



The Progress-Index

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A unique opportunity awaits Petersburg's neighborhoods

The Virginia Local Initiatives Support Corp. returned to Petersburg last week and it is time again for residents to stand up and be heard.

So far, Petersburg residents have done just that. About 50 people participated in the last meeting, which followed an October meeting where 200 residents came out to be heard.

Residents now have one last opportunity to be heard before plans are created that could impact Petersburg neighborhoods.

Virginia LISC is a community development organization that aims to improve neighborhoods by supporting the development of childcare centers, playgrounds, health clinics, schools, shopping centers and new businesses, as well as apartments and homes in low- to moderate-income communities.

Virginia LISC, formerly Richmond LISC, has helped to revitalize the Oregon Hill, Blackwell, Church Hill and Carver neighborhoods in Richmond.

And now Virginia LISC's primary focus has become Petersburg.

"We believe that we can have the same success here," said Veronica Jemmott, a community development manager with Virginia LISC.

Virginia LISC's work in the city is being funded by The Cameron Foundation.

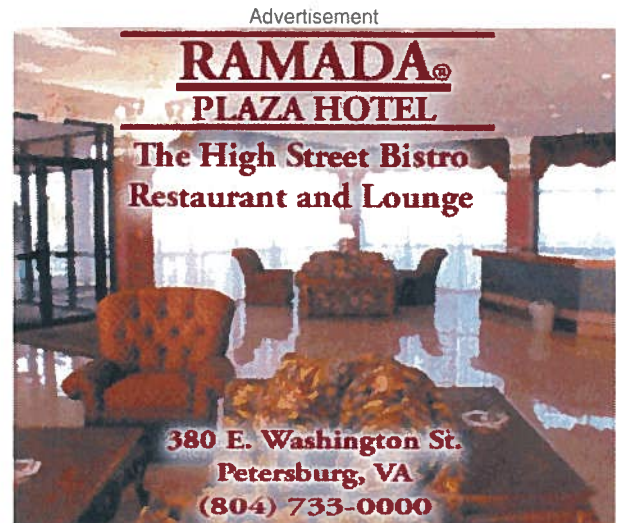
Some of the areas identified in October and discussed again were the Blandford and Halifax Street triangle areas. Residents have already said that they would like to see more places for youth and upgraded housing in those two neighborhoods.

LISC will be back this month to finish gathering data on Jan. 23 and 24. And then on Jan. 25, the community is being asked to come out and vote on some of the projects. All three meetings are at Tabernacle Baptist Church on Halifax Street.

By April 26 the plans should be complete and will be presented at Union Train Station. By June the plan will start to be used.

"The success of these plans really depends on you and your input," said Jemmott.

We agree and urge residents to show up later this month to help create — and vote on — plans for neighborhoods in their community.



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