

## Housing Opportunities Action Council Meeting Notes

Wednesday, September 28, 2016

1:30 PM – 3:00 PM

Council Meeting Room

### 1. Introductions

- a. Present: Biff Traber (Corvallis Mayor), Anne Schuster (Benton County Commissioner), Jim Moorefield (Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services [WNHS]), Paula Grace (Benton Community Foundation), Aleita Hass-Holcombe (Corvallis Daytime Drop In Center), Donna Holt (Linn Benton Housing Association), Sarah Power, Robert Stebbins (United Christian Church), Laura Deety, Tatiana Dierwechter (Benton County Health Department [BCHD]), Rocio Muñoz (BCHD), Sara Hartstein (BCHD), Letetia Wilson (Center Against Rape and Domestic Violence), Kenny Lowe (Benton County Mental Health), Brad Smith (Corvallis Housing First), Julie Manning (Samaritan Health Services), Jennifer Moore (United Way of Benton & Lincoln Counties), Corrie Latimer (Love Inc.), Jen Chen (Corvallis Housing First), Daniel Duncan (Corvallis Police Department), Brigetta Olson (WNHS), Judy Ball (LWV & CHF), Bill Glassmire (Corvallis City Council), Kenny LaPoint (Oregon Housing & Community Services), Deborah Hobbs (Baha'is of Corvallis), Paul Adent (Department of Human Services), Elizabeth Sollie, Matt Gordon (First Christian Church), Paul Cauthorn (Candidate for Benton County Commissioner), Wendell Hendershott (Grace Lutheran Church), Netsie Griffith (Grace Lutheran Church), Barbara Nixon (First United Methodist), Abigail Buchtey (Good Samaritan Episcopal), Simon Justice (Good Samaritan Episcopal), Laurie Childers (Quakers), Abby Terris (Corvallis 2nd Center), Kari Whitacre (Community Outreach, Inc.), Martha Lyon (Community Services Consortium), Parker Williams (Notetaker, BCHD)

### 2. Report on HOAC Meeting processes

- a. **Biff Traber** – The leadership committee discussed the Governance Board and how they have been lost among the audience at past meetings so we placed the name tags at the table so that the Governance Board is noticed and discussions can flow. I also got feedback about how we didn't get through the agenda in August, so this meeting we structured the agenda so that the audience can make comments at the end of the agenda.

### 3. Review/Accept Minutes from August meeting

- a. **Julie Manning** – Move to approve the minutes.
- b. **Biff Traber & Anne Schuster** – Second the motion.

### 4. Presentation- Housing and Development Task Force recommendations- Kent Weiss/Jim Moorefield

- a. **Kent Weiss** (Housing & Neighborhood Services Manager) – I was asked to discuss the initiative that was created with the current City Council in 2015. At the beginning of each council term they establish a goal(s) to work on/accomplish during the 2 year term. The initial goal is to put in place a work plan to address an issue. One current goal is to work on the housing within the community. An analysis and comparison of Corvallis' housing was done relative to other cities in the state and other university towns that are very similar to Corvallis. They looked at similar university enrollment compared to the city population. Not surprisingly, the problems/issues in Corvallis almost mirror other university cities on the West side of the country. To carry out the work toward the City Council's Housing Development Goals, they created a task force of 6 people, who began meeting in June, 2015. They began working on the information that came from Eco North West to look at ways to increase housing in Corvallis. We are trying to add more tools to our tool kit. The task force began evaluating those ideas as well as other recommendations and experiences from other resources. They came up with a series of 17

policy options they are going to present to the main Council Meeting on November 7. What they are going to do with those policy options is break them up into near, medium and long term options. There will be multiple policy options, certainly in the medium term, that can be worked on at the same time. I haven't finished the task force's recommendation based on the results of our meeting last week, so I will not present you with that today. Instead I will discuss our top 5 recommendations that we want to begin working on right away.

i. **Construction Excise Tax – Kent Weiss**

1. Allows the ability to tax new residential and non-residential development, the tax specifically applies to improvements to real property that result in new structure or additional square footage in an existing structure.
2. Bring in anywhere from \$400,000-\$600,000 each year, as development picks up we can build this into a larger pot of money and use the funds that qualify for federal funding.

ii. **Voluntary Inclusionary Zoning – Kent Weiss**

1. Allows us to ask new construction to commit a number of their units toward affordable housing. Required inclusionary zoning is limited to structures of more than 20 units, which we don't really get in Corvallis. For required inclusionary zoning the target level is 80% or above median income. For voluntary the target is 60% and below medium income. With voluntary inclusionary zoning, we can choose to set the income level and the requirement can be less than 20 units. Will be completely voluntary but will offer incentives.

