

**Longmont Asian Connection (LAC)**  
**(now A-PAL)**

**Meeting Report**

- Meeting:** LAC Introductory and Planning
- Date & Time:** August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 6pm to 8pm
- Location:** Longmont Public Library, room A
- Purpose:** The first meeting of the LAC is a workshop designed to assess and evaluate the needs and sentiments of the Asian communities of Longmont. The data collected will serve as guide in the development of action plans to address those needs.
- No. of Attendees:** 28

**The Meeting:**

The meeting started with a Japanese buffet dinner during which attendees had the opportunity to get to know each other and start the discussion of their interest in Asian communities and Asian culture.

Linda Kopecky represented the City of Longmont welcomed the attendees, followed by Libby Barstow who gave an overview of the Longmont Multicultural Plan. Rita Liu was the facilitator and co-facilitated by Eva Wodehouse. Both Linda and Eva served as scribes.

**Attendee Introduction:**

The attendees were asked to introduce themselves and briefly describe their expectations of LAC.

**Group Discussion:**

The group session was lively. During this session, the needs of Asian communities were discussed touching on the following topics:

- Asian festivals in Longmont;

- Asian representation in local government;
- Opportunity for visibility;
- Closer connection between cultural groups;
- Asian grocers in Longmont;
- Encourage new businesses in Longmont – retain revenue within City;
- Chinese language school;
- Language, cultural and networking programs for adoptive families;
- Use of museum & library and related services;
- International outreach projects such as charitable & medical assistance and help for orphanages;
- Develop, maintain and update sources of information on the internet relative to Longmont and the Asian communities;
- English lessons for the elderly and opportunities to familiarize with local customs;
- There was a call for annual social events such as picnics or gatherings.

#### Individual Input:

At the end of the general discussion, each attendee was asked to fill out four separate cards listing ideas and suggestions which they think LAC should pursue. The cards were grouped into focus areas and displayed in front of the meeting room. The attendees were encouraged to view the proposed items and discuss the ideas and proposals in small groups. Participants were asked to sign a form indicating their interest areas and their willingness to lead or participate in such items.

The following is a summary of ideas and proposals include those suggested at the meeting plus some derived from numerous previous discussions with interested parties.

#### 1. Network/Communication:

- Establish LAC link within the City website
  - Listing of LAC activities
  - List of resources
  - Language and cultural resource for Asian culture

- Information on world culture activities in Longmont
  - Announcement of Asian American workshops and network meetings
  - City calendar of multicultural events
  - Information Center for all different cultures
2. Culture:
- Celebration of Asian Culture
  - Chinese Lunar New Year celebration – Dragon Dance & Martial Arts
  - Chinese movie in Longmont library
  - Reading program in the library with different/specific language
3. Retail / Business: Bring revenue to Longmont
- Sponsor workshops on business ownership, financing and development
  - Asian supermarket in Longmont
  - Asian food isles at King Sooper, Smart Co, Safeway
4. Activities:
- Demonstration of Asian arts
  - Games: Mahjongg, Chinese Chess
  - Exercise: Taichi
  - Sports: Badminton, Ping Pong
5. Classes:
- Chinese language class for American and adopted Asian children
  - English/Culture lessons for grandparents from Asian countries
  - Martial Arts
  - Culinary (Chinese, Japanese, India, Malay, etc.)

- Painting, Calligraphy, and Floral Arrangements
- 6. Charitable causes:
  - Support for needs elsewhere – children & schools
- 7. Adoptive parents connection:
  - Asian culture festival to incorporate adoptive families for culture awareness & social connection
- 8. Social:
  - Meeting Place for social gathering and networking

### **In Summary:**

The discussions at the Meeting were exciting and spirited. The mood of the attendees and the type of suggestions made, particularly the strong desire for more information, signify a longing for activities involving Asian communities and their hope to get more involved in local government and the community.

### **Implementation Suggestions:**

Any immediate advancement in LAC will be encouraging to all parties concerned.

The following are some suggestions to provide immediate results:

- Set up a LAC information section within Longmont City's website.
- Announce the meeting places that can be utilized by the Asian communities for their events and social gatherings.
- English courses for grandparents are already available. Some Asians are already attending classes. Provide school contact numbers and address.
- February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011 is Chinese Lunar New Year. Planning and preparation for Lion Dance and, possibly, martial arts demonstration should begin with solicitation of knowledgeable volunteers.
- Feasibility study of Chinese Language classes for children.
- Announce all projects under consideration. Solicit expertise and volunteers.

**Next Steps:**

- Present meeting results to Multicultural Action Committee and the Community Involvement Task Force.
- Present meeting results to Karen Roney, the Director of Community Services, for her input and decision.

**End of Report**