



WESTSIDE CITIES

· BEVERLY HILLS
· CULVER CITY
· LOS ANGELES
· SANTA MONICA
· WEST HOLLYWOOD

Homeless Issues Committee Meeting
February 15, 2007
12:30 – 2:30p.m.
Santa Monica Main Library
Staff Meeting Room, 2nd Floor
601 Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica, CA

AGENDA

The meeting was called to order at 12:40 by COG Chair, Santa Monica Council Member and Homeless Issues Committee Members Richard Bloom; and Culver City Council and Homeless Issues Committee Member Carol Gross.

Mr. Bloom announces that due to the length of the agenda and presence of a number of members of the public desirous of addressing the Committee public participation would be limited to a total of five minutes.

I. Report on Launch - Urgent Care Facility for the Westside

Robin Kay announced the 12/18 opening of the Westside Urgent Care facility She noted that the program was not fully operational, pending resolution of a remaining technical issue with the state. Nonetheless, they have seen 127 clients to date. Luana Murphy, program Executive Director commented that the program has been well received with 51% of clientele coming from hospital emergency rooms – they're a sicker clientele that might otherwise be the case. As a result, stabilizing these clients to avoid further hospitalization is critical. The program is operational 24-hours a day.

II. United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) 2nd Annual Summit on Innovations for Jurisdictional Leaders. National Press Club, Washington D.C. March 7-8, 2007

Julie Rusk, Cit of Santa Monica advised that several representatives would be attending this summit and would report on results at a future Committee meeting.

III. Update on CARES West Los Angeles VA Proposal for Homeless Vets Therapeutic Housing

No word – no progress out of Washington. Ms. Gil Krisiloff suggested efforts be initiated to get out ahead of the federal process and to and to develop “our own” re-use policy recommendations. She offered to will work with staff and propose actions to initiate/further advance re-use planning for the West LA VA property.

IV. Year-round Emergency Shelter for the Westside

Safiya Jones reported that an inventory of LA city-owned property has been prepared and is being analyzed. She said the city will be working with residential groups, philanthropic and faith based groups and the business community as project partners. Ms. Jones was asked if other cities would be contacted in the outreach/collaboration process, she said, "Yes".

V. Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) Report on January Homeless Count

Rebecca Isaacs advised that the three night event involved 1300 volunteers and numerous sites. She briefly discussed the methodology established, the demographic and telephone surveys used. She advised that all data will be compiled and ready by July.

VI. Culver City Update on St Joseph's Center Project and Community-Based Subcommittee

Committee Member Carol Gross introduced Andrew Parker from Upward Bound House, who commented on his organizations expanding family shelter project into Culver City. He said the reception from Culver City had been wonderful and they are looking to others willing and interested in financially supporting the new project on which will completely renovate/reuse an old motel on West Washington Blvd. He commented on the generosity of Supervisors Burke and Yaroslavsky, and noted the hope is to close escrow in the fall of 2007 and to open the facility in Jan. 2008.

Armando Abrego, Culver City advised that as the Committee becomes more knowledgeable, they are more comfortable asking questions and that they are reaching out to the Coalition to address homelessness on the Westside.

Rhonda Meister, St Joseph's Center thanked Culver City for extending the hours of operation of the Armory.

Rebecca Isaacs, LAHSA asked Ms. Meister if St. Joseph's had collected data to determine where the increased number of clients is coming from. Ms. Meister responded that they are asked, and that clients are moving west and into CC, but they are not seeing a significant number of clients/families from Skid Row. Ms. Isaacs noted how important reliable statistics/data is and the need to gather information in a uniform way using uniform questions. Flora Gil Krisioff noted that a recent conversation with Jim Howitt, Volunteers of America, WLA Armory revealed they have seen a real spike in the number of families served (90), and Tim Davis in Sylmar has advised they used more housing vouchers than ever before. Julie Rusk offered to work with other cities and providers to develop a "script" that all could use to gather consistent information and to share any information collected by the City of Santa Monica.

VII. Update on Santa Monica's Evaluation of the Homeless Continuum of Care

Julie Rusk reported on implementation priorities as directed by the Santa Monica City Council upon accepting the Evaluation report in January 2007. These include :

- Convening a community stakeholder committee
- Developing options for increasing the permanent supported housing
- Developing a public info campaign regarding panhandling
- Increasing the supply of services to the homeless beyond the city of SM

- Developing a new data management system
- Advocacy efforts on fair share housing legislation with real incentives for other cities.