- a. **Jim Moorefield** – Unfortunately OSU construction will be exempt from this.
- b. **Kent Weiss** – The median income for a family of 4 is ~\$84,000. When we match income for housing we look at the individual family.
- c. **Paula Grace** – If there are buildings going in that have more than 20 units, will you make that involuntary?
  - i. **Kent Weiss** – No because we are targeting 60% and below, so that is not where the money comes from. For example, only 3 buildings from the retreat have 20-23 units, if we had the required inclusionary zoning they would have rezoned everything to fit below the requirement.

2. **Wendell Hendershott** – Do you have any examples of this?

- a. **Kent Weiss** – We have federal funds that have been invested in several WNH projects where they build a 50 unit project that is offered to people 60% below the median, so this will provide another resource for that funding.

iii. **Accessory Dwelling Units. – Kent Weiss**

1. A second living unit built on a single home property. There is a lot of capacity to build those units in Corvallis but not a lot are built. We will offer incentives such as: waive extra fees (e.g., sewage); allow more than one accessory dwelling unit on a property or do away with the requirement that an owner has to live in one of the units; and wave system development charges (\$15,000 - \$20,000 per unit).

iv. We want to bring together community members (finance, housing, law) that know how to put together donations of money to be used for affordable housing projects in the future. – **Kent Weiss**

v. Look to the Construction Excise Tax to support funding for a Housing Planner position in community housing development. – **Kent Weiss**

1. Our recommendation is that the city moves forward and hires someone for this position so that they can begin this planning process and so that when the time comes, we can actually make the other 12 policy options a reality.
2. **Jim Moorefield** – The City of Corvallis just finished an inventory of land within the city, and outside city limits, but within the urban growth boundary. This “Buildable Lands Inventory” explained one reason why we have an affordable housing problem: the amount of developable land inside city limits compared to what we need is very small. We vote on annexations in Corvallis which is an important value in Corvallis to control how we grow, but bringing an annexation to a vote costs a lot of time and money. Willamette Neighborhood Housing Services did a small annexation, got less than 60% of the vote, and we spent tens of thousands of dollars just to bring this to vote, so imagine what larger developers would spend. One of the things the task force did was suggest another way the City of Corvallis could get involved in facilitating appropriate annexations. Most annexations are passed in Corvallis, but we don’t know about the number of annexations that don’t pass. From my point of view, we have an undersupply of land which increases land cost and opportunity for development. We need to do something to create more housing opportunities for our community.
  - a. **Brad Smith** – What has the experience been for cities that have done this?
    - i. **Kenny LaPoint** – The City of Bend put a similar tax into place and was grandfathered into the process. It has leveraged millions of dollars into the city and has brought in a large amount of affordable housing into Bend. It acts as a revolving fund. It provides the capital to get projects done that other regions haven’t had access to.
  - b. **Judy Ball** – What we are lacking is high density zone land, while we have a lot of low density land, can you answer if we are able to utilize that land?
    - i. **Kent Weiss** – The City Council is addressing that to see if we can change the density of residential zoning, this resolution will tell us how the council would like us to direct this.
    - ii. **Biff Traber** – To accept the Buildable Lands Inventory, you have to have the fixes in place before it comes up because it all gets approved by the state before building.
    - iii. **Anne Schuster** – The Buildable Lands Inventory percentage is decided, but not the actual land.
  - c. **Community member** – Do you have recommendations for tiny housing or building houses out of alternative materials?
    - i. **Kent Weiss** – The task force wanted to see what comes out of the planning work surrounding tiny houses and other types of small housing before discussing arrangements. They didn’t discuss reducing infrastructure requirements and I’m not sure that would go very far. To my knowledge, you can do a straw bale house or use other alternative materials.
5. **Planning process update** - Tatiana Dierwechter
  - a. HOAC Planning Process and Timeline Visual attached
  - b. Update – **Tatiana Dierwechter**



- ii. **Paula Grace** – We did discuss some opportunities for funding in the inter committee funding; there is more detail in the minutes from the meeting which I can get you.
- iii. **Julie Manning** – It seems that because this is such an expensive process, our best opportunity for success is to all work together to make sure we have as much funding support brought forward as possible.
- iv. **Jim Moorefield** – This body isn't currently seeking funds, so one of the purposes of the funding committee within the charter is to see what we will look like in the future. We will convene to look at existing entities and potential directions for seeking funding.
- v. **Paula Grace** – Even though we are an unincorporated organization, we can raise them through fiscal sponsors and still manage.

8. **Agency updates - Cold Weather Shelter**

- a. **Biff Traber** – In reference to an article in the paper; funds were committed to Corvallis Housing First with the support of a number of agencies that contributed to the proposal given to the city council, to operate the men's cold weather shelter for this (2016) winter with the intent to operate the shelter at a different location in future years. This does leave us with the situation where it is important to have a solution this winter for where the men's cold weather shelter will be held after this year. We have a lot of work as a community for the future years, so it is important to begin now so that we don't come along similar issues that we have this year.

