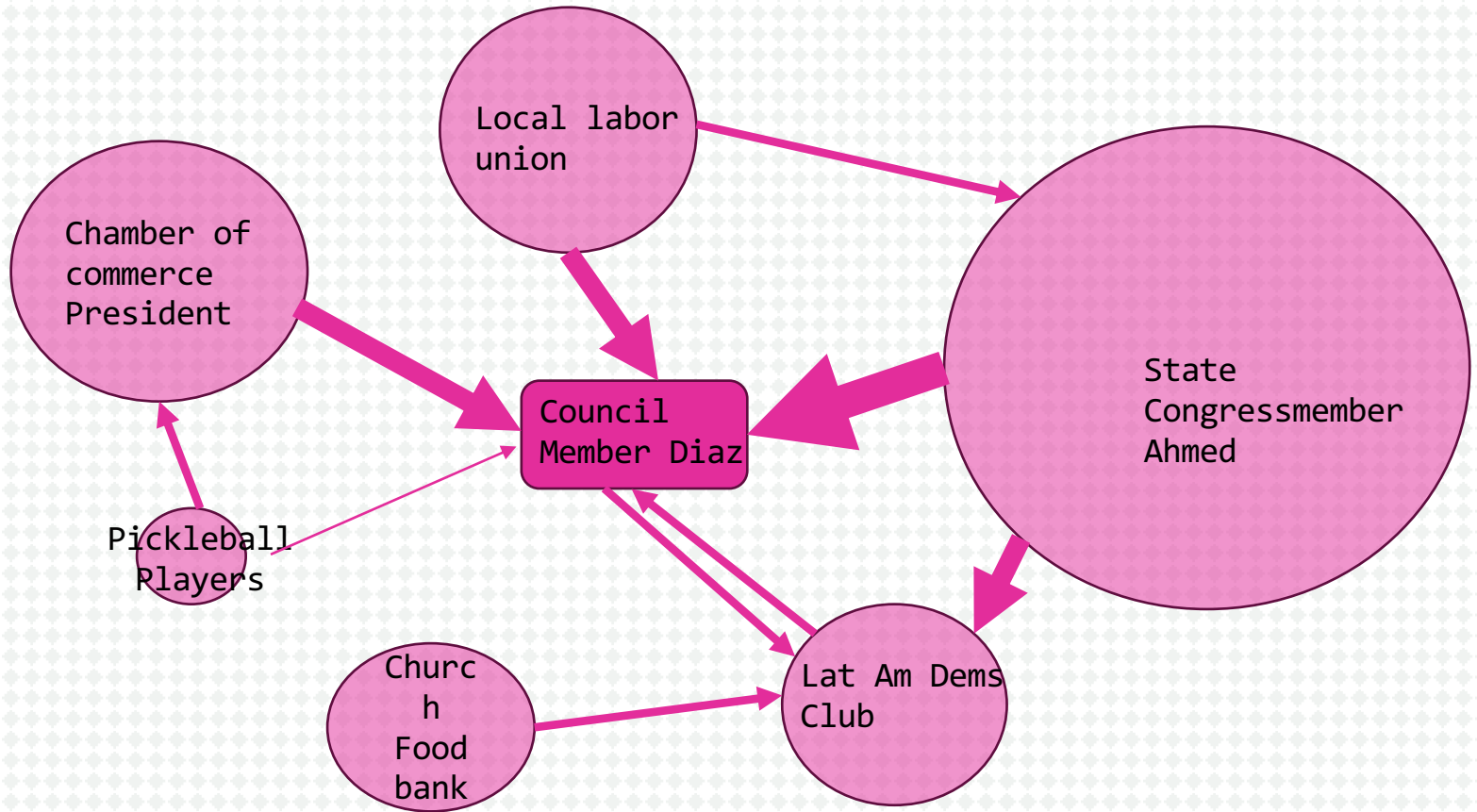


Decision making standards*?(Tier 1)

- Statutory
- Policy
- Personal



Influence Mapping



Guide to meeting with Tier 1 Decision-Makers

- Make a personal connection
- Make Messages bigger than you
- Make a specific request of the office



Impact of public opinion:

