**Corktown Community Safety Meeting**

**Monday, March 23, 2015**

**Meeting Notes**

Debra Walker started the meeting with safety tips and encouraged everyone to make sure they had a copy of the Safety Tips Handout. In addition to the items on the handout, she mentioned the importance of reporting if you see a car being pushed by another vehicle. The immediate thought is that this is a Good Samaritan. In any case, it is illegal to push a car, and this is probably a theft. Call 911 and try to get the plate of the vehicle pushing.

She also talked about keeping your electronic car key fob next to your bed. In case of an emergency or suspicious activity outside, press the ‘panic’ button on that fob to deter any possible criminal activity.

Incorrectly indicated on the handout is the phone number for your NPO – Neighborhood Police Officer. The number identified is for the Corktown Beat Officers. The NPO is Tamyra Harris-Hardy. Her number is 313-570-4364.

A great crime deterrent is lighting. While some of the residential streets have the new lighting, the cross-streets (i.e. Trumbull, Lafayette, Porter) are to be done after residential; and thoroughfares (i.e. Michigan, Grand River, etc.) are last.

While there are several area security organizations partnering to assist Corktown, it is essential that we all do our part as residents. Meeting our neighbors is number one. Communicating is also important. There is a new Facebook page – Corktown Neighborhood – to provide information and insight pertinent to the community. As always, the GroupMe app works wonderfully when reporting ‘real-time’ crime activity. Our DPD officers use the App as well, and find it very helpful.

This group is now registered with the City as an official community organization. This makes us eligible to participate in various city initiatives. The Corktown Business Association has also registered. The mayor’s plan is to provide opportunities to residents via their local community organizations.

**DPD Captain Aric Tosqui**

Capt. Tosqui introduced his staff. He stated that Corktown is one of the safest neighborhoods in the city, even with the recent attention with car thefts and car break-ins. Crime has continuously decreased over the years. There has been one violent crime in the last two months; there is a 100% decrease in assaults and burglaries; and a 35% decrease in larcenies. Cars being pushed are car thefts 95% of the time vs neighbor helping neighbor. The four cars recently stolen were all recovered – two in Corktown and two in other neighborhoods. The wheels were taken from all vehicles. While no one has been apprehended yet, DPD believes it is the same crew. They [DPD] are looking for a white van.

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Tosqui stressed three things –

1. **Report crime.** There is a dedicated beat of officers in Corktown able to provide above average response time. Even if this reporting results in an increase in numbers, it is better to be aware of the incidents so the DPD can work to deter and / or irradiate the opportunities. If he [Tosqui] doesn’t know about the crime, he can’t deploy sufficient resources to support.
2. Understand the crime in your area. Use the new **DPD Connect** app and **crimemapping.com.**
3. Download and use **GroupMe Text** Alert app.

Tosqui also talked about the new initiatives from Chief Craig. There is a pilot in Corktown, Midtown and Downtown that includes a Mobile Reporting Desk on Friday and Saturday evenings. This eliminates the need for a crime victim to have to go to the Police Precinct to report a stolen car. Other incidents can still be called into crime reporting, without the need to go to the police station. He stressed the importance of parking in a secured lot if available, otherwise in a well-lit area. Detroiters need to change the mindset that they have to park on the street in front of the establishment they are patronizing. You may need to park and walk a bit. There is an effort to make the city more walkable, which in itself is a crime deterrent when more people are on the streets. It is also an incentive to keep crime down, so residents feel safe walking.

Tosqui mentioned that NPOs are available to conduct home safety surveys and safety plans for your home.

Someone asked if the opportunity to report stolen cars would ever be available to do on-line. Tosqui stated that because of the need for specific verifications, it would be difficult to ensure that false reports are not submitted.

The recent drug raids on an on-going concerned property on Wabash, has allowed the city to seize that property. The new ordinance says that properties involved in more than one drug raid can be seized by the city. This particular property is currently in legal for dispensation. Apparently, the associated car was also seized.

