



## Homes for All Leadership Group

**“Providing innovative leadership toward ending homelessness”**

*Tuesday, February 13, 2018, 9:00 am*

### Meeting Notes

#### Welcome & Introductions

Commissioner Garrido opened the meeting and thanked the Salvation Army for hosting the group each month. Attendees introduced themselves. No comments or changes were noted for the previous January 9<sup>th</sup> meeting materials or meeting notes.

#### Reports/Updates

**i. Kitsap Housing and Homelessness Coalition**

Sheryl Piercy, Social Services Director from the Salvation Army and member of the KHHK, discussed the Project Connect events held in January. The Project Connect is a community resources fair run in conjunction with the annual homeless point-in-time count. This year the Project Connect fair was conducted over 3 days and in 3 locations: Port Orchard, Bremerton, and Kingston. Each location had more than 40 vendors in attendance and attendees were able to meet with vendors for assistance. Another benefit is vendors networking with each other.

**ii. Permanent Supportive Housing**

Kurt Weist, Executive Director of the Bremerton Housing Authority, discussed the concept that BHA is pursuing for a low-barrier Permanent Supportive Housing project. A project like this is needed in our community and similar efforts in other communities in Washington have been very successful. Monica Bernhard from Kitsap Mental Health Services noted that recently BHA applied to the County for 1/10<sup>th</sup> of one percent funding for Mental Health to fund a feasibility study which will be performed by Community Frameworks. Kitsap Community Resources and Bremerton Housing Authority have been looking at sites and a sub-committee has been formed to find and evaluate locations. Expect the feasibility study to be completed at the end of April.

Kurt stated that where there is a significant community need to address housing crises that the faith-based communities rise to the challenge. Kurt has been presenting to numerous churches throughout the county about the gaps in housing services and the need for housing services. He shared the presentation with the Homes for All Group.

A few of the notable statistics and talking points from the presentation:

- Last year 1 in 250 households experienced homelessness

- Causes for homelessness include a combination of insufficient income, limited or no employment, health crisis, mental health, disabilities, lack of skills, and chronic substance use.
- Currently service delivery system is inefficient as many individuals end up in hospitals and jails which cost over \$40,000 to house each person.
- On any given day an estimated 600 people in Kitsap County are living without shelter (living on the streets, temporarily with friends/family, in vehicles and in the woods).
- Last night 74 people stayed at the Salvation Army Winter Shelter. This shelter will be closing at the end of March.
- There are nearly 1,000 homeless students across all Kitsap County school districts.
- Deeply affordable housing is needed for people with extremely low income.
- Currently there are only 12 affordable rental units available for every 100 extremely low income households.
- The Section 8 program was very recently cut 20% by the current federal administration.
- Bremerton Housing Authority has not been able to issue a voucher in 16 months. Inflation means that the Housing Authority will not be able to keep up with rents.

There was discussion about some of the other small projects in the county that have helped to house people including One Church One Family where churches adopt a family. The Salvation Army shelter model of a low-barrier damp shelter could be expanded.

Poulsbo Mayor Becky Erickson commented that the City is working on drafting rules for Cabins for Christ. Similar to One Church One Family concept, except that instead of finding a house to host a family, parishes will be permitted to construct dwellings on church property. These dwellings will contain bathrooms and it will be free to hookup utilities. It will be relatively inexpensive: they are expecting costs to be around \$2,500 per unit. She will be presenting this idea to a series of pastors next week to find churches who will participate. Currently there is another project already in operation at the Nelson House. This beautiful old house has been rehabilitated, and now houses 5 young women. Coffee Oasis is providing management and the neighbors are very happy with the project. The City is also looking at a similar project on another property for housing a workforce training space.

Vicki Cole from the Suquamish Tribe discussed their tiny shelter program. This project began in October last year with 6 tiny shelters. Showers and bathrooms are provided in a facility that existed prior to placing the tiny shelters. Currently 1 participant has moved on to permanent housing, 3 are participating in the Tribe's wellness programs or other services, 1 has employment, and another is attending school. Last year they had 2 units become contaminated with meth and the units must be cleaned before they can be reused.

