

Monthly Meeting Minutes 7/5/17

3:15 pm, 300 N. Ventura Ave, Ventura, CA 93001

Ventura Social Service Task Force

Attendees: Judy Alexandre, Angie Allmendinger, Karyn Bates, James Boyd, Jerry Breiner, Gane Brooking, Sonja Flores, Jennifer Harkey, William Hughes, John Jones, Robert March, Miguel Marquez, Pam Marshall, Kate Mills, Melissa Perezchica-Ramirez, David Schmutte, Karol Schulkin, Michele Surber, Sandra Troxell

- I. Call to order
 - A. Pam Marshall volunteered to bring copies of the minutes & agenda to August meeting
 - B. Sonja Flores volunteered to bring copies of the minutes & agenda to September meeting
- II. Introductions
 - A. Sandra Troxell (Salvation Army) - difficult to find housing in county for clients
 - Housing is expensive & scarce
 1. Recuperative Care just opened
 - B. Pam Marshall - notes that the homeless population is **not** declining
 1. This places increased pressure on the faith community.
 - C. Melissa Ramirez - Ventura County Homeless Services recently awarded a 1-year grant to offer permanent supportive housing
 1. Program started on 7/1
 2. Voucher-like program
 - a) Tenants responsible for finding housing, which is then subsidized
 3. 25 spots in program
 - D. Angie Allmendinger - works for School on Wheels to provide free tutoring to homeless children
 - E. Jerry Breiner - concerned about lack of available land for building in Ventura
 - F. Karyn Bates - thinks we need a county-wide citizens committee to work on housing & homelessness
 1. Also suggested that VSSTF could be more closely tied to the city council (in an official capacity)
 - G. Gane Brooking - important to educate the business community & the public about the housing crisis
 - H. Wayne Hughes (Salvation Army) - how do we help people sleeping in their vehicles?
 1. Not everyone wants a permanent residence
 - I. Kate Mills - important to look at all issues facing people who are homeless or having difficulty finding affordable housing
 - J. Jennifer Harkey - Public information outreach meeting
 1. Need to get public to understand the needs & what they can do
 - a) E.g. landlords should be accepting vouchers.
- III. Approval of or changes to the agenda for 7/5/17 as emailed - MSC

- IV. Approval of or changes to the minutes for 6/7/17 as emailed - MSC
- V. Treasurer's Report (Dave Schmutte) - Balance is \$3,712.46
 - A. Annual web hosting bill arrived on due date; Dave Schmutte ended up paying for it (\$116)
 - 1. Dave will be reimbursed.
 - 2. Housing Authority had been paying for web hosting for last 8 years.
 - 3. Plan going forward is for VSSTF Inc. (a 501c3) to use credit card to pay for web hosting & be reimbursed by VSSTF
- VI. New Business
 - A. Reports from Continuum of Care, Stakeholders group with current information helpful for planning
 - 1. Continuum of Care - Jennifer Harkey
 - a) Pathways To Home
 - (1) Coordinated Entry Assessment to guide people to services
 - (2) Assessments get people on list, and eventually on way to get permanent supportive housing
 - 2. Stakeholders Group - Judy Alexandre
 - a) A potential site may have been identified for the year-round transitional shelter
 - b) Peter Brown will contact Jerry Breiner
 - (1) Positive site that could work on multiple levels
 - (2) City staff enthusiastic, but very preliminary
 - (3) If property is secured, might be able to use for Winter Warming Shelter this year
 - B. Strategy planning for developing very affordable and extremely affordable housing
 - 1. Need to address advocacy, education, coordination
 - 2. Judy Alexandre - What do we do to develop housing component of plan?
 - 3. Broke up into 3 groups for brainstorming about needs, resources & steps to take
 - a) Needs:
 - (1) Health - Physical & mental
 - (2) Food - Meals, access to food resources
 - (3) Income - Connection to income sources & benefits
 - (4) Phases of Housing - campgrounds, vehicles, couch surfing, doubling up, ES, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing
 - (5) Accessibility - for clients with disabilities
 - (6) Transportation
 - (7) Veterans' needs
 - (8) Special populations needs - sex offenders, transitional age youth, domestic violence victims, youth (educational needs), LGBTQ, families
 - (9) Legal support

(10)Funding

b) Resources:

