

Carrboro Community Safety Taskforce

Listening Session 2 with Community Organizers and Alternative Policing Representatives Summary (Minutes)

Monday, September 11, 2023 – 7:00-8:30p 108 Bim Street, Carrboro, NC 27510

7:04 p.m. Introductions and Attendance – Fedders, Chair

Members – Fedders, Chowdhury, Barrett, Hayes, and Blasdell

Council liaison – Sammy Slade

Staff – Jones-McNair

Introduction of representatives

Anise Vance – Assistant Director, Durham Community Safety

Manju Rajendran – Community Safety/Wellness Task Force, Durham Beyond Policing

Devin Ceartas, Chapel Hill Community Organizer

Guest - Donald Hawkins, Chair, Racial Equity Commission

Question and Answer Session

Representatives were asked to share their stories -

Ceartas – Community safety versus community building. Doing things different and better for community. Important to show up when people feel threatened. Work with communities to build a stronger coalition (connecting) to help each other. Develop safety plan(s). Create models that push resources down and out to communities.

Rajendran – community considered community alternatives when pushing back on a new police headquarters in 2016. Emphasis on peer groups and peer support. Durham experiences more gun violence and gender forms of violence. Strong push for using some of the funding of vacant police positions toward other needs in community – housing, food, child care, eviction diversion, city alternatives and living wages which helps to end some criminalized behavior. In 2022 the Community Safety Department was created. (Separate from the Police Department)

Vance – Durham launched structural intervention after examining places like Denver, San Francisco, Charlotte. The Community Safety Department and alternatives such as HEART (Holistic Empathetic Assistance Response Team) Program emerged. HEART is a team of first responders (mental health clinicians, peer support specialists and EMTs) that respond to 911 calls that involve behavioral/mental health needs and other quality of life concerns. The success of the department warranted a 50% increase in staff.

Task force members intend to maintain a partnership throughout remainder of group charge.

Closing – Fedders, Chair