### iii. **Legislative Update**

Kirsten Jewell, Kitsap County Human Services Housing and Homelessness Program, noted some of the recent legislation impacting housing for Washington State. The House has passed three homelessness-related bills and they are moving to the Senate.

The Source of Income Discrimination bill which prohibits discrimination of renters based on sources of income such as social security, child support, SSI and Section 8 vouchers.

The second bill would change policy so that the amount of rental subsidy available would not be reduced when people to make a transition from the HEN Housing & Essential Needs Program to the ABD Aged, Blind and Disabled Program.

The last bill (HB1570) is the Document Recording Fee bill which would eliminate the recording fee sunset provision, make the recording fees permanent, eliminate the current requirement for spending 45% of rental assistance in the for-profit market, and give local counties the option to increase the amount collected through the document recording fee.

## **Discussion: Review of Progress on South Kitsap Small Cottage Community**

### i. **Physical Site**

In South Kitsap another site needs to be identified. New sites will need to have the ability to place fencing around the property, have accessible utilities, parking, bus lines, and space for kitchen and bathroom facilities. The faith community has promised to rehabilitate 2 units available to act as kitchen and bathroom facilities.

### ii. **Human Services Network (Programs)**

#### • **Human Services Planning**

The Kitsap Rescue Mission, Kitsap County Human Services, and Kitsap Community Resources, are working together to define and organize the human service provisions of the Kitsap Cottages project.

There was discussion about the importance of public outreach and communications to make any project welcomed to the local community. Work is underway to develop a Frequently Asked Questions document that will address what the community wants to know about this project.

#### • **Policies and Screening**

Most of the human services plan and how services will be provided has been completed. There will be not be a set length of stay, but housing is intended to be temporary with the goal to find permanent housing as soon as possible for each resident. The number of residents in the village will be capped at 20, and units can house 1-2 people at most.

Screening for the program will be provided by KCR's Housing Solutions Center and will include a background check and drug testing, including an evaluation for meth

use. There will be a zero-tolerance policy for drugs (including marijuana) and alcohol in the village buildings. The zero-tolerance policy also excludes sex offenders, arson or the manufacture or distribution of meth. Other criminal history will be evaluated according to when it occurred, actions taken since that time, and mitigating circumstances.

- **Council and Governance**

The next step is to finalize plans for the initial Resident Council and Resident Code of Conduct prior to residents moving into the village. Resident responsibilities and rules will be developed and rules for governance will be established by following guidance from multiple similar projects and evidence-based practices.

Mike O’Shaughnessy, Executive Director of the Kitsap Rescue Mission, stated that it would be preferable to set up the council 30 days prior to moving into the encampment. The Rescue Mission would shelter the initial council together at the Rescue Mission for 30 days to allow the participants to develop working relationships with one another, set rules, work on outreach, all of which helps to develop the skills needed to govern the village. The Council will also identify a spokesperson for the village and reach out to neighbors. This will have the benefit of helping these formerly homeless persons to restore their place in the community, to put out a public face for the village to the neighborhood, and help to reduce stereotypes and fears by meeting with neighbors directly.

A community neighborhood group will be the final piece of governance. This group will include the residents, neighbors, and businesses. This group will meet on a regular basis to discuss and address issues so that everyone involved will have a voice. This will help to establish elevated trust among neighbors new and old to feel safer than the status quo.

- **Remaining Questions**

Funding for case management for the initial launch of the village is budgeted to help for the first year of operation only. Upon opening of the village, fundraising will need to start immediately to establish funding for the future.

There are a few questions that are currently needing to be addressed. These questions include:

- What are the rules regarding children?
- How to arrange fee structure and what is fair for costs? Cannot call it lease or rent without having to follow Fair Housing rules.
- If fees are to be charged, how would this apply to residents with zero income?

