**EHHD CHART Plan4Health Project – 03/24/15 CHART MEETING**

**Thoughtfully Crafting our Community Action Plan - Planning and Zoning Advisory Committee (PZAC)**

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| **Milestone**  | **Considerations… WHAT ARE WE MISSING? Please add any other key questions/considerations we need to be aware of. If answers to these questions come to mind, please jot those down as well.** |
| **1.1 Develop a toolkit for local rural planning and zoning commissions, elected officials and advisory boards by October 2015. The purpose of the toolkit is to increase awareness about steps and actions that can be taken to equitably increase opportunities for physical activity within local small/rural communities.** | * Volunteers serving in these leadership positions may have varying degrees of expertise, training, and background on these topics and issues.
* Need to increase the intended audience’s understanding of the power they hold in making these important planning decisions (their role can be more than solely a regulatory role)
* Need to acknowledge that they may already be doing some of the things that will be included in the toolkit (i.e. building trails) but making the connection to the fact that while they may have been doing it because “they like” trails (recreation), it also fulfills another benefit which is connected to improving health outcomes such as preventing chronic disease through greater access to active living opportunities (even from the perspective of active transportation beyond recreation purposes). We can now focus on the opportunity to increase equity in access to these trails (connectivity of trails, access by public transport routes, etc.)
* Not all towns are equipped with permanent full time staff to assist local leaders with their community planning and zoning functions. The gap is often bridged through the use of consultants, resulting in opportunities for sustainability of efforts and consistency of approach over time.
* Most towns do not have a formalized or institutionalized process for training and orienting new elected/appointed officials and leaders about relevant planning and zoning functions, issues, topics, and resources.
* Many of the potential decisions that could improve the built environment go beyond the scope of local PZCs, hence the need to engage other elected/appointed officials, advisory boards, and resident groups (e.g. funding a new bikeway would need town council approval in most towns.)
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| **Milestone**  | **Considerations… WHAT ARE MISSING?** |
| **1.2 Partner with local rural planning and zoning commissions, and other elected/appointed officials and advisory boards to disseminate the toolkit and ultimately promote policy, systems, and environmental change.** | * Need to get on meeting agenda ahead of time
* May be hard to keep the audience attention and focus if meeting agenda is full with other topics
* May be worthwhile considering to meet with commission members 30 minutes before official meetings start, and hold focus group/discussion with them during formative phase of the project, as well as one-on-one meetings over coffee to get engagement at the very beginning. They will become the key informants for toolkit development, as well as champions for dissemination later on. This will be particularly important in those communities who do not benefit from the support of P&Z staff to help chaperone this project along. Members of PZAC shared names of other local people whom we should share this project with and possibly invite to sit on the PZAC or at least serve as a key informant.
* Membership changes over time, so we need to plan for sustainability of effort and institutionalization of training process and toolkit utilization. What can we do to ensure the toolkit is passed on to and used by new officials as they begin their service after the project life?
* May not be able to attend a seminar, workshop, training, or conference outside of already scheduled commission meetings (remember they are volunteers, not staff)🡪 ask them! Involve them in the plan making from the very beginning!
* Consider using available technology to disseminate product: webinar in which people can participate live as well as stream at a later time? Their time availability is limited and they all function as volunteers. We cannot ask too much of them, in addition to what they already contribute! Perhaps we can ask SOPHE/DHPE for TA on creating webinars.
* How do we make this toolkit and dissemination process engaging and compelling? 🡪 Communication piece is crucial. Can we use a multimedia approach (video clip)? Should we use experiential learning methods? Active and engaging methods are effective in creating personal connection and relevance to the issues. Also connected to the issue of relevance, we need to think about how to change our residents’ inclination from being “reactive” to “proactive” in their involvement in local planning decisions. We do so by finding alternative ways to connect to different sectors of our local population and broadening the lenses to this being a “community” issue, rather than a regulatory property by property issue (i.e. focus on walkability, bikeability, connectivity of trails, etc.)
* Tone is key. Because of varying experience levels, the tone needs to be basic enough for everyone to understand, but not too basic to disengage those with higher levels of experience and expertise. Including members of the priority population in the planning of the dissemination will be key in ensuring that the dissemination efforts are effective.
* With elections coming up in November, can we find champions who are set on building a legacy and tradition of health in all policies?
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| **PZAC Brainstorming Session – 03/24/15** |
| We will be interviewing/surveying PZC members and other elected/appointed officials to help inform the development of the toolkit and outreach efforts.  |
| 1. What specific topics should we include to assess current relevant:

KnowledgeAttitudesBeliefsBehaviors MotivationsNeeds | DensityTransportation(will think more about this question and email responses at a later date) |
| We would like to find as many synergistic opportunities as possible, to increase our project impact, while minimizing the burden on local officials.  |
| 1. What related major and routine projects are already in the works in our towns that could be leveraged and potentially infused with a greater health lens within the next 12 months?

AndoverAshfordBoltonChaplinColumbiaCoventryMansfieldScotlandTollandWillington | -195 corridor project-Placemaking project in Coventry-Midriver project connecting Mansfield and Tolland with a trail along the Willimantic river-Pathways in Tolland: overlaying maps of local territory and identifying missing links and opportunities for additional connection with an eye on equity (i.e. Champ grant: are there enough walking opportunities connecting senior centers to other parts of town?)-Mansfield sidewalk connecting Mansfield Center to Public Library and Southeast elementary school-Coventry: playful city initiative and connection to the issue of “toxic stress” experienced by children and their families.-“Get outside!” program championed by Coventry-Connect with Susan Eastwood in Ashford, Gary Greenberg in Scotlans, Susie Jorgenson (sp?) in Willington, Patrice Carson in Bolton, and Paula Stahl in Columbia. They should be invited to join our efforts as part of the PZAC. |

**Miscellaneous thoughts/comments/notes/questions**

-Coventry STEPS: walk and read

-Connect with local librarians and Council of the Arts as they have been doing great work engaging the community on health-related topics.