

Steering Committee for Concord's Plan to End Homelessness

Meeting Notes September 15, 2020

Held Via Zoom 2:00 - 3:30 pm

DRAFT

Steering Committee Members Present: Byron Champlin, Ellen Fries, Ruth Perencevich, Claudia Walker, Jason Wells, Linda Lorden, Tim Sink, Karen Emis-Williams,

Absent: Rosemary Heard, Lew Feldstein,

Additional: Ellen Groh, CCEH; Greg Lessard, CCEH; Mayor Jim Bouley; Roseanne Haggerty, Community Solutions

Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Byron Champlin, Chair, at 2:05pm

Approval of April Meeting Minutes: Moved by Ruth and seconded by Jason. Passed.

Welcome to Linda Lorden, President, Merrimack County Savings Bank, newest member of the committee. Formal welcome to Linda. Went around introducing ourselves.

Brief update from CCEH on Concord-area homeless service providers' responses to COVID-19

RC open under a tent. Working on new ventilation and air purification for RC using various Covid funding streams. May use current shelter space during the day for folks to stay warm since places they used to do so, such as the Library, coffee shops, etc., are not available.

Working with Friendly Kitchen to see if they stay open in afternoons. Applying for staffing at FK. CCEH would send staff for casework. Funding would not come until January – CDBG funds.

Toilet at CenterPoint was available, but trouble with drug use, complaints from neighbors – gone just this week.

Outreach workers and staff seeing increased drug use and mental health issues in camps.

McKenna – seeking to make more space available in their building.

Family Promise – not rotating – at a campground in cabins – ending end of October.

Friends – used hotel rooms for a while – no longer able.

Winter Shelter – hard to get good advice on how many okay in the space we have – CCEH staff think 28. Usual is 40. Air purification system. SEEKING ONE LARGER SITE. Or a second spot, but staff very concerned about ability to do this. Not anticipating use of any volunteers this winter.

3 shelters in town combining to apply for shelter money.

- Hotel rooms – use for those most medically at risk, and least likely to cause trouble
- Another site?
- First Church?
- Have Jason reach out to all faith community at once?

Tim: average numbers last year?

EG: 32/night - slow in beginning, then busier in mid-winter. Under capacity in March this past year – Covid came and guests left in fear.

Tim: Turn away any? EG: Yes, 6 or 7 nights called 211

Linda: would extra space have to be in walking distance of town? YES

CDBG-CV funding request approved by City Council calls for putting folks into hotels. Don't know if anyone will take them. Holiday Inn or Best Western?

CCEH plan to have caseworker involvement at hotels? EG: do check-in at least every day have person hotel staff could call.

Byron – suggest considering it similar to HF model. Provide a lot of support – take hassle off hotels. Better chance of getting hotels to cooperate.

EG: also considering cleaning service at end.

Mayor Bouley: Toilets at Centerpoint and FK, now gone. Who supplied? CCEH did CenterPoint. Handwashing station at FK CCEH provided. We don't know who paid for others – Rec. Dept.?

Who accepting homeless guests? Holiday Inn, Best Western, Fairfield Inn – need credit card pay. Hampton Inn but in Bow; Elmwood Lodge. Not Residence Inn, or others owned by Steve Duprey. Damage paid for by hotel, not City. Stealing issues. TV damages, etc.

Jason: Happy to work with faith communities. Greater Concord Interfaith Council meets Tues. 7pm, so timely. Put EG in touch? YES. Jason connecting.

Mayor: Funding sources? EG: Shelter modification – 15 M NHHFA, spend by 12/30, physical adaptations or buy whole building. Covid CDBG ... Money – Service only, for increased need due to Covid, avail. Jan.1. Other major pots? NERF \$ put out by NHCF – very specif. CDBG - \$ for our tent.

Discussion: Framework of homelessness as a public health emergency; how can the City best respond?

BC: Rosanne Haggerty: newly moved to Concord! Welcome.

RH: Thank you. Happy to be here in Concord. Family here.

Head of **Community Solutions** – work to end homelessness around the country.

Met with EG and Byron to discuss what's going on around the country. Emergency \$ from CARES Act has been used very creatively. Buying hospitality properties. Short term for quarantine and isolation, long term make into housing. Chance to build long term investment in infrastructure, accelerate HF. Impressive outreach to landlords, get new actors into the mix. Have had 4 communities get to ZERO chronic and Veteran's homelessness DURING COVID!!! Others very close. Big shifts in how communities are addressing homelessness. Public Health agencies working in new ways with housing agencies. CDC having huge conversations now about homelessness and health outcomes. HL is a public health crisis for those experiencing it, and for others affected by it.

NH State Law – Public Health and Housing converging – What are the things we're trying to do to address homelessness that are being held up by rules and regs, codes, etc.

Declare Homelessness a Public Health Emergency?? New national conversation.

BC: what regulations get in the way? RH: Data sharing arrangements. Can't share – many ways to overcome. Public Health Law says in "Emergency" need to communicate, HIPA waivers.

Use of properties – NH, DHHS – use of properties for public health – zoning setbacks, use restrictions – maybe made sense once, but may be needed to meet emergency need – public health imperative can override. Ability to use property for public health reason.

Atlanta example – many folks talking about acquiring properties, developing, etc. Takes forever. NOW getting moving!! Quicker in Covid – public interest, emergency, different set of judgements. Seeking ways TO DO THINGS!!

Does Concord have these obstacles. EG talked about CCEH's idea to use Lun Hing site for decompression and later develop into housing- seemed there were many obstacles from the City. Discussion- May have been differing perspectives. How packaged and presented may make big difference. Many residents don't want affordable housing. Is there magic to 30/40 number of units? Yes, pay fees and overhead, not have concentrated groups of all people coming from homelessness. – 40 units w/10 from HL would be good mix....

CCEH has been looking at tons of properties for many months. So much time and effort by CCEH and City to no avail. What can we do to make it easier/better/feasible? Limited supply of property. Are there models in other communities to better that tension?

RH: A challenge everywhere. Get real estate community involved. Much trouble with affordable properties is due to bad management, bad upkeep, no security, etc. Have management reassure community. Is there a **property management Co.** In the community highly respected that could help us?? 2 different conversations possible.

Discussion on hotels- Fairfield Inn!! 104 units. Convert quickly Overabundance of hotels now. Closed. Now is the time to get hotel property Call Duprey!

Rosanne send deal terms – how \$ used, etc. in other places in case helpful.

EG- how to use after Covid? \$ to use for property for shelter ok, then hope to create new space for housing.

BC: Time is up. Thanks to Ellen Fries for being the scribe today and for the past several years. Seeking someone else in future, so think about it.

Thanks to all for you time.

Special thanks to Rosanne and to the Mayor.

Meeting adjourned at 3:28 pm

As a reminder, the Steering Committee is now meeting quarterly.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 15, 2020 2:00 – 3:30 PM

Meetings will be held by Zoom unless Covid 19 restrictions can be lifted

For questions, contact:

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