- **Outreach and Messaging**

Messaging is of huge importance and we need to make sure that the community knows that subject matter experts are involved, that a lot of planning and thought

has gone into this process, and that we know what does and doesn't work before starting a village. The FAQ document being put together is one piece, but there are multiple avenues to explore. The League of Women voters can and will hold public forums and well as get stories into the local news. A social media account can be established to promote this project and to provide information with regular announcements.

- A Communications Sub-committee was formed to help develop the talking points and messaging.

## **Additional Discussion**

### **i. Update to Homeless Housing Plan**

Kirsten noted that over the next couple of months the Kitsap County Homeless Housing Plan will be updated to come into compliance with new state requirements. There will be opportunities for stakeholders to provide input on the updated plan. A survey will be sent out to collect information from stakeholders about priorities, barriers, and solutions needed for Kitsap County. In addition, there will be a community stakeholder meeting.

- Kirsten will send out a link to the survey and information about the Community Meeting.

### **ii. Pet Care**

Suzanne Hughes from the League of Women Voters made a brief mention that they are making good progress on obtaining help providing pet care services. In the short-term: three veterinarians have offered their services including exams and vaccinations to residents of the village. There are discussions to offer a monthly pet care clinic at the Salvation Army.

### **iii. Need for shelter after Salvation Army Closes Winter Shelter**

Sheryl noted that it will be 3-4 years before some of the planned housing projects come to fruition. In the meantime there is a need to have year-round low-barrier shelter which accepts guests that are currently staying at the Salvation Army. The Winter Shelter will close on March 31<sup>st</sup> and there is no place for these guests to go once the doors close. Sheryl has talked about this at other meeting including the KHHC meeting. There is hope that some churches will be able to step up, perhaps to split the load and rotate throughout the year. What is needed lots of floor space and bathrooms. If it can be located somewhat close to the Salvation Army then people can still make use of the shower and laundry facilities.

- Tim Bolger will talk with Sheryl about requirements for a space.

## Commitments and Closing Comments

- Communications Sub-committee will be created. Members to include Tim Blair, Judy Rae Karlsen, Suzanne Hughes, Jim Bolger, Monica Bernhard, Kirsten Jewell, and Nancy Olsten, with Mike O’Shaughnessy convening the meeting.
- Suzanne Hughes will connect with Sheryl Pierce to collect stories to submit to the Kitsap Sun.
- Suzanne Hughes will work on arranging sites to advertise and preparing a League of Women Voters presentation.

Next Meetings: 9 a.m. at the Salvation Army

March 13

April 10

May 8

## Meeting Participants

Commissioner Charlotte Garrido	Kitsap County
Dr. Susan Turner	Kitsap Public Health
Amanda Knee	YWCA of Kitsap County
Angie Silva	Kitsap County Commissioner’s Office
Doug Washburn	Kitsap County Human Services
Holly Paterson	Housing Kitsap
Jennifer Kreidler-Moss	Peninsulas Community Health
Jim Bolger	Kitsap County Department of Community Development
Joe Roszak	Kitsap Mental Health Services
Judy Rae Karlsen	Citizen
Kirsten Jewell	Kitsap County Human Services
Kody Russell	Kitsap Strong
Kurt Wiest	Bremerton Housing Authority
Leah Milavich	Resident
Lisa Kurek	Eagle’s Wings
Mary Roe Dewald	YWCA of Kitsap County
Mike O’Shaughnessy	Kitsap Rescue Mission
Monica Bernhard	Kitsap Mental Health Services
Nancy Olsten	Kitsap Rescue Mission
Randy Barnett	Coffee Oasis
Robert Christensen	West Sound for Social Justice
Sheryl Piercy	Salvation Army
Suzanne Hughes	League of Women Voters
Tim Blair	Project Share – Ekklesia Church
Tom Pinkham	Resident
Vicki Cole	Suquamish Tribe