

New Orleans City Council District D Redistricting Meeting
April 20, 2011

The second of two City Council District D community meetings on Redistricting was held on April 20, 2011 at St. Maria Goretti Church from 6 - 7:30 PM. Data from the 2010 U. S. Census indicates that District D must grow by some 10,413 residents to reach the ideal population based on post-Katrina citywide numbers.

Redistricting LLC provided a timeline for the public input process, as well as information on redrawing the lines. Their presentation also included information on the legal requirements the council must fulfill, as well as the traditional redistricting principles and timeline for adopting the redistricting plan.

“I feel the frustration,” said District D Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell after hearing a number of residents’ questions and concerns. She spoke to residents indicating she believed that the lines of District D were more succinct several years ago.

Residents agreed that District E should be one district that includes parts of District D, but voiced concerns about the process, stating that they cannot learn redistricting overnight and could not provide the type of meaningful input that the process requires. Some residents were skeptical about whether their comments would be taken seriously. Other residents asked questions beyond redrawing the lines to determine how they would better benefit from redistricting as far as city services and representation by council members.

One resident asked how he could become more involved in his community and was directed to speak with many of the neighborhood organization leaders who were in attendance at the meeting. Other residents were very passionate about the neighborhoods in District D and their relationship with the councilmember who has directly addressed their concerns.

Councilmember Hedge-Morrell encouraged residents to continue being a part of the process. She said that to ensure the lines are drawn in a way that is most beneficial to District D will require reaching the hearts and souls of the other councilmembers.

The council deadline for adopting a Redistricting plan is targeted for August 2011.