

January 13, 2010

Housing Options Sub-Committee Meeting

Present: Loretta McCarty, John Jones, Mike Merewether, Ken Finning,
Muriel Steiger, Patricia Hamilton

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I. Old Business

A. Gateway/Sober Center Project

The Subcommittee is expected to have a meeting later this month. There were no updates to report.

B. HomeShare Program

Ken F. reported that he is distributing applications at the One-Stop and at Ventura College. All returned applications right now are for home seekers, we currently have no applications for home providers. Ken's marketing idea is for some college students to distribute the HomeShare flyer to homes in the area surrounding the college.

The HomeShare office is at the Area Agency on Aging. The office set up is still in progress. They have a new replacement computer, and will soon have a functional desk and file cabinet.

On January 5th Susan Everett, Muriel Steiger and Patricia Hamilton made a presentation to a senior service meeting scheduled by Bonnie Wiley, director of senior programs. At this meeting they were able to get the word out to the 20 senior organizations in attendance.

Further publicity can occur with the offer from Neil A. who previously said he could arrange for free radio coverage and Peter Brown could take care of CAPS TV.

C. RiverHaven

Although Clyde Reynolds was not there to provide an update, John Jones reported that the recent strong winds had lifted the tent that was used as a community room. The tent pole damaged one of the domes, but repairs were made.

They are now considering combining some of the domes into one large dome for community room purposes.

Painting of the domes will occur in the spring when the rains are over and the weather is warmer.

It was discussed that RiverHaven requires case management and an individual goal and strategy plan, but does not require drug or alcohol treatment or referral from another agency. That is why it can be a housing resource and referral from One-Stop, if there are vacancies.

Currently there are 18-19 households at RiverHaven which is almost maximum occupancy.

New Business:

A. Subcommittee on Social Service Funding

John J. discussed the review process for each committee's funding proposals. Ken Finning will represent the Housing Options Committee because he doesn't have an affiliation with any of the funding option requests.

Once a set of recommendations is developed, they will go to the City Council Committee on Housing and Homelessness. One of the decisions being sought from the City Council committee is whether the funds can be used for direct services to the client (e.g. eviction prevention) or whether they can only be used for program costs.

Mike Merewether asked about the status of the Kingdom Center. The Kingdom Center hoped to begin renovation of the City Center Motel. It was shared that one unit was to be occupied after Christmas with the rest to follow as each is renovated. It was observed that a large investment of time and money is being spent making the site habitable and there is only a 3-year lease on the property.

The day service component has been delayed due to a citizen appeal.

How the Gateway/Sober Center and Emergency Shelter could or may be part of the Kingdom Center project is uncertain. The Gateway project is looking for another site and could provide some emergency shelter. But it may not provide shelter for each population in need.

The group also talked about the WAV project. The Housing Authority has dedicated 15 vouchers to the homeless housing component. It was asked how the ownership of the components of the project is organized. Tax credit projects typically require a limited partnership so it is assumed this is how part of it may be structured.

Rents for the artist units were discussed. Some residents have indicated the rent is more than they expected. Ken F. shared that rents are set below market rents. It was also discussed that the sale of the 13 market-rate condominium units was supposed to help support the cost of the rest of the project and these have not sold yet.

It was mentioned that the El Patio will begin remodeling in January. Some tenants will remain in their units and will be relocated to remodeled units as they are completed. The Housing Authority is providing voucher assistance to 27 units, based on referrals and committed case management

from service agencies. The County Behavioral Health Department has committed services as well.

Ken F. raised the idea of talking with the City about developing more affordable housing by using the WAV model. Specifically he indicated there are about 3000 project in the queue, waiting for permits. These include single family home remodels and commercial or industrial projects, but many of these include housing projects waiting to develop. His suggestion is for the Housing Options Committee to review the pending housing projects and identify those that could be favorable as affordable housing projects. This would be based different parameters, such as location to public transportation.

Jeff Lambert will be asked to attend a future Housing Options committee meeting to review the pending projects and also discuss this concept.

Mike Merewether reminded the group that some developers have built or may build affordable units without any city subsidy, and then they have to compete with the subsidized unit to find renters. With City or other affordable housing subsidy, the projects typically have lower rental rates than a privately developed apartment.

When Jeff Lambert next attends the Housing Options committee we also want to discuss the city's progress on Emergency Shelter site identification and funding.

Announcements:

John J. discussed the upcoming Community Outreach meeting. The goal is to discuss success stories such as the Eviction Prevention Program and getting the HomeShare Program established. The goal is to also provide opportunities for those in attendance to find a place where they can pitch in and help.

The Social Service Task force also wants to schedule a retreat for its members, sometime in the spring. It is possible that Lauri Flack could facilitate the meeting. The outcome of the retreat is to explore what role we are playing and want to play in the future and also identify what we are doing well.

John J. and others will be attending the National Alliance to End Homelessness conference on February 12th and 13th in Los Angeles. Several people from Ventura will be attending so they will review the agenda and ensure attendance at several different sessions in order to gather as much information as possible.

Cindy Cattle is investigating attendance at the Housing California Conference this spring. She would like to present information about the Eviction Prevention Program.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING

February 10, 2010

4:30 - 6:00 PM

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