

Northeast Action Teams (NEATs) Governing Document, 11-22-2016

Purpose/Goals: Northeast Action Teams (NEATs) are issue-specific groups created to respond to immediate or significant needs in the neighborhood and can exist as long as interest is available. The goal is to identify and solve problems in our district, while promoting community capacity and leadership, inclusion, cohesion, and diversity. NEATs address social, racial, class, and environmental justice issues through advocacy, education, and direct service provision. We are committed to an “Equity and Inclusion Policy” and will work towards:

- Prioritizing the voices, experiences, and involvement of underrepresented and diverse communities.
- Developing avenues for partnership by creating opportunities to bridge the work being done across the community, thus building upon common values with respectful collaboration.
- Valuing the past while considering the future in making decisions that contribute to improved livability for all.

Equity and Inclusion Policy: All NEAT proceedings (meetings, communications, decision-making, etc.) must adhere to the “Equity and Inclusion Policy”. NEAT meetings will also incorporate “Group Agreements”, which are agreements made by the team, at the start of meetings that lays out ground rules for working together effectively and efficiently. NECN Staff has discretion to ask any member or participant to leave due to violation of the “Equity and Inclusion Policy”, “Group Agreements”, inappropriate conduct, or conduct inconsistent with NECN mission and goals.

Roles and Responsibilities: NEAT members are encouraged to take on leadership roles. Examples of responsibilities include facilitating meetings, creating agendas, preparing and coordinating for meetings, developing and researching issues, recruiting participants, building partnerships, and forming subgroups. NECN staff will guide, support, or perform any activities described above.

Criteria for Issues & Topics: NEAT members and NECN staff will identify topics. Topics must be consistent with NECN mission and goals and the “Inclusion Policy”. NEAT work should increase livability in NECN’s district, involve and benefit a diverse group of people, build leadership, skills, relationships and partnerships – especially with and among historically underrepresented populations. Examples of team issues include, affordable housing, houselessness, air toxics pollution, emergency preparedness, and schools.

Membership & Eligibility: Team meetings are open to the public and will be announced on NECN's calendar. A person is eligible for NEAT membership after attendance at one NEAT meeting and upon signature of the "Inclusion Policy". NEAT members are eligible to vote. NEAT members are not required to be on any Board or Neighborhood Association. Meetings are set based on participants' availability. Members are encouraged to be present at meetings and to give notice when they cannot attend. NECN will provide food and transportation assistance, as needed.

Communications: Community members can sign up for NEAT list serves. Agendas will be sent out to interested participants in advance of the meeting. Relevant materials will be posted to NECN's website, social media, and emailed. NECN adheres to inclusive communication and will reach communities by phone, in-person, and through liaisons to the community.

Actions & Advocacy: NEATs will adhere to collaborative and cooperative decision making with consensus as the end goal. Members are encouraged to welcome new viewpoints, opinions, and ideas. The group will ask, "How will decisions, advocacy, and action advance equity for underrepresented groups?" *Non-controversial/non-complex* decisions will be made by *informal consensus*, which is a quick way to test for agreement on issues that are not contentious or complex, using a thumbs up/sideways/down method. Controversial issues are considered complicated, important, and/or create strong disagreement. *Controversial or complex* decisions will be made by *modified consensus* (consensus combined with majority decision making). This means getting at least 70% of votes (of all present and non-present members), for a decision to be made. NECN Staff has the discretion to take action on issues, as needed.

NECN Staff have the discretion to dissolve a NEAT. Anything not expressly laid out in this document is at the discretion of NECN Staff.