

Ventura Social Service Task Force

July 3, 2013

Present: Neal Andrews, Jerry Breiner, Kent Brinkmeyer, Sue Brinkmeyer, Harold Cartlidge, Jim Duran, Susan Everett, Miranda Fierro, Ken Finning, Jill Forman, Mary Haffner, Tim Hawkins, John Jones, Jeff Lambert, Sharon Lanning, John Luttrull, Arlene Martinez, Donna Mason-Lutrell, Kevin McCurdy, Eileen McCarthy, Kate Mills, Verena Murray, Rob Orth, Kathy Powell, Melissa Ramirez, Clyde Reynolds, Laura Roberts, Debora Schreiber, Muriel Steiger, Eileen Tracy, Daniel Zapata, Sean Zellers

Introductions and Announcements

Meeting was called to order at 3:07PM. Introductions were done.

Copies of a letter from Mary Haffner to City Council regarding the Inclusionary Housing issue were distributed.

With Peter Brown not present and Jeff Lambert unable to arrive until later, the report from the City was delayed until Jeff's arrival.

Subcommittee and Other Reports

A. Faith Subcommittee – Sue Brinkmeyer

1. A draft brochure listing faith community aid available for those in need is being sent around to the various parties for review.
2. The second addition of the Faith subcommittee call for help will be sent out for inclusion in faith community bulletins next week. If any organization has a good news story – please send them in to put into the bulletins.

B. Homeless Prevention Subcommittee – Jill Forman/ Debora Schreiber

1. The Homeless Prevention coffers are very low on funds. Cindy intends to send letters with thanks to past donors and a plea for help.
2. The Salvation Army had the fund in July.
3. July and August – Unitarian Universalist Church of Ventura will have offerings for the fund in August and October.
4. The July 4th booth will be manned all day. Hopefully they will receive lots of donations.

C. Housing Options Subcommittee – Susan Everett

1. The goal is to continue planning for the insurance funds for landlords so it is important to continue to achieve 501(c)(3) status for donations for this fund.
2. Neal has been able to identify several landlords who would consider the program and several people who would be interested in serving on the board of directors.

D. Report from H2H Community Solutions – Rob Orth

1. The group has gathered enough funding to hire Amy Luoma in the housing specialist position. She will get going in the next couple of weeks. Once Amy, the housing specialist is on board they plan to do a Vulnerability Index, which may coincide with the homelessness count.
2. ESG obtained. The money will be used to hire case managers.
3. In clarifying the relationship between H2H and Hundred Thousand Homes, Clyde Reynolds mentioned that there is an effort to formalize collaboration, stimulate community engagement, establish an endowment, and funnel resources to the H2H/Hundred Thousand Homes effort. Looking at a model for that effort. Non-Profits, public and businesses could all be involved and could become the organization that determines how to use funding. Currently, the money being raised is funding the Housing Specialist position. The ESG (106K) received by Turning Point will channel through the Housing Specialist.

E. Coordinated Assessment/ Intake Committee – Clyde Reynolds

1. Assessment to be handled by a coordinated system. Marissa Mach at the County is overseeing the HMIS implementation.
2. The first deliverable is the completed form which will be available for review on September 1, 2013. The plan as to how to use the form and how the information will be used will be determined in November. By January 1, 2014 we should be using the intake form tool.
3. The form contains two types of data. 1) All assessment pieces 2) Some program data that can go directly into HMIS because they fit universal data points.

F. VSSTF Steering Committee – Sue Brinkmeyer

1. The steering committee and other interested folks will be at the July 4th street fair. The booth is on Main between Figueroa and Palm. Come see us.

G. City Report – Jeff Lambert

1. There is an all out effort going on in the Santa Clara River to eliminate encampments. The effort started in April. The police are trying to remove the criminal elements who are causing increased crime in the area and bothering the people at Riverhaven.

The effort underway is a coordinated effort between police, fire department, Parks Department, Public Works. The property is entirely within the Ventura City limits.

The area will be posted on July 16, 2013. The camps will be removed and maintenance of encampment removal will continue through August so the area will be ready for clean up by the Cal Lutheran incoming freshman on September 2, 2013.

The City Council came up with \$25K from the housing budget for housing and services and \$50K from Public Works and the Park Department for the physical clean-up work.

Jeff explained in answer to Kate Mills' question that services offered would include storage of personal items, housing, and behavioral health.

Discussion ensued as to the effects of the river bottom removals, including the effects at Ormond Beach in Oxnard. The bad guys from the Santa Clara River are showing up at the environmental study site at Ormond Beach and many of the groups there (FEDS, Schools etc.) are hiring their own security to protect them.

Rob Orth mentioned that Oxnard is looking at Ventura's Community Intervention Court – just like Ventura watched Santa Barbara then established our CIC.

Neal Andrews stated that we won't solve the homeless problem by moving people. We solve the homeless problem with housing. Another problem affecting our homeless issue is the realignment and the early release program. He brought this up to the governor who basically said it's our problem.

2. The City is reconsidering Inclusionary Housing Ordinances. The downtown ordinance covers for sale and for rent properties. The Citywide ordinance covers For Sale only . The item is on the July 15, 2013 agenda. Staff recommends eliminating the Inclusionary Ordinances. Preliminarily HCD has indicated that the Housing Element will be certified and that HCD is just awaiting the inclusionary.

In response to Clyde's question about what, given the loss of redevelopment money, the rationale for elimination of the inclusionary ordinance is. Jeff

explained that 1) he does not believe that it is the obligation of developers to bear the burden of the social concerns of the community; 2) he feels that inclusionary is a constraint to housing – less housing happens; 3) the density bonus law was just amended; 4) City has just funded affordable housing with the \$135K that they awarded to the Housing Authority and the money that was awarded to Clyde’s building; 5) no housing was developed by the inclusionary ordinance – it didn’t produce any units. One alternative could be in-lieu fees. It gives an alternative to a developer but it hasn’t been determined how much the fee should be and how the money is to be spent?