The City of Santa Monica recently released an RFP for the next three year funding cycle for social services.

Committee Member Carol Gross commented on funding issues facing providers. Andrew Parker commented on the funding penalty currently faced by providers as a result of linking “poverty” statistics to money for shelters. The homeless count tie in was briefly discussed.

VIII. Regional Coordination and Advocacy. Identification of Additional Strategies.

Kate Vernez advised that a new subcommittee of the League is being formed to address funding and policy mechanisms to provide incentives for homelessness services and housing development. The goal is a non-combative approach. The new subcommittee will meet on March 1 to develop guiding principles on the homeless housing issue so that the League can better respond to legislative and regulatory proposals as they arise. Related policy resources are being developed to increase capacity for local agencies, provide a compendium of zoning tools, development incentives and best practices for siting, and prioritize the allocation of available resources. Housing element reforms are also underway to better ensure compliance. The overarching goal is to form consensus on the issue of fair-share homeless housing through incentives rather than mandates in order to avoid a legislative veto. The League invited elected and appointed officials from around the state to participate in development of these policy parameters, to be voted on March 30 at the League Policy Committee. Committee Member Carol Gross reminded that we are the League and urged the League’s involvement to balance out the issues. Committee Member Richard Bloom observed that the efforts appears to be pulling together nicely.

It was noted that Leslie Wise, Rebecca Isaacs and Flora Gil Krisiloff will be part of a delegation heading to march in early March. Ms. Gil Krisiloff said the intent is to advise of needed legislation and she encouraged these present to email priorities to her. She noted the intent to discuss funding for support services – much more difficult to find; she referenced the Homeless Count unfunded federal mandate – the count is costing the county a million dollars; and that there has been no cost of living adjustment for grants, some of which are 10 years old. She also noted an increase in funding match from 15-25%.

Committee member Richard Bloom noted he will be joining Mayor Villaraigosa, with representatives from the LA and Santa Monica Chambers in early March to address Homeless Issues. Committee Member Gross noted her intent to be present.

IX. Next Steps:

Future Agenda and Action Items Identification

- A. Report back on USICH Annual Summit
- B. Flora Gil Krisiloff will work with staff and propose actions to initiate/further advance re-use planning for the West LA VA property.

X. Public Comment

Mr. Bloom advised that each speaker would be afforded two minutes to speak.

Kristin Flannery representing SONIC Venice, Andre de Montesquiou representing SONIC Venice and Arthur Kessler a Venice citizen addressed the Committee. The noted their concerns that there is an unacceptable concentration of homeless services/service agencies in their neighborhood; there has not been appropriate neighborhood coordination and advance planning regarding this project; and the “flexible” hours of operation of the proposed program will be confusing and lead to more loitering/neighborhood problems.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:45 p.m. Next meeting scheduled for April 19, 2007.

Meeting Attendance:

Santa Monica: COG Chair and Homeless Issues Committee Member. Richard Bloom. Staff: Ed Edelman, Kate Vernz, Stacy Rowe, Julie Rusk

Culver City: COG Board Member and Homeless Issues and Committee Member Carol Gross. Staff: Armando Abrego

Beverly Hills: Staff: Julie Kahn

Los Angeles: Staff: Safiya Jones,

West Hollywood: Daphne Dennis

Other: Jody Hall Esser (WSCCOG), Flora Gil Krisiloff (Supervisor Yaroslavsky), Robin Kay (LA County Dept. of Mental Health), Rebecca Isaacs (LAHSA), Olga Mohan. M.D. (Harbor UCLA), Bruce Rankin (Westside Food Bank), Tni Reinis (New Directions), Luana Murphy (Exodus Recovery), Debby Modell (OPCC), Samantha O’Neil (SM Chamber), Rhonda Meister (St. Joseph’s Center), Andrew Parker (Upward Bound House), Anna Scott (Wave Newspapers), Carol Bodlander (Venice Citizen), Kristin Flannery (Sonic Venice), Andre de Montesquiue (Sonic Venice), Arthur Kessler (Venice citizen).