

# Cherry Hill Youth Development

Board Chairman,  
Family Health Centers of Baltimore  
631 Cherry Hill Road  
Baltimore, MD 21225

Congratulations of your selection as Baltimore's most recent neighborhood to receive an Operation Safe Streets grant. Under any other circumstances this achievement could result in significant benefit to the community.

As the principal author of the Operation Safe Streets Grant application submitted in early 2007 which was written on behalf of the Cherry Hill Youth Development Committee I must express my deep concern that elements of our grant application have been used to benefit the Cherry Hill Trust. Your decision to reapply for the Operation Safe Streets grant in May 2008 is clearly an action that co-opted the prior efforts of the Cherry Hill Youth Development Committee and the community. The fact that **your resubmission was done in complete isolation** from the community and our committee clearly shows your disregard for the community and its desires.

On numerous occasions and initially in December 2006, it was explicitly conveyed to you, the officers and legal representatives of the Cherry Hill Trust that no aspects of the Cherry Hill Youth Development Committee work shall be used to benefit the Cherry Hill Trust.

It significantly concerns me that the Cherry Hill Trust, which operates as a non-inclusive community based organization and the Family Health Centers of Baltimore would ignore the decision of the Cherry Hill Youth Development Committee for your own gain and disenfranchise and marginalize the hard working residents and supporters of our committee.

Cherry Hill Youth Development initiatives to establish good and meaningful relationships with community advocates was and has always been based on the fact that most participants declined to support any initiative that was led by the Cherry Hill Trust. Assurances were provided and with those assurances a significant number of residents participated in our efforts to rally the community in support of the Operation Safe Streets grant initiative back in early 2007.

Your actions in 2008 epitomize the behaviors of most executives who come into this community and marginalize the residents on a routine basis for their own gain. With **absolutely no communications with the community** about your intentions to re-apply for the Operation Safe Street grant and your new partnership with the Cherry Hill Trust we see clear indications that you continue to marginalize the Cherry Hill residents.

The actions demonstrated by your re-application for the Operation Safe Street grant only serve to further splinter the community and constitutes a failure of monumental proportions in community building and leadership!

Kim Trueheart, Chair, Cherry Hill Youth Development Committee