

# Group Living Advisory Committee – Community Corrections Subgroup Meeting #2

Date and Time: Tuesday, May 1, 2018, 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Location: Williams Street Center

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## Attendees

### ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Kristin Lewis  
Frances Falk  
Shannon Carst  
Rose Rodriguez  
Michael Henry  
Greg Mauro (Denver Director of Community Corrections)

### DENVER ELECTED OFFICIAL

Deborah Ortega

### DENVER STAFF MEMBERS

Andrew Webb  
Eugene Howard  
Kyle Dalton

### FACILITATOR

Meagan Picard

## Meeting Summary

### 1. MEETING OPENING – WELCOME/INTROS/AGENDA

Meagan Picard opened the meeting, welcoming and inviting everyone to check in. She then shared the meeting agenda:

1. Welcome/Introductions
2. Review and Agree: Ideal Future State
3. Continue: Problem Identification
4. Next Steps/Close

### 2. REVIEW AND AGREE: IDEAL FUTURE STATE

Prior to getting into discussion about the ideal future state, the group wanted to discuss several questions:

- First, a cluster of questions were up for discussion: Does the zoning code as written make sense thinking about where facilities can be located (in industrial zones versus in communities). Is siting something we want to talk about now? If someone wants to start a new facility, should they be obligated to follow the zoning code as written today? If we have the opportunity to be in commercial mixed-use areas, some other locations that may

be close to residential, do we want to require them to be in industrial areas that may not be near other zone districts?

- The group discussed how this is the first time in a long time that the city is looking at this subject in the zoning code.
- Interest was expressed in broadening the allowance/use – including into non-industrial areas – in order to reduce the likelihood of concentration and to allow the current "non-conforming facilities" the ability to expand.
- There are other uses that are also limited to industrial areas which results in a concentration of certain uses that cannot locate elsewhere.
- A member noted that Crossroads is considering their options, including demolition and rebuilding to "look" more like Delancey Street.
- It was also noted that people are most concerned about sex offenders and violent offenders. Tours of the facilities were suggested to demystify them. It was also suggested that we could reconsider what's included in the industrial areas more specifically.
- What is the average length of stay? And how do placements happen?
  - It is based upon offender reintegration and support needs, which includes everything from case management to treatment services
  - Process: when someone is coming out of prison, you get referred to the city where you'd like to live. Community Corrections Board approves the requests for placements. Assignments to facilities are based upon the needs of the client and availability of space.
- Would language changes allow non-conforming to become conforming and then also allow expansion in both services and physical form?
  - All responded affirmatively
- Is reviewing the ordinance a part of this project?
  - We are looking specifically at zoning and land use regulations, not necessarily the municipal code regulations to operations. However, city representatives said that the group can identify issue areas in the municipal code for future municipal code revisions (may need to involve Safety and City Attorney's Office). They said this is an ideal time to identify other municipal code areas in need of updates.
- If we change the category from "community corrections" to another type of use, would that also remove our non-conforming status?
  - We may need to revisit the definition of traditional community corrections. Delancey Street isn't really traditional community corrections.
- Square footage requirements - where do these come from?
  - From other state and federal requirements.

The group then reviewed, updated and agreed to key elements of their ideal future statement:

- Zoning supports a flexible and safe range of approaches to meet client and community needs.
- Supportive services that assist clients to reintegrate into the community and reduce recidivism.
- Healthy community relations in neighborhoods not concentrated in one or a few places.
- Public is educated about the work being done in community corrections.

### 3. CURRENT STATE – PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

#### **Staff Review & Comment**

Staff reviewed issues already identified by the group – these issues can be addressed within the Denver Zoning Code:

- Demand exceeds supply, but DZC challenges expansion and limits competition
- "Community Corrections" nomenclature leading to negative stereotypes/images
- 3/4 Housing Models being enabled
- Need for physical space modifications to have "space" to provide services – limited by DZC. Employment support/services are need, perhaps even on-site, in addition to treatment.
- Square footage references that are State/Federal requirements that then change making it challenging to align our DZC language with national standards when they change.
- Zoning Code Parking requirements exceed the needs of facilities (in some cases)
  - Q: Is there flexibility to not provide required parking when we know it's not going to be used? Do the facilities have the flexibility to share parking with others? A: Yes, facilities can use extra parking capacity with others.
  - It was noted that the variance process is there to provide relief for parking requirements and other issues, but we should consider making it easier to address reduced parking needs.
  - There's still a public process when facilities want to expand, so if we remove the variance process, there's still an opportunity for communities to be notified when a facility has desires to expand (physically or programmatically).

After the above review and further discussion of previously identified problems, the group considered: *What in the DZC prevents the desired future state?* Only a few additional problems were noted, and the group agreed that the list is pretty complete with these additions:

- Zoning above 120 beds/facility - there isn't any documentation or national evidence/best practice around a specific number of beds; the number is arbitrary. The issue is more about community acceptance. It was noted that the number of beds per facility (zoning allowances) and funding capacity are not always the same number. DZC could allow 500 beds but Community Corrections may only have funding for 100, therefore the remaining 400 could be located by the facility.
- Better right-sized numbers of beds per zone district (similar to what we have already).
- Square Footage Requirements (40 v. 50 SF). Currently following 50 SF.

### 4. NEXT STEPS AND CLOSE

The group will work with a draft problem statement, developed by staff based on what they have heard in these meetings, and they will revise it to share with the full committee at its convening on June 13, 2018.

Next meeting: Andrew will send a Doodle poll. The group is looking at either May 22nd or June 5th (Tuesdays are good for most). Location: Independence House