

## Volunteers of the Month – AHNA’s Strategic Plan Effort



In January of this year, AHNA began the effort to update the Asylum Hill Strategic Plan. The existing one was approved 11 years ago, in 2009. That plan required more than 15 months of meetings and the assistance of Aetna and Reid & Reige attorney Robert Reichert, and when it was completed it did not include an action plan.

AHNA has learned from our past, and we are grateful for all the lessons learned and opportunities presented. The first opportunity came in the form of Ted Carroll's retirement from Leadership Greater Hartford. As Executive Director there he was able to assist AHNA to become a stronger and better-organized NRZ. So at the beginning of this year he and others spoke of the need for a new strategic plan. He also volunteered to chair the Steering Committee. That was the impetus needed to begin the process, and his leadership skills have been put to good use.

The image above is from the first planning meeting that took place January 30<sup>th</sup>. There the committees and chairpersons were identified. They are: Arts & Culture, Jackie McKinney; Economic Development, Wayne Benjamin; Employment, Yvonne Matthews; Environment and Green Initiatives, Lynn Johnson; Housing, Ken Johnson; Human Services, Esther Gonzalez-Torres; Public Safety, Janine McMahon; and Youth and Education, Michelle McFarland; a very ambitious list.

Each of them, in addition to their time as AHNA Board members, took on the task of recruiting members, chairing meetings and creating lists of priorities, all toward making Asylum Hill a better, more livable and sustainable neighborhood.

In November, AHNA hosted a morning meeting with many of our community partners, to share the newest draft of the Strategic Plan and solicit both comment and commitment to help make it happen.

The AHNA Board will then review all of the input received, agree upon a final draft, and submit it to the general AHNA membership for approval. That document will be shared with Hartford City Council and the State of Connecticut Office of policy and Management for their approval as well. An annual action plan will be drafted shortly thereafter.