A resident questioned the appropriate response when hearing car alarms. Tosqui stated that you can call the station, post on GroupMe, call NPO or Beat officer.

Tosqui also mentioned that there were no crimes St. Patrick’s Day parade or St. Patrick’s Day.

There was a question about the requirements for Prosecutor’s office to provide a warrant. While there is a back-log in the Prosecutor’s office, DPD stated that they work hard to provide as much evidence as possible to substantiate the need for a warrant. When the Prosecutor’s office says more info is needed, DPD works hard to provide. Those incidents when the Prosecutor just says “no”, requires starting all over. Unfortunately, the amount of time involved in not securing a warrant, allows [alleged] criminals to continue committing crimes.

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A resident expressed concern about innocent people wrongly accused, and possible profiling. Tosqui said he has zero tolerance for such actions.

There were questions about the number of police officers on duty during the evening. It was stated that that information is not provided. DPD uses many tactics to deter crime, including BAIT cars, which someone asked about. Tosqui stated that most crime does occur after dark; and there are more officers on duty on weekends. He also stressed the importance of residents keeping on their porch lights.

There was also a question about unfamiliar cars parked for more than two days. Tosqui said that contacting your NPO or beat officer should be done.

Tosqui talked about the recent car break-ins that involved Federal employees’ vehicles. Laptops were stolen from their cars. This is another reminder of how important it is to remove all valuables from your car.

It is important to coordinate communication in the evenings when Beat Officers are off-duty. Contact Sgt. Hall at 313-316-0668. Sgt. Hall also talked about the upcoming Bike Patrol that DPD will be conducting in Corktown with AmeriCorps. However, Cortown residents are encouraged to participate as well.

Captain Tosqui can be reached at 313-648-9478. He encouraged everyone to attend the regularly held 3rd Precinct Community Relations Meeting. The Precinct is in the process of moving; and the next meeting will be in the new location – 2875 W. Grand Blvd. – Third Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

NPO, Tamyra Harris-Hardy talked about how she provides ‘fake ticket’ on cars with visible items, encouraging them to remove those items from their vehicles and that would-be thieves perceive value in everything.

There was concern about the need for residential parking in certain areas. There is a process in place that will be shared with residents.

The concern about walkability is a factor in that the Traffic Department currently has a traffic light study to possibly remove the light at Michigan and Sixth. That is a busy intersection. Someone stated that making it a four-way stop will actually make sure everybody has to stop.

Resources to contact for various issues was mentioned. That information will be provided with minutes.

**District 6 Manager, Rico Razo –**

Razo talked about DTE’s initiatives that have helped decrease crime in their area – Downtown West – by 75%. They have a plethora of cameras as well as use Secondary Police. They are working with Corktown to expand their initiative to help decrease crime, as well as are Rock Businesses.

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He also talked about the Mayor’s goal to strengthen Block Clubs, and encouraging that they are all registered to take advantage of various services, and that organization enhances response from city. He provided information about the new zero% home rehab loans available for up to $25,000.

**Announcements --**

Walker talked about AmeriCorps expanding into Corktown. They will offer Home Safety Assessments, which include FREE smoke and carbon monoxide detectors; lights for outside fixtures; door and window alarms. AmeriCorps also provides FREE car clubs home, car and, personal safety tips and boards-up open and unsafe properties. AmeriCorps Urban Safety Program is part of WSU’s Urban Studies Department and also works with DPD and other agencies to identify crime trends based on statistics.

She also encouraged residents to join the Corktown Patrol. Training is provided. The different patrols: walking, driving, dog-walking, bicycling, window watching. Car lights, magnetic car signs, whistles and t-shirts are provided.

Motor City Makeover is May 16th, and Walker would like the community to participate and either identify specific areas to clean or encourage neighbors to do deep cleaning on their blocks. The city provides dumpsters, trash bags and t-shirts.

Requested for next meeting –

Parking Enforcement

Traffic Engineering

Prosecutor’s Officer

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Walker

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