9. **Other updates or information sharing**

- a. **Anne Schuster** – I wanted to point out the fact that we don't have a meeting in November because it will be combined with the December meeting to best fit our Holiday schedules.
  - i. There is also a Homeless Summit in Lebanon
    - 1. **Julie Manning** – I will send out some more information about this Homeless Summit
    - 2. **Jim Moorefield** – The guy who is putting on the summit is a consultant that has information about homelessness to "sell" to the community.
- b. **Bob Stebbins** – Boise is an example of how the US Constitution in the 8<sup>th</sup> amendment applies to the issue of where to allow homeless people to sleep because it is not legal to prohibit people from sleeping on public land. This acts as "cruel or unusual punishment" but not allowing people to sleep, so it is something to think about for our community.
- c. **Matt Gordon** – The faith community has such a large representation today because we've discussed putting together a coalition of some sort to address the homeless problem but realized this already exists in the HOAC. We decided to show today to gain ideas to discuss our own agenda and figure out what we want to do moving forward.
- d. **Jim Moorefield** – As a follow up on Bob's statement, I recently learned that shelters are covered by the Fair Housing Law. So some concepts to help the impact of shelters on the community will be looked at in the future to avoid violations of the Fair Housing Law. Also, Willamette Neighborhood Housing has an additional 13 unit project under way. 8 of the 13 units will be 1 bedroom units set aside for veterans with disabilities, 4 of the other units will be duplexes for multiple people or families. We don't have many options for housing single people so this is a great effort to address this issue. The units are in the middle of construction so we will probably be leasing them out in January or February.
  - i. **Julie Manning** – Do the 8 units set aside for veterans with disabilities include mental and physical disabilities?
    - 1. **Jim Moorefield** – Yes!
- e. **Kari Whitacre** – Some say that we do, but Parole and Probation don't send their offenders into Linn County. The partnership between COI and Albany Helping Hands allows someone who comes in as a sex offender but not within parole or probation to go to Albany Helping Hands, because they don't have any kids on site. We get around 50% of our families from Linn County.
  - i. **Martha Lyon** – How do you determine which county people are from?

1. Carrie – An ID, school registration, some sort of proof. But a lot of people tell us right away that they are not from the county so that isn't an issue.
  - ii. **Matt Gordon** – Where should we send families that are not from the county?
    1. Carrie – Send them to COI because we can shelter them temporarily and then can connect them to other resources and get them where they need to be.
  - iii. **Community member** – We are seeing homeless people coming into churches as a last resort, not knowing what to do and need help, which is part of our interest in this.
  - iv. **Martha Lyon** – The We Care program was started in the churches of Corvallis to determine who is helping who, make sure there isn't overlap, and to cover all gaps. We use funds to make sure people don't fall between the cracks. We make sure these people can make it back to where they came from.
  - v. **Kari Whitacre** – To clarify, we are at capacity and having to reduce our numbers, so we have limited ability and resources which is why we primarily try helping people from our county first. We just don't have enough beds to accommodate all of this or else we would.
  - vi. **Aleita Hass-Holcombe** – We called Salem to see what their employment rates are and they are also not accepting anyone else because they are also at capacity. Homeless people begin to circle between counties because everyone is at capacity and try to connect them with other resources that are also at capacity.
  - vii. **Corrie Latimer** – Please call us because we would love to help call and connect these families with social services.
- f. **Martha Lyon** – There was extra EHA emergency housing money from the state this year that comes through the Community Services Contortion. It's a limited amount of money that we only get for one year and we don't have it yet, but it's exciting because we've looked at the need in the tri-county region and identified target populations so we are concentrating on housing families in Benton County, homeless youth in Lincoln County, and single hard to house men in Linn County (primarily Albany). Easier said than done, but we have distributed the money and are figuring out how to use the funds. The first thing we are doing is working with the Relief Nursery. This is for people who have been separated or are in danger of being separated from their children. We are working to identify and then provide mentorship to help the families to stabilize. We are hoping for 10 total families (referrals), the difficulty is whether or not we can find somewhere for them to rent in the future.
- g. **Jim Moorefield** – The Environmental Housing Alliance is working on their agenda (hopefully ready in late October). The draft proposal will go up to \$10 or \$12 million for the biennium.
- h. **Kari Whitacre** – When reviewing the HOAC website, I thought back to the Plan to End Homelessness created by the CSC. We should consider looking into this and taking some of their key points to work on.
  - i. **Aleita Hass-Holcombe** – One thing to take from that program is detox and treatment which is a high priority for the plan.

**The November and December meetings are combined and will be held on December 7<sup>th</sup>.**