

Group Living Advisory Committee – Transitional and Special Care Subgroup Meeting

Date and Time: Monday, April 9, 2018, 5:30 – 7:00 PM

Location: Step Denver

Attendees

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Brendan Bartic
Bill Dolan
Chris Coddington
Scott Kiger
Lex Papesh
Daniel Fuchs
Mimi Florance
Brice Hancock
Paul Scudo
David Eisner

DENVER STAFF MEMBERS

Andrew Webb
Kyle Dalton

FACILITATOR

Meagan Picard

Meeting Summary

MEETING OPENING

Meagan Picard opened the meeting, welcomed everyone and shared the meeting agenda:

1. Introductions
2. Charter Housekeeping
3. Ideal Future State
4. Current State – Problem Identification

1. INTRODUCTIONS

Meagan Picard invited committee members to share their names, affiliation, and what they hoped to contribute to this process. Members shared interest in contributing perspectives on needs of juveniles and adults in recovery as well as neighborhood interests, information on what sober living is and isn't, provider perspectives on challenges in neighborhoods and a general desire to learn.

2. CHARTER HOUSEKEEPING

Meagan shared that the Definition of Success has been edited in response to kick-off meeting comments and asked committee members to review and consider it for discussion at the next full

committee meeting. She also shared that the agreements page had been updated to incorporate input from the kick-off meeting and asked members to sign it. Signed agreements were received from Chris Coddington, Lex Papesh, Scott Kiger, Brice Hancock, Bill Dolan, Paul Scudo, and Daniel Fuchs.

3. IDEAL FUTURE STATE

Meagan shared that we have a worksheet to help guide this process but will start with where we want to be in our future state. The group appeared to coalesce around the following vision of how recovery programs (transitional, special care and sober living) would be handled in Denver communities in an ideal world:

The Denver Zoning Code would allow for the full range programs to be sited equitably throughout Denver neighborhoods in order to provide for the full range of recovery needs for juvenile and adult community members. This allowance would include clear definitions and regulations of these facilities, including considerations for density and spacing in relation to other supportive group living arrangements and programs, in order to ensure that integrity within the industry is maintained and that neighborhoods can have confidence that clients of these facilities will be good neighbors and know where to turn in the event that they are not. In turn, neighborhoods welcome program participants as full and equal members of the community, making each neighborhood a better place to live together.

The above statement was drafted by project staff and will be reviewed and updated at the next meeting of this sub-committee. Following are more detailed comments shared in the conversation, which were used to develop the above draft statement of the future that this group wants the DZC to help create – or to allow for:

- Community members have greater access to needed services and resources – provide financial and community support, including safe and affordable housing
- Participants are in communities that are welcoming – “not less than; be part of”
- DZC has better categories/definitions (Colorado Alliance of Recovery Residences and, National Alliance of Recovery Residences have examples; good example in St. Paul, MN, as well):
 - Designation for sober living (transitional – offender re-entry or special care – treatment now)
 - Capture needs across continuum of care (levels 1-3). Basic sequence of help: detox, residential treatment (different levels), IOP, OP, sober/independent living. Sequence is case by case.
- Presence of these facilities don’t put home values at risk.
- Participants are respectful of neighbors – get consistency within industry (need regulation for this)
- Want clarity for both providers and neighbors
- Integrity in industry is maintained with regulations
- Collaboration occurs within the industry
- Consider relationship to other types of shelters in DZC update
- Be clear about neighborhood impact

4. CURRENT STATE – PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

The group also discussed several questions on their minds and shared information about the existing situation. Highlights of those discussions follow:

- Q: Do all housing options need to be integrated into neighborhoods? A: yes
- Q: What is state versus local purview? A: Local regulations should govern parking, size, fire safety, health, and these need to be compatible and consistent.
- Q: Where do you go to complain when something goes wrong? A: Get to know each other and who owns the house (quality control is managed individually in each sober housing arrangement)
- Q: Are there density rules by neighborhood? A: Yes, there are proximity and density regulations for large facilities but not for small. The group seemed to agree that both should be included, along with consideration for other forms of group living regarding density.
- Q: What class is sober housing in? A: Fair Housing Act considers people in sober living arrangements as “families in sobriety,” so they have been exempt from regulations in the DZC. Recovery is considered a disability; addiction is not.

Specific problems/needs identified included:

- Too many people in a neighborhood creates negative impacts.
- Treatment definition is needed – state licenses treatment facilities (special care)
- Sober living homes are not defined – needed
- Small versus large care facilities – need clear definitions for small facilities, like large facilities

The scope of this group’s work was refined to specifically include: transitional, sober, special care group living for juveniles and adults.

Additional items for follow-up:

- Get information on state efforts to define sober living/recovery housing
- Gain clarity and agreement on what the group is working to achieve through their recommendations (review and refine statement in blue block above)
- Learn more about existing situation by exploring a few “case studies/examples” related to zoning of these facilities (one that’s gone well (Paul will prepare example from provider perspective, and Chris will ask for one from Joel from neighborhood perspective) and one that went poorly (Lex will prepare example from provider perspective, and Chris will ask for one from Joel from neighborhood perspective))

MEETING CLOSING

The group agreed that they will meet again on Monday, April 23, 2018, 5:30-7pm, at Step Denver and will consider another location for the future during that meeting. They also agreed to include review and refinement of the group’s “ideal future” statement as well as review and discussion of the case studies in the next meeting before continuing to identify problems.