Tier 2 Influencers and Tier 3 Constituents

- Validation
- Influence/Persuasion
- Direct Decision-Making Powers



Scope of Outreach

- Issue Outreach vs. Project Outreach
- Participatory Outreach vs. Advocacy outreach
- Low-profile vs. high-profile outreach



II. Putting plan to practice



Messages and materials

- Preliminary Internal FAQ
- Preliminary external talking points
- Support mechanisms
 - + Petition
 - + Supporter card
 - + Digital tools
- Collateral
- Website
- Boards
- Slides



Understanding your opposition

Four roots of opposition

- 1.Lack of information
- 2.Lack of participation
- 3.Conflict of interest
- 4.Conflict of values



Understanding your opposition



Position

Interest

Need



Understanding your opposition

Position Vs. Interest Vs. Need

Imagine an opponent states “It’s too tall!”

What are 5 possible interests they might have?

What are 5 possible ideas of ways to address those interests?



Overcoming Public Misperceptions

- Sponsor misperceptions
- Project misperceptions
- Project impact misperceptions
- Misperceptions about public opinion
+Spiral of silence



Public Information methods

- Unilateral Communication
- Bilateral Communication
- Invitational Group Meetings
 - + Hard-core opponents separate, avoid *poisoning the well*
- Multiparty Meetings
- Open Houses
- Organize a tour of a successful project



CAUTION!

- Increasing visibility of your project
- Notifying people of new issues potentially of concern
- Validating vague fears of the project

Inherently condescending - "tell" vs. "We want to hear from you"



Increasing likability

- “The most effective negotiator is not the persuasive speaker, but the persuasive *listener*”
- Establishing shared values and goals
- Same team, the situation is the obstacle
- Give your opponents an off-ramp, way to save face if they are changing their minds
- Reflecting back
- Happens over time



Subject: [REDACTED] community engagement plan

[EXTERNAL]

To Stop [REDACTED] supporters,

I am pleased to forward you [REDACTED]'s community engagement plan (attached) that has been submitted to the [REDACTED] City Council. This document outlines [REDACTED]'s commitment to use the CEQA process on the existing plan to develop smaller alternative project plans. [REDACTED] invites all groups and residents to participate in this process.

The city is facing a massive budget deficit and must build thousands of new low and moderate housing income units. Keeping [REDACTED] will provide NO BENEFIT to the city; therefore, a new development of some size will be impossible to stop.

I urge you to watch the July 24th city council meeting on [REDACTED] study review.

Thank you for your support,

[REDACTED]

30-years [REDACTED] residents

Stop [REDACTED]

The [REDACTED] grassroots movement to stop [REDACTED] redevelopment

Web site: [REDACTED]

"The more signatures we collect, the more power to our movement!"



Methods of persuasion

- Appeals to logic -> Data
- Appeals to emotion -> Stories
- Peer pressure -> association with well liked individuals

“87% of people are more likely to believe a statement if it has a statistic in it.”



Holding a public meeting

- **Open House format**
- **Venue matters: Large, comfortable, ample and tasty food**
- **Convene 3rd party experts**
- **Bring friends**
- **Lay groundwork ahead of time**
+ **Advance meetings with opponents**
- **Listen more than talk**



Meeting pitfalls!

- Too many people and not enough time -> hold multiple meetings
- Anonymity of mob allows anti-social conduct -> nametags, personal introductions at the door
- Promotes groupthink with opponents reinforcing hostile attacks on your project -> make sure you have supporters in the room (spiral of silence)
- Forum for opponents to organize against your project and hone their messages.



III. Mobilizing Supporters



Mobilizing Supporters

- + “beating the bushes” -> direct allies, indirect allies, community relationships
- + Holding events, attending events,
- + asking for endorsements -> support cards, petitions, Action Network/Jotform, emails, phone calls, meetings
- + Identity matters



Media Strategy

- + Letters to the editor
- + supporter to give comment to a reporter
- + relationship with the paper
- + earned media(press releases)



Social media Strategy

+Nextdoor Brigade

+Participating in Facebook forums



Public Hearing Management

- + Manage hearing logistics for your supporters
- + Provide food, water
- + Think about childcare, a pizza gathering beforehand



Questions??

Milo Trauss
GCA Strategies
Gcastrategies.com
hello@gcastrategies.com
215-370-1225