Mary Haffner asked if the staff recommendations were made before the VSSTF recommendations were received by the City. Jeff answers no.

3. The Harbor Church Conditional Use Permit received a negative declaration for the environmental report and is out for comment as of July 9th. The item will be before the Planning Commission on July 29th. Staff will have the analysis out 10 days before that meeting. At that meeting the Planning Commission could act or ask for more information. He feels that the issue will get continued.

Daniel Z. asked if the Planning Commission action is appealable. Jeff answered that it is appealable and that there could be two appeals --one by the applicant and the second by the neighbors.

Kathy P. mentions that things are getting dicey in the neighborhood around Harbor Church. A few of the neighbors are threatening church staff. She feels vulnerable when she goes to the church early in the morning to cook.

Jeff mentions that his staff has also received threats and threatening emails.

Mary Haffner stated that the Blanche Reynolds school has no problem with Harbor Church.

4. The 10-Year Strategy to End Homelessness was endorsed by the Council Committee on Homelessness and will move forward. Neal reported that VSSTF recommendations on priorities will be reviewed at the August 1, 2013 Committee on Homelessness meeting and the result will likely go forward to Council in September.

H. One Stop – Kate Mills

They continue to have very high numbers of clients coming to the One Stop. She mentioned that they have always kept a database.

IJ. Family to Family – Donna Mason-Lutrull

Donna explained for those new to the task force that F to F is a collaboration of 26 – 28 churches and 400 to 500 volunteers who cook 150 – 200 meals for homeless and families in the area. They serve lunch on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and breakfast on Saturday and Sunday. Lunch is served at 11:30 AM.

They are in short supply of children's books. Anyone with books – please donate.

- J. Homeshare – Ken Finning and Muriel Steiger
One match was made last month. Muriel asked if anyone knows someone with secretarial skills that would like to work with Homeshare. It is a paid position for about 15 hours a week.

III. Business

- A. VSSTF recommendation to City Council on Inclusionary Housing ordinances:
John Jones began the discussion with a comment that now is not the time to do away with the inclusionary ordinances. He also lamented that the meeting scheduled for stakeholder input is likely too late for any of the issues raised that meeting to make it into the Council members' packets. Sue asked if everyone had seen Mary Haffner's letter to the City Council mentioning the number of homeless children and the lack of community involvement in the decision-making process to date.

Eileen McC. stated she believes Jeff has misstated the HCD's comments regarding the City's Housing Element. She is on the committee working on the HE. She says HCD had significant comments about the draft HE and also questioned if a sufficient number of sites were identified for housing. The Inclusionary Ordinance in question is the 2006 ordinance which states that 15% of the units need to be set aside as affordable housing and 40% of the 15% targeted to the very low income. It is one tool in the toolbox.

Tim Hawkins. took issue with Jeff's statement regarding the developer's social obligation. He said community action through government fulfills the obligation to the community.

Eileen mentioned that there are two different ordinances. One is the 2004 ordinance implementing inclusionary requirements in the redevelopment areas which is the 40% of 15% mentioned above and the second is the Inclusionary rule for the rest of the City.

Kate Mills moved, Ken Finning seconded, and Clyde Reynolds' amendment was accepted on the following motion:

"The VSSTF opposes the staff recommendation to eliminate both Inclusionary Ordinances. VSSTF urges City Council to leave the Inclusionary Ordinances unchanged; that staff be directed to explore creative best practices from other communities; that any further decision be postponed until there has been significant community engagement; and that alternatives including in-lieu fees be considered. VSSTF also encourages City Council to engage in a process by which the City comes up with alternatives which achieve the goal of increasing low and very low income housing in the City."

The motion passed with 30 Ayes and two abstentions.

- B. VSSTF response to the June 25th action by the Board of Supervisors (BOS) redirecting \$300,000 of the \$950,000 left from the original \$2 million that was set aside for the homeless shelter to the Housing Authority for Castillo del Sol. Sue asked if a letter of gratitude and a request that the funds from shelter funds be replenished might be useful.

Clyde R. reported that he was disappointed that the BOS sought to take money from the shelter funds, but mentioned that the BOS has agreed to look at HOME and CDBG funds and see if any of that money can be reprogrammed so that the \$300K will not have to come out of the shelter funds.

Consensus was that no VSSTF reaction was called for at this time.

- C. No Room at the Inn, a 501 (c)(3) organization that raises money for homeless services by displaying crèches, is available for interested organizations to take over. It is mentioned that the Lutheran Social Services is considering taking over the event.

IV. Networking

On the agenda were :

- July 11, 4-5:30 pm - stakeholders' meeting inclusionary housing, Santa Cruz room City Hall
- July 15 - Inclusionary Housing item on City Council agenda.
- July 20/21 Bowl Hop - purchase a hand-crafted bowl made by local artist and sample local cuisine; proceeds go to Project's food pantry.
- November 9, 6 p.m. to midnight - Black and White Dinner at Oxnard Performing Arts Center
- One event not mentioned was the July 18th VCHTF event at the Camarillo Ranch – A Night at the Movies. There will be a showing of an Oscar winning movie “Innocente” and the actress and subject of the film will be present. Tickets are \$45 and can be purchased from Debora or Sue.
- Laura Roberts from Society of Saint Vincent de Paul mentions that they have a dire need for 200 twin mattresses for the winter warming shelter and distributed flyers asking for volunteers to help at the shelter when it opens. Those interested in helping with meal service, check in, or bedding distribution should contact Laura at lrobert@svdpla.org or 805-705-7156

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Everett