

Meeting Minutes
City and County Commission on Supportive Housing
April 28, 2009
10:00 a.m.

Attending: Ken Schmidt, Jim Marks, Anne Devitt, Jackie Ivy, Rochelle Williams, Brittany Neidhardt, Paula John, Bruce Kruger, Sue Breier, Jim Hill, Jim Mathy, Jim Tarantino, Martha Brown

Jim Tarantino chaired the meeting. Ken Schmidt, executive director of Hope House, was welcomed as a new member of the Commission.

Review and Approval of January 13, 2009 Minutes. Approved as distributed.

Supportive Housing Development Project Updates.

Martha Brown provided the following updates.

- Prairie Apartments 1218 West Highland; grand opening of 24 one-bedroom units held April 3, 2009.
- Washington Park Apartments/United Methodist Children's Services Project 39th and Lisbon. 24 3-bedroom units now under construction. 10 units specific for families experiencing mental illness. Supportive services on site
- Johnston Center Residence. 1230 West Grant Street. Project has received a second allocation of tax credits. The project will break ground later this spring.
- Empowerment Village: Project has two locations. At 1527 West National, formerly known as Oakton Manor CBRF, developer will construct 34 one-bedroom units and office space for Our Space staff and programs. Then, a second building will be constructed at 6th and Lincoln where the current Our Space operation is located.
- Autumn West: Temporary location at former Hillview Nursing Home. BOZA hearing scheduled on April 30th at 6:30 p.m. in room 301B to obtain a special use permit for the potential new location at 836 N. 20th St. The Community Advocates organization is now administering the Autumn West program.
- St. Ben's/Heartland Housing: Prospective site identified at West Tamarack and Fond du Lac. Heartland Housing will apply for tax credits in June of 2009. They are the current Continuum of Care bonus project.

Discussion: Paula John commented positively about the location and grand opening of the Prairie Apartments.

Jim Hill commented that Community Advocates is rallying support for the BOZA hearing regarding a special use permit for the proposed location at 836 N. 20th St. There is some opposition to the location from individuals who believe there is an over concentration of services for individuals with disabilities on the west side. The project also faces financial challenges. Milwaukee County had hoped to provide federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program (foreclosure) funds to the project, but allocations of

NSP funds fell far short of what was expected, and the project cannot be funded from that source. Jim Tarantino asked if there was anything that the commission could do.

MOTION: A letter will be drafted to the Wisconsin Department of Commerce requesting reconsideration of NSP allocation. Sue Breier moved, Paula John seconded. All in favor.

MOTION: A letter will be drafted to BOZA in support of the Autumn West Safe Haven Project. Sue Breier moved. Jim Marks seconded. All in favor.

MOTION: A letter of support will be drafted and sent for the St. Ben's Heartland Housing Project. Sue Breier made the motion. Ken Schmidt seconded the motion. All in favor.

Tax Credits: Martha Brown provided information about the recent allocation of Low Income Housing Tax Credits by the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA). For the first time in 2009, tax credits were set aside for supportive housing. The following Milwaukee supportive housing projects received tax credits are:

- Johnston Center (91 units)
- Empowerment Village (65 total units 1527 West National and 525 West Lincoln)
- Veterans Manor (52 units)

These allocations would finance 208 additional new permanent supportive housing units in Milwaukee, if the newly allocated tax credits can be sold successfully. The current tax credit market is very weak.

Martha Brown commented that the Special Needs Housing Action Team had suggested that Milwaukee County needs 1000 units of supportive housing for the mentally ill. If all the units that received tax credits in 2009 are constructed, the community will be at 30% of this goal by the end of 2010/early 2011.

New Samaria: Jim Mathy indicated that Tri-Corp is going through foreclosure on the New Samaria project. Cardinal Capital and WHEDA are exploring an option for Cardinal Capital to take over the management of the building if a foreclosure is formalized. There are a lot of management issues that need to be dealt with very quickly including meals for the residents and the building is at risk of losing its electric and gas services.

Discussion: Jim Hill commented that the City of West Allis has concerns over the general condition of the property. The city feels there are needed repairs on the property.

10-Year Plan to End Homelessness: Jim Mathy presented on the Continuum of Care's efforts to develop a Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness. The process should be complete by late summer. The plan will include recommendations regarding supportive housing.

MOTION: Milwaukee County is seeking formal commission endorsement for the SAMSHA/HPRP initiative which rapidly rehouses behavioral health division clients and works to establish income. Suzanne Breier moved. Jim Marks seconded. All in favor.

Recovery-Based Housing: Karen Avery and Peter Hoeffel, representing the Mental Health Task Force, asked the commission to consider developing an oversight body to assure that the housing projects developed are recovery based. Ms. Avery and Mr. Hoeffel asked the Commission to develop benchmarks and criteria for new housing projects.

Discussion: Paula John commented that there should be input from family and caregivers. Suzanne Breier felt that this was not the commission's role. Jim Hill felt projects should promote goals of the commission. Karen Avery explained Recovery based as a very bottom up process that empowers consumers to be active in their own care and recovery. Karen also stated that there needs to be a holistic approach to prevent another New Samaria. Rochelle Williams suggested a community advisory approach to evaluation. Jim Tarantino suggested that an annual report card be presented to the commission to continue to evaluate the permanent supportive housing projects the Commission has supported. The group decided that a presentation would be needed on best practice models. Jim Hill and Martha Brown agreed to come up with an annual report card of projects that provides information on both number of units constructed and the supportive services provided.

Impact of Supportive Housing in Illinois. A copy of a study was handed out about the impact of supportive housing in Illinois for the group to review.

MOTION: A letter will be drafted for the Common Council and County Board explaining the impact of permanent supportive housing. Suzanne Breier moved. Jim Marks seconded. All in favor.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Commission on Supportive Housing will be July 28, 2009 at 10:00 at Cherry Court Apartments.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned.

Minutes prepared by Jessica Shriver