WALNUT CREEK HOMELESS TASK FORCE Notes

**December 8, 2021**

**Regular Meeting: 2:00 PM – 3:30 PM**

**Introductions and Welcome**

**Hope Village**

Rev. Mark Burnham of Grace Presbyterian and Jasmine Tarkoff of Hope Solutions gave a presentation on Hope Village Micro Homes currently being evaluated at Grace Presbyterian. Rev Burnham gave an overview of the church’s mission and its history in the neighborhood including the sale of excess land to provide for Tice Oaks Apartments which has 91 affordable apartments for low-income seniors. Rev Burnham and Jasmine Tarkoff introduced the team and gave an overview of the project. Hope Solutions has the lead on acquiring funding for capital and operations. Hope Solutions will also take the lead on tenant screening and will work with the County’s Coordinated Entry program. The project is aimed at seniors and tenants will be thoroughly screened and onsite services and management will be provided. There is more info about Coordinated Entry: <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/#CES> Questions were raised about the potential for conflict at the preschool as well as other concerns about the project. Rev Burnham indicated that he is working closely with their onsite preschool to ensure that there aren’t any conflicts. The agenda for the public meeting that night was shared. The public meeting was to be focused on presenting information on the project and listening to the attendees. Input was being solicited on what people liked and disliked about the project and how to address any challenges identified. In addition, Jasmine Tarkoff encouraged anyone with concerns to reach out to her directly at [jtarkoff@hopesolutions.com](mailto:jtarkoff@hopesolutions.com) and Jaime Jenett invited anyone who had questions to reach out to her at [Jaime.Jenett@cchealth.org](mailto:Jaime.Jenett@cchealth.org) or 925-464-0152 cell. Sam Levine brought everyone’s attention to a Change.org petition being circulated <https://www.change.org/p/mayor-of-walnut-creek-prevent-homeless-housing-at-grace-presbyterian-church-in-walnut-creek> opposing the project. No application has been submitted to the city yet because they are working to reach out to interested parties to find common ground and practical solutions.

**Rebuilding Together East Bay North Organization (RTEBN)**

Mr. JW Frye gave an overview of their program in Berkeley and other nearby cities which started with an overnight parking program and has grown to include a variety of programs that work to preserve affordable home ownership by providing rehabilitation and critical repairs to the qualified seniors, veterans, and the disabled. They have been able to pair CBDG funds to fix up housing with bridge funding to both fix up the main house and construct an auxiliary housing unit on the property to both provide affordable housing and to provide income to the owner to help them stay in their property. They are interested in providing services such as engineering and architectural work through their volunteers on projects like Hope Village.

**Task Force Leadership Update**

There continue to be open positions such as the advisory committee which helps update the City Council on activities and the Homeless Engagement committee.

See 2020 Goals and Priorities for details WCTFH Mission & Goals 4.1.20 (wchomelesstaskforce.org)

**Weekend & Evening Services**

LaWanda Franklin gave an update on the Off-Hours support team. They have compiled the information from the survey from 39 people. The surveys show a continued demand for off hours services including food, shelter, showers, and laundry. One issue that was brought up was the difficulty figuring out how to access services. Both CORE and HOP regularly contact homeless and have brochures available. One additional avenue to spread information could be at the BART station. Cindy Darling is reaching out to BART to set up a meeting with BART, CORE and HOP to see what is possible.

**Meeting with Rotary Club**

Mark Newsom met with the Rotary. They continue to be interested in helping and are looking into establishment of a 501c3 so that they have an organizational structure.

**Communications Committee report on Fall Forum**

Lisa Andrews gave an update on the Fall Forum. So far feedback is that it was well received by the community, and many are hoping to be in person next year. A couple suggestions were to include a dry run, especially if on zoom next time, to look for opposing views to incorporate that perspective, and to work to avoid acronyms. There were 75 RSVPs and attendance by 45 with 12 to 13 panelists.

**General Updates & Discussion**

Trinity Center Updates: Leslie Gleason reported that the evening program is getting ready to start the following Monday. This year there is an opportunity for volunteers to help and they can sign up at <https://trinitycenterwc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Trinity-Center-You-Inspire-Hope-How-to-Help_Nov-2021.pdf> She gave a big shoutout to city staff working on this including Sherluna Vien and WCPD. Trinity is continuing to see high numbers and averaged 77 people a day. This is causing challenges due to space, and they are working on alternative solutions.

HOP team: Sgt Gary Silva, WCPD is continuing to reform the Homeless Outreach Patrol. He introduced Matt Adamson who is on the team one day a week now and hoping to work more and Jacob Chaney who is working to check up on encampments on a regular basis. Once the HOP team is fully reconstituted, they expect to be more effective. All three officers attended a 2-day training on de-escalation and mental illness that they found very valuable.

Two action items were to connect HOP with Steve Mason in the Contra Costa Sheriff’s office who is interested in helping and using the HOP model. The second was to consider whether there was any way that volunteers could help Jacob with data entry or other non-law enforcement activities to help out.

County update: Jaime Jennet shared that the uptick is continuing and that in November, of 31 people contacted, one third were newly homeless. There was some good news. The Richmond Brookside Center has reopened and has the same type of more private spaces that the Concord center has which seems to b working well. In additional Delta Landing in east county is ready to open in a hotel purchased and rehabbed. These services are accessible through the CORE team.

For Council on Homelessness meetings, you can always check their calendar here: <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/council.php#Meetings> and you can also sign up for the mailing list so you get notifications by going here: <https://cchealth.org/h3/sign-up.php>

● Trash Disposal: Jan Warren said they met on Nov 17th for a brainstorming meeting and are turning to more of a health focus.

**Next Meeting: January 5, 2022**