

Coosaw Creek
NeighborHood Watch (NHW)
Organizing Meeting
4/24/2012

Steve Weise
Woodland Walk
Member, Disaster Prep Committee, POA

Purpose

- POA Board member kick-off & Introductions
- Briefly note past neighborhood problems & request input regarding any additional problems
- Discuss simple observe & report concept of NHW
- Identify leaders willing to organize a portion of Coosaw Creek (CC)
- Based on response, discuss next steps

Intro

- Board member kick-off
- Steve Weise - asked by POA to see if community wanted to start a simple NHW
- Attendees - Who & reason for attending
- Officer Maria Leahy - NHW contact at NCPD
 - ➡ not available tonight, but interested in helping

Oversight of NHW

- POA Board
- POA Safety & Security Committee
 - periodic crime updates for CC
 - receive NHW suggestions for improving CC safety
- POA Disaster Preparedness Committee
 - post-disaster use of NHW assets
- North Charleston Police Dept

Past CC Problems

- Community residents have experienced thefts of property from cars, homes and a home invasion
 - Several cars unlocked
 - Arrest in 2011 has halted most theft activity
 - Home invasion not resolved
- Fences and postings at the community perimeter have not kept trespassers away.
 - Most are residents or friends - not all
- Ignoring these problems may lead to family safety concerns and further theft.

NHW Concept

“Neighbors Helping Neighbors”

1. Be alert
2. Be safe
3. Be respectful & professional
4. Report suspicious or criminal activity to police

I. Be Alert

- We are the people most responsible for our safety and that of our families - police seldom prevent crime
- Get to know your neighbors - without being nosy
- Observe the neighborhood routine in your daily activities - know the normal so the unusual & suspicious stand out
- NHW & NCPD provide training & reference materials on how to observe & report
- Be alert, observant & caring

2. Be Safe

- Observe - do not confront
- Verbally interact only if you feel safe
- POA Board position that no weapons allowed as NHW representative

3. Be respectful/professional

- Get to know neighbors while respecting their privacy - everyone has different threshold of openness
- Respectfully obtain input from neighbors regarding their concerns
- Do not confront - we are not vigilantes or police officers
- Offer materials to make homes, autos, streets safer from crime

4. Report suspicious/criminal activity to NCPD

- Police can use information from NHW reporting to reduce crime
- Must be willing to call police - don't "pass the buck"
- Call 911 for crime or clear safety issue
- Call duty line (745-1015) when activity seems suspicious but not clearly criminal

Related aspects of NHW

- Does not have to be all of Coosaw Creek
- We can organize those areas with more interest & willingness to participate
- We can be flexible within NHW:
 - Focus on things of concern to that area
 - Be inclusive, not one size fits all areas
 - Spectrum - from 'learn to be safer' to 'neighbor patrol'
- If NHW effort unsuccessful, we can choose to be more alert and report if necessary

Summary of NHW Concept

“Neighbors Helping Neighbors”

1. Be alert
2. Be safe
3. Be respectful & professional
4. Report suspicious or criminal activity to police

**Our starting point for a “minimal”
organized NHW**

Participation

- Ideally, most residents would observe & report
- Today, we want to identify NHW leaders who will organize interested neighbors in the area around their homes
- 14 families expressed interest in NHW before/at meeting
 - ➔ Timbermarsh Lane
 - ➔ Sawgrass Drive
 - ➔ Woodland Walk
 - ➔ Herons Walk
 - ➔ E Fairway Woods
 - ➔ W Fairway Woods
 - ➔ Club Course

Next Steps

- Go to your neighbors and determine whether they will participate
- Feed back results to Steve Weise by June 5th
- Set up working group to develop CC NHW charter (Steve Weise has examples)
- Work with POA Board on NHW Liability Document for NHW participants
- Steve Weise to work with Officer Leahy/Board on protocol for any NCPD background checks of NHW members and on needed training