

Walnut Creek Homeless Task Force
February 1, 2023
Meeting Notes

Welcome by Facilitator: Marco Newsom

Speaker: Stefanie Brynen, Walnut Creek Housing Manager:

Discussed her personal goals:

- Formal Data Collection within the city and those agencies touching homeless in Walnut Creek
- Determine common elements, identify data is already collected by multiple entities
- Looking for emerging needs for housed and unhoused, number of affordable units
- Objective assessment of needs met
- Catalogue the action items and timeline promised in the Housing Element
- Document the progress toward the items
- Apply and/or support funding efforts for 2 grants every year
- Gather input on priorities for funding/gaps in current funding including WCHTF and agencies who serve homeless in WC
- Gave overview of the Housing element, as the basis for our future work
- Reported that WC already has a diverse housing stock with only **30 – 35% of current housing stock is single family homes**, however, we still have needs for more diversity

Donna: As homeless and housing advocates we acknowledge the work that the City has done and encourage city housing policies that allow creative ways to meet affordable housing needs; example: Hope Village at Grace Presbyterian Church.

General Updates & Discussion

- Task Force Goals and priorities 2023 – Marco Newsom
Marco reviewed last year's goals and priorities. Recommendations for 2023:
 - Focus on meeting affordable housing needs
 - Table incorporating WCHTF as a **501 (c) 3** for now
- Communication remains a priority. A new lead is needed. Gina will continue to work on our website
- Safety Net Services: weekend services including showers will be done by agencies other than the task force
- **Partnerships:** assess on upcoming survey
- **Advisory/advocacy remains a priority**
- Annual survey will go out soon. Task force members will receive a link. We will explore other ways to distribute: Library, Trinity List serv, WC Downtown Nutshell, ?others?
 - Data collection and prioritization
- Future meetings in person or hybrid. Stephanie will check of the availability of the 3rd floor conference room at the city as a preferred location.
- Annual Forum, Hybrid is the first choice, again looking for location and city support. Preferably before the fall. Potential topics – affordable housing needs; survey members for topics.

Walnut Creek HOP Update – Sgt Gary Silva

- WC is experiencing a huge influx of new homeless folks, and more trouble with theft.

- Seeking feedback from public about the larger encampments in Civic Park regarding trash and trespassing
- Assessing port-a-potty needs in areas to the north (near Burger King)
- Storm Effects: HOP worked with Rich Payne to move encampments out of swollen creeks to parking areas along the trails. County increased capacity at East County shelters.
- **Trinity Center Updates: Leslie Gleason/Leticia Wiesner**
 - Spring Fundraiser June 15th invitation at the Bancroft gardens. Please promote and attend! Trinity Center needs our support.
 - Storm effects: increase in new people at the Center, increase in capacity in Evening Program. 25 slots for shelter at the Armory, current use is about 13 – 14 people. Issues with Armory include cost, availability, seeing more folks with mental health issues where open area sleeping may not be appropriate, pets and personal possessions are not accommodated, Armory set up of one large, open room (like a gym).
 - Looking for alternative to Armory and have not found any. (County has a \$21.5M former motel which has been very successful as shelter for unhoused.) Smaller groups which can form “community” more easily could be a solution. Trinity sees social bonds between frequent users of the Evening program.
 - Daily census at Trinity Center is increased year over year to average of 67 members per day, sometimes as many as 80 people. Demand is continuing to rise.
 - Neighborhood relations for Trinity have been good, due to Trinity’s new security staff. This is necessary with the numbers of folks seeking services and the increased number of folks with mental health issues.
 - Coffee with Cops: regular events where Trinity members and HOP officers/CORE team have an informal time to get acquainted and form relationships, dispel myths between those seeking services and HOP and CORE team members

County Updates: Jaime Jennet

- PIT count was successful this year. Special acknowledgement of the support from WC police. Data needs extensive analysis/cleaning, expect 2023 PIT reports in the summer. (2020 PIT is the most recent reliable data available.)
- Delta Landing in East County has 175 units, very successful in housing those in need.

Loaves and Fishes Jeanette Kennedy

- Food truck, delivering food now, in a 6 month pilot period. Transporting meals from L & F central kitchen to East County sites. Donna added that Sports Basement on Ygnacio Valley Boulevard has offered their parking lot for the food service in the past.

Housing Committee Update – Donna

- Hope Village Community Meeting – February 16, 6pm open to community @ Grace Pres. Church, City will announce that there is no need for City Council approval or additional public hearings. Project is moving forward, estimated completion is May 2023.
- SB4 has been introduced by Senator Wiener to allow religious entities to build affordable housing on their land “by right.” see <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-12-06/california-churches-nonprofit-colleges-could-build-homes-on-their-land-with-new-bill>
- We are encouraged to contact our State Senator to express our opinions on this bill. SB4 is expected to be up for the vote at the end of February or early March. Templates and more information can be found in YIMBY’s Advocacy Guide: [SB 4 advocacy guide - Google Docs](#)

Next Meeting March 1, 2023

Resources:

CCC Housing Needs Report: <https://chpc.net/resources/contra-costa-county-housing-need-report-2022/>

Christoph Nauer – St. Perpetua Church shared at MFAC Housing and Shelter Meeting

Order of Malta Clinic in Oakland—500,000 homeless people in the Bay Area without health insurance. Link for an organization that provides health care for the homeless:

<https://www.orderofmaltaclinic.com/>

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Habitat Restore Program is moving to Diamond Blvd. and will be open in March. and always use volunteers for this.

Link for pickup/donation information:

<https://restore.habitatebsv.org/donate/>