**Data Stewards Meeting**

**MINUTES**

**Session:** Monthly Meeting of the Data Stewards/Sarasota County Community Data Collaborative

**Date:** Monday, May 21, 2012

**Location:** Green Room, Twin Lakes Park

**In Attendance:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| First Name | Last Name | Neighborhood | Organizational Affiliation |
| Jim | Bennett | Sawgrass |  |
| Lee Hayes | Byron | Southgate |  |
| Laurel | Corrao | Indian Beach Sapphire Shores | New College |
| Nancy | DeLoach | South Field | County HHS |
| Harrison | Fox | South Venice | South Venice Civic Association |
| Doug | Griffin | Siesta Key |  |
| Nita | Hester | Country Club Ridge | City of North Port GIS |
| Colleen | McGue | Central-Cocoanut | SCOPE; Institute for the Ages |
| Bill | McKelvy |  |  |
| Michelle | Norton | Chamberlain | City of North Port |
| Gregg | Obarski |  | City of Sarasota |
| Aubrey | Phillips | University Park | UF/IFAS Sarasota County Ext. |
| Allison | Pinto | Central-Cocoanut | SCOPE; Banyan Sprout |
| Kathy | Solie |  | Sarasota County GIS |
| Jason | Wincker |  | Sarasota County GIS |

**Agenda:**

* **Introductions**
* **Developing Platform/Technologies** 
  + **Why create a platform focused on neighborhoods?**
* **Developing Datasets** 
  + **Natural Environment:** 
    - **Sarasota County Green Map / Open Green Map**
    - **Impervious Surface & Watershed Well-Being**
* **Clarifying Quality of Life Indicators** 
  + **Which affect life in neighborhoods, and which variables are neighbors likely to affect?**
* **Reflection & Decision-Making**
  + **How is reflection on community data informing resident-led efforts?**
* **Announcements**

What follows are notes of the presentations and conversation associated with each session.

1. **Introductions**

* Everyone introduced themselves by name, neighborhood, and institutional/associational group affiliation (as a way of reinforcing our neighborhood-based and cross-scale/cross-sector orientation).

1. **Developing Platform/Technologies**

“Why make a new platform, focused on neighborhoods?”

* Data stewards reflected on this question while looking at maps of different boundary systems relative to the neighborhoods of Sarasota County: Zip Codes, Census Tracts, Census Block Groups, and School Attendance Zones.
* These are the boundary systems typically visualized and examined relative to data about our community, but do not communicate indicators of well-being with the same degree of granularity or social meaning as the neighborhood boundary system. This is why the Community Platform we are developing is focused on neighborhoods.

***Comments and questions from Data Stewards:***

* Best government happens at the neighborhood scale.
* The key is “from the bottom up”- this drives the process best.
* Regenerate activism by giving neighborhoods a chance.
* At the South Venice Civic Association, water is the biggest concern. Lots of volunteers from the neighborhood have engaged in the Alligator Creek pilot project. Engage neighbors in what is going on around us, especially for sustainability.
* People associate themselves with neighborhood, because it is more about the way we live.
* People care most about their neighborhood- their familiarity is their own backyard.
* We shouldn’t get too far down the road without realizing that not all people affiliate with a neighborhood. We don’t want to force people to identify with a neighborhood.
* A lot of people don’t yet have an appreciation for the value of neighborhood identity. The platform increases awareness about the value of neighborhood. Also, granular data isn’t good unless looked at in the greater context.

1. **Developing Datasets**
   * Data Stewards reflected on the subject of data for decision-making.
   * Data Stewards involved in the Sarasota County Green Map presented on the new Open Green Map, and the process of converting Green Map data to Open Green Map data points.

***Comments and questions from Data Stewards on data for decision-making:***

* People get overwhelmed by data. Have to have some sort of way to prioritize the data.
* A small group can’t make decisions about the priorities for the whole.
* There are things that governments can do, citizens and government, and citizens alone.
* People get apprehensive about privacy and personal data. Hope that data will be used positively.
* It is important that locally defined boundaries are prioritized over federal government defined boundaries [for the sake of local community change efforts].

1. **Presentation on Sarasota County Green Map -- Aubrey Phillips and Doug Griffin**

* Consists of sustainability/built environment indicators.
* Purpose is to showcase Sarasota County as a “green” place to live.
* “Green Maps” have developed universal icons and categories.
* Through the Green Map, Sarasota County focuses on assets and the positive.

How does the Green Map relate to the development of our community’s data platform?

* It is an example of a data platform that is interactive- citizens can post questions, etc.
* It is an example of data platform maintenance -- volunteers will manage requests.
* It is an example of a robust set of icons - Icons are established internationally.
* It offers a lot of the same features as the community platform will offer.

Doug Griffin reflected on his experience working on the Open Green Map:

* Knowing something about the places (by having visited them) makes it possible to add value
* Entering data points takes a long time.
* Questions/concerns arise about the categorization of data through the process itself.
* Questions arise regarding the value of information. Pocket parks, for example. Is that information valuable? To whom?

1. **Clarifying Quality of Life Indicators:**

* **Which variables are important to include, relative to neighborhoods?**
* Which affect life in neighborhoods, and which variables are neighbors likely to affect?

An example was shared of thinking through this process with a Data Steward: Laurel Corrao, a GIS Intern developing a data layer relating to the Environmental Domain of Community Well-Being.

* What affects watersheds that relates to neighborhoods?
* One possible aspect to examine: Impervious surfaces (where water is unable to infiltrate the ground) vs. areas that enable less polluted runoff (e.g. bioswales)
* Working with Sarasota County to create a layer that communicates this by neighborhood.
* Does the amount of impervious surface change over time?
* Watersheds are another way for neighborhoods to relate to one another.

1. **Announcements:** 
   * Nita Hester explained the GIS process of conducting a spatial join using address data and the neighborhood boundaries.

* If each steward gets their dataset organized by street address [street #&name, city, state, zip], the data can be overlaid with the neighborhood boundaries to generate a neighborhood label for each line of data. This is what each Data Steward needs to be doing in the upcoming month.

***Comments/Questions from Data Stewards:***

* What do we do with neighborhoods that are not self-defined?
* County Neighborhoods Shapefile has a subdivision layer as well – does it make sense to include subdivisions as neighborhoods?
* Each subdivision in North Port gets added to the Comprehensive Plan.
* We have to have the ability to define county-wide neighborhoods.
* Get consensus around neighborhood definitions.
* This conversation needs to start happening soon - partners need to feel comfortable enough with neighbors defining their own boundaries. It will take a lot of processing time for applications.
* We will explain that the preliminary platform is built using neighborhoods identified to date, and neighborhoods will be added or modified over time with community input.
* This is a “Straw Man” Platform to assist our community in determining how it wants its ultimate community data platform to be designed.
* Let’s have a list of priorities.
* Regarding the identification of indicators: What is coming out of the Community Data 2.0 Sessions?
* There should be blank parts in the community platform so they are visible.
* We don’t have to have all neighborhoods defined by Day 1 of the community platform.
* We need to create a data sharing system so that the datasets contributed by data stewards for the platform can be shared more easily.

Each Data Steward took a worksheet to think about and respond to the following:

* What datasets do we have that are valuable for neighborhoods? Organized into which geographies?
* What are our concerns about privacy?