- (1) City Center
- (2) Resources for developers
- (3) Rental Assistance Programs
- (4) Partner Programs
- (5) Existing transitional facilities:
 - (a) Turning Point
 - (b) Rescue Mission
 - (c) Lighthouse
 - (d) Salvation Army
 - (e) Family to Family

c) Steps

- (1) Reconsider density (building height)
- (2) Identify areas for zoning changes for shelters & affordable housing
- (3) Get inclusionary housing commitments
 - (a) E.g. x number of section 8 units
- (4) In lieu fees - could be increased and put in lockbox for homeless housing
- (5) Identify funding sources
- (6) Identify operators
- (7) Education/community/advocacy
- (8) Judy Alexandre - city is looking at general plan
 - (a) Need some people to have knowledge of it & very specific suggestions for things to add
- (9) Kate Mills - HUD versus McKinney-Vento Act funding?
 - (a) Judy Alexandre - look at both
- (10)Karol Schulkin - keep up pressure on the city to keep moving forward
 - (a) We should get more people to attend the monthly council meetings, deliver points like:
 - (i) "We want forward movement on the shelter."
 - (ii) "We want zoning changes to help more housing get built."
 - (b) Judy Alexandre - we will come up with list of talking points at the next homeless subcommittee

VII. Reports

- A. Mercy House (MH) Visit (6/30) - Peter Brown, Judy Alexandre, Karol Schulkin, Ron Mulvilhill, Stephanie Caldwell
 1. Currently a 100 bed shelter, but building out to 200

2. Judy Alexandre - Mercy House felt like a better fit for Ventura than other organizations
 - a) Mercy House works closely with agencies referring people to housing
 - b) Felt a warmth between staff and clients
 - c) MH will be forwarding their operational plan
 - d) MH permits service and companion animals
3. Karol Schulkin - Mercy House supports Anaheim area
 - a) Opened 5/5/17
 - b) Building out a large warehouse space
 - (1) Currently half used
 - (2) Have washing machines
 - (3) Plans to set up a women's section and add showers
 - (a) Currently using portable showers
 - c) Clients need referrals from agencies to stay
 - (1) May be refused admittal for 2 reasons:
 - (a) Active felony warrant
 - (b) Registered sex offender
 - (2) Issued clean clothes, plus get other clothes laundered upon arrival
 - (3) Can also store other gear
 - d) Meals are contracted, but hope to set up kitchens eventually
 - e) 2nd floor potential build out for recuperative beds
 - f) Operating budget for fully built out shelter = \$1.8 million
 - g) Area homeless count is approximately 6,000
 - h) Property was purchased by Orange County, with 3 cities also buying in
 - (1) OC gets set-aside beds
 - i) Uses volunteers and paid staff
 - j) Cubicles for service providers with plans for permanent space for agencies in full build-out
 - k) Average stay = 3 months; maximum stay = 6 months
 - (1) Expectation to work towards finding housing
 - (a) 4 people found housing since 5/5
 - (b) 8 people referred to housing since 5/5
 - l) Clients get a follow-up evaluation after 7 days to see how they are doing
 - m) 99% of people housed from Santa Ana since last winter are still in housing
 - n) MH is a low barrier shelter
 - (1) Expectation is safety of people in building
 - (2) 1 emergency call since May
4. Miguel Marquez asked how MH deals with families
 - a) Karol Schulkin - there are other locations for referring families, but MH will house on emergency basis

(1) Family Redirection (like Family Promise)

(a) Uses taxi services to bring clients to churches that make 1-month commitments

(2) A family shelter that can house 56 people is opening soon

5. Kate Mills asked about Peter Brown's reaction

a) Judy Alexandre - Peter was very excited about what he saw & asked many questions

VIII. Announcements and Future Speakers

IX. Other

X. Adjourn; Next meeting is August 2, 2017, 3:15 pm; 300 N. Ventura Ave.

XI. Meetings:

- A. Faith Sub Committee of VSSTF July 26, 3 pm; Church of Christ (Bryn Mawr and Telegraph) Pam Marshall pojcat@verizon.net
- B. City of Ventura Homeless and Housing Subcommittee City Hall, July 12, 4 pm
- C. Shelter and Housing subcommittee of VSSTF July 18, 3 pm; Orchard Community Church Library (Telephone and Placid) Ron Mulvilhill ron@housinginnovationsandsolutions.com
- D. Homeless Prevention Fund, July 19, 4 pm; Unitarian Universalist Church, (Ralston) Sue Brinkmeyer sbrink@glendale.edu
- E. Continuum of Care Housing and Services committee , July 20, 10-12 am; Ventura county Community Foundation 4001 mission Oaks Blvd Clyde Reynolds cbreynolds@roadrunner.com
- F. Homes for All, July 20, 3pm Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf, John Jones johnsandersjones@gmail.com. Check with John about the meeting