

When the Ferguson Consent Decree was first made available to the public, I was pleased to see strong requirements regarding the implementation of community policing, and more specifically problem-solving policing. To better understand what the Department of Justice meant by problem-solving, I went to the COPS website and found a pamphlet entitled, "Community Policing Defined". I asked the Civil Rights Division attorneys if that was what they planned to implement in Ferguson. They said yes.

I was pleased, because that pamphlet describes a major shift in the mission and organizational structure of police departments that move to problem solving. It describes a shift toward more geography-based "beats", a deemphasis of arrests, and a focus on solving the immediate underlying causes of crime. The pamphlet also describes a deemphasis of police as the sole source of public safety, with other agencies—both governmental and private—as well as individuals implementing solutions.

Many years into the process of Consent Decree implementation, I am coming to believe that problem-solving policing is not a serious goal of the Ferguson Police and that the Consent Decree will not get us there.

It is true that we have developed a Policy and Plan that both pay lip service to problem solving. But the department has taken no steps toward actual implementation. In talking about community policing, they continually revert to community meetings as their basic talking point, and include departmental changes in mission, attitude toward arrests or organizational structure only when prodded by community members.

There has been little or no movement toward serious limits that would create regular geographic beats. There has been little or no discussion with the public to inform community members about problem-solving policing and the new role that public input can play. There has been no discussion about reorganizing the department in terms of structure, incentives, hiring or decision-making authorities to facilitate problem-solving. If the police department wanted to do these things they would already be happening.

To me, this lack of progress calls into question the validity of the Consent Decree project. As we entered into the Consent Decree, activists from other cities warned us to be skeptical and predicted that progress under other Consent Decrees had been frustrating. And it is becoming increasingly difficult for me to justify spending time on a program that does not appear to be bearing fruit.

How long can you expect any community member to stay involved? The hope is waning that changes on the street will result from the shuffling of paper that has been the main body of the work so far. And as community involvement dwindles, the hope of a community-based police department evaporates as well.

This problem is coming more and more to the fore. If you as the judge in this case do not confront it, I'm afraid you will find yourself in a position where you have less and less power to effect change as the Consent Decree comes to exist in name only. I hope that you will intervene to change this process of decline.

John Chasnoff



To who it may concern:

I am submitting this statement for the records and the judge's consideration. Many of the NPSC members have concerns over how their hard work and intellectual contributions toward policy drafts and training plans have been disregarded by the Department of Justice representatives and former police Chief Armstrong.

I will primarily discuss the The NPSC subcommittee which revised the "Use of Force" policy. Four to five of us researched, compared other city's police policies, revised and redrafted large portion of the old Ferguson "Use of Force policy. After several months of meetings, some of which were 5 hours in length, the policy draft was submitted. In August the "new" policy was posted for public comment. When reviewed, several of us noticed large discrepancies in the text. We were well aware that we were writing a draft and our submissions were suggestions but the edits were severe.

We invited the CRT representatives to our August meeting and discussed this issue. Ms. Senier addressed our concerns with Ms. Barton during the meeting. While Ms. Barton agreed to work with us over the matter, Ms. Senier was dismissive, and equated our many hours of work to the public comments made by citizens in the online comment form. I challenged her on this as it was insulting and disingenuous. By the time of the September meeting, we had little resolution or clarity about the subcommittee's contribution; who deleted and edited important portions of the policy and where NPSC committees stood in terms of future policy writing projects.

The questions posed are:

- Is NPSC input incidental to the policy revision process?
- Is NPSC invited to the final revision of the policy?
- Is this just a way to tick off a point on the checklist of public input or a serious consideration of what were have to contribute?
- For future policy revisions, are there set guidelines for submission and a public process?

It would help both the community and the NPSC if these questions and the policy revision episode were to be addressed by the court, the monitoring team as well as the CRT for the DOJ.

Thanks you for your consideration,
Dr. Jacquelyn A. Lewis-Harris