

## **Global Atlanta Works Steering Committee**

Aaron Turpeau, Chairman

May 25, 2006, 7:30 am – 9:00 am

Executive Conference Room -

Atlanta Regional Commission

Meeting Summary

### **Members Attending**

Akanmu Adebayo, Executive Director, Institute for Global Initiatives, Kennesaw State University

Demming Bass, Vice President, Department of Communication and Business Resources, Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce

C. J. Bland, President and CEO, Minority Professional Network/ARC Board member

Ron Finnell, Director, The Southern Center for Studies in Public Policy, Clark Atlanta University

Lesley Grady, Vice-President for Community Partnerships, Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta

Jim Mullins, Director, Governmental Relations, DeKalb County Schools

Soon-Hee Paik, President and CEO, ES Consultants, Inc.

Vanessa Olcese (representing Sandra Font, COO, Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce)

Dan Vargas, President, Vargas & Amigos

Aaron Turpeau, President, 3T Unlimited/ARC Board member

### **Atlanta Regional Commission**

Chick Krautler, Director

Carolyn White, Office of the Director

Darlene Daly, Department of Comprehensive Planning

### **Meeting Objectives**

- To obtain input and recommendations related to the implementation and future sustainability of the Global Atlanta Works program.
- To refine the mission, goals and accountability for a broader focus on diversity in the region.

**Purpose and Introductions – Aaron Turpeau**, ARC Board member and Global Atlanta Works Steering Committee chair expressed appreciation for those agreeing to lend their expertise to the Global Atlanta works program which focus on working with the region's growing ethnic and racial communities. The committee has been asked to 1) assist in the development of strategic policy options that will guide ongoing implementation, evaluation as well as the future direction and sustainability of the Global Atlanta Works program; 2) provide key insights in helping to understand the implications and meaning of the changes, particularly related to regional policies, growth and development; 3) help articulate what the goals and options for the region should be (immigration, assimilation, etc.) and 4) provide recommendations for getting where we need to be.

He noted that ARC recently took a large group of regional leaders to Miami as part of the annual Leadership, Involvement, Networking and Knowledge (LINK) program and this experience spurred additional interest in addressing issues related to diversity. Further, it is indeed an error when we do not discuss diversity. But, what does that mean? Should we talk about integration, assimilation? What goals should we pursue? How should the issues be framed?

Committee member introductions were made with each offering perspectives on reasons for serving. Comments included the following:

**Vanessa Olcese** - Growing Hispanic business community and important that we are involved in things going on in community as well as getting word out about what we are doing;. Hispanic Chamber established first business incubator for our members.

**C. J. Bland** - Minority business representation increasingly focusing on global perspective/

**John Mullins** - DeKalb one of most diverse systems in state. System sponsors International roundtables and Diversity Councils and continually looking at opportunities to do more.

**Lesley Grady** – Important that ARC is going beyond data gathering/facts to understanding, and it is important for the philanthropic community to be brought along.

**Demming Bass** – A long-term goal of the Gwinnett Chamber is to make the county the melting pot for celebrating culture.

**Ron Finnell** - Raising awareness about diversity and influencing social policy is a major interest/

**Soon-Hee Paik**- As president of the Asian American Foundation and a business owner, concern is focused on increasing Asian participation as well as creating an Asian Community Center

**Akanmu Adebayo** –Globalizing curriculum is major concern and effort underway at Kennesaw State University

**Dan Vargas** – There are things to be learned from the black experience, particularly in terms of Latinos and Blacks working together.

Turpeau concluded that we are starting with the right people at the table, representing business, education and funding. He challenged the group to be prepared to discuss the tough issues in terms of diversity and planning issues in particular.

**Chick Krautler** provided an overview of the Atlanta Regional Commission, discussed the changing demographics in the region, ARC's commitment to engaging all segments of the region's population in the regional planning process, and the role of the Global Atlanta Works program in this process. He noted the following:

- ARC is committed to an inclusive public involvement process. It is the right thing to do and important from a regional perspective, but does present challenges.
- The region is now home to more than 400,000 foreign-born residents from more than 80 countries

- Hispanics/Latinos, Asian Americans and Blacks are having a major economic impact in terms of buying power: Hispanics/Latinos at nearly \$8 billion, Asians, more than \$3 billion (Selig) and ARC estimates the buying power of Blacks at \$24 billion. A significant cultural influence is also being felt.
- Inroads have been made in accessing and engaging the participation of Blacks in the region, however, we still need to figure out additional strategies to increase the involvement of Asian and Hispanic/Latino community and business leaders.
- Addressing diversity from a planning perspective is clearly important and there are planning requirements; but, we must do more than what is required and hear all the diverse voices to get it right.
- ARC is getting to know the diverse community leaders by hosting a series of community discussions on diversity in collaboration with local county commissions, chambers and the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta. And, serving as a catalyst and support for local follow-up action as well as involving them in ARC's planning process.
- In the early 1990s, we started developing a series of fact sheets on Atlanta's ethnic and immigrant population groups. The updated version of this series, "Global Atlanta Snapshots" has grown from collection and dissemination of data to establishing committees.
- Other ARC engagement strategies: Asian and Latino Advisory Councils, Environmental Justice Planning Team.

Krautler introduced Carolyn White and Darlene Daly (co-program managers and committee staff liaison). They provided a brief status report on the 4 main components of Global Atlanta Works: Global Atlanta Snapshots, newsletter, resource directory and diversity community conversations. Input requested: capacity building and sustainability, community partnerships, linking websites, marketing and communications plan, other future strategies and dissemination of best practices.

#### **Committee Discussion Points:**

- We need to raise the level of awareness about the changing demographics and the impacts
- Should look at way the ongoing immigration issue has galvanized cultural wars and the issue of diversity
- Snapshots great resource for schools but can potentially (elephant on Nigerian snapshot) perpetuate stereotypes
- How many members are aware of this program? What good are the Snapshots/Global Atlanta Works if they are a secret?
- Lots of opportunity for collaboration and communication; important for ARC to link with partners such as DeKalb schools

- Look at leadership in general; issue of communication is important
- Staff request to have Global Atlanta Works program linked to committee members company websites as a resource
- We can benefit by working through other networks (Hands on Atlanta; Regional Leadership)
- Are we framing issues out of reach? Begin with end in mind. Are there next steps? Are you sharing information? Begin peer network. Meeting and discussing this issue is only the first step
- Establish cross-county conversations
- Work through Chamber of Commerce. Organize meetings with chamber membership, using the Snapshots to help educate them about Asian and other communities
- Look at models (mixed income and mixed use has strong diversity components); diversity = class AND income
- Collaborations should extend beyond chambers, i.e. include grass roots folks (neighborhood planning units - Beltline project struggling with community engagement); link with Atlanta Development Authority to see what they are thinking
- Don't just talk about bricks and mortar
- There are specific planning needs requiring and critical to minority communities such as the transportation corridor studies, including Buford Highway and Tara Boulevard and Envision 6 (the regional plan with an emphasis on linking transportation and land use). Public participation started for the Buford Highway transportation corridor study with major consequences for the Latino population but limited participation thus far from those most impacted. How can we make sure communities affected by these planning processes are having a say? We need resources and contacts with people that can lead us in the right direction.
- Frame "diversity community conversations" around issues and bring all together at some point for cross fertilization of ideas, sharing what was learned, outcomes and implications

**Next Steps:**

- Staff to provide committee members marketing and outreach plan
- Address planning issues
- Follow-up on potential partnerships
- Continue discussion- what diversity means for the region and what should be done

**A schedule for the remaining meetings (2 expected) will be forwarded this month.**