

Group Living Advisory Committee – Community Corrections Subgroup Meeting

Date and Time: Friday, April 6, 2018, 1:00-2:30 PM

Location: Fox Community Corrections Program

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

GUEST

Arik Yox

DENVER STAFF MEMBERS

Andrew Webb
Eugene Howard
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, whether they were a guest or committee member and what they hoped to contribute to this process. Members shared interest in contributing historical perspectives on community corrections in neighborhoods, history of re-zoning community corrections, provider perspectives, and information to support decision-making. Some participants also shared interest in learning about zoning community

corrections facilities and contributing a fresh perspective on the issue. An important question was also raised: *are we meeting needs..do we need change?*

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 Rose Rodriguez, Arik Yox, Kristin Lewis, and Frances Falk.

One participant also asked if the group has a map of community corrections facilities to use in the group's work. A map, with some limitations, is available for reference as needed today.

3. IDEAL FUTURE STATE

Meagan shared that we have a worksheet to help guide this process but will start where do we want to be in our future state. First, community members wanted to develop some shared understanding about project background and this group's focus. Discussion included:

- Regulations and Use Limitations set forth in the Zoning Code. What they are today and how the zoning code regulations impacts these types of facilities?
- This project is limited to land use and siting regulations in the Denver Zoning Code, but we will collect any recommendations for changes to the municipal code and other regulations and provide to appropriate agencies for consideration.
- In 2005, the capacity of existing facilities was inadequate compared to the needs for the population seeking re-entry into the Denver community. At that time, there were 11 facilities, but the buffering and siting restrictions severely limited the available locations for new facilities. Given that, the profession sought to expand the capacity limits of existing facilities from a cap of 60 to 90 persons. Four facilities were identified as being capable of expansion - all along the I-70 industrial corridor. Others could not expand because they were non-conforming uses (Independence House). Through a negotiated process, the four sites were allowed to expand to 120 max capacity. The 44th and Fox location was limited to a capacity of 90 persons max.
- Concerns from communities led to the 10-year moratorium to observe and monitor neighborhood impacts (2008 – 2018) and is set to expire next month (May 2018).
- Facilities have not expanded to the maximums: one is at 110, 87, 73, 90.
- There's now a need to increase capacity. There is no appetite to build prisons; rather have more community correction facilities as an element of the solution to the need.
- South Federal and Yale is the sole Federal Corrections Co-Ed facility operated by Independence House. This facility has a capacity of 105. It follows Federal and Municipal regulations. Funding comes from Federal government, not state pass-through funding.

What would the desired future state look like? Various ideas were shared, all of which coalesced around a vision of zoning that supports a range of approaches to meet client and community needs, including supportive services to successfully re-integrate clients into communities and prevent recidivism, as well as healthy community relations in neighborhoods, including not concentrating these facilities in one or a few neighborhoods.

During this discussion, a participant noted that it sounds like we're talking about models and programs and asked if we should be talking about programs or more about buildings and locations. The group consented to building understanding of what we are trying to enable in order to know what we need the code to do. Highlights follow:

- Delancey Street in San Francisco; non-profit, social enterprises classified as training schools; interview/acceptance process; no sex offenders, arsonists, or mental health issues. Operate a number of businesses, on-site restaurant/coffee shop, management of the facility. Self-sustaining operations (no one has to pay). Philosophy: "Each one, Teach one." When they leave the program, they have skills, relationships with the broader community, and hold one another accountable. Program has been around for 40 years and is expanding to other cities in other states. Average residency is two years but people don't move on until they're ready. The facility is located in a very expensive area of San Francisco.
- Move beyond the status quo to help insure the client's success.
- More funding is needed locally.
- Thoughts on how big facilities should be. Should the code enable the expansion of uses/programs in non-conforming structures without expanding the number of beds? In these cases, the uses/facilities are "grandfathered." You can make changes in grandfathered facilities, you just cannot expand the non-conformity. You can reduce the non-conformity, not expand it.
- Would be great to have some flexibility to expand, modify a non-conforming facility, including parking (or using parking areas that are no longer required or needed).
- Sunnyside is changing, and there is a desire to be allowed to change to fit within the changing community, to better "fit into" the area.
- Having diversity: building, programming, some autonomy that keeps us within the parameters of regulations.
- Being integrated into community
- Flexibility and the ability to have healthy competition to therefore have better programming and services. Currently, only those with buildings or land can provide services
- TRANSITIONAL HOUSING: There's a need for this population (a 3/4 house that would fall under Comm. Corrections. A "3/4 House" is a less restrictive version of a halfway house. The community corrections board would make the determination of who would go into this type of facility.
- From a community standpoint, the concerns are around safety, ethical operation and fair share.
- Looking for collaborative opportunities. What services/programs that others provide offer partnership opportunities: job training and opportunities for large municipal projects like National Western Center and Central 70? Should we have conversations with other providers like Salvation Army that also serve members of this population and other shelters that provide housing to folks coming out of incarceration?
 - 50% of who we serve are people who have been/come from addiction. Synergy/opportunity to bring the sober living providers together with this group to have a collaborative discussion?
 - We should have a meeting and input from clients.

4. CURRENT STATE – PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

One participant noted that the community seems open to facilities and new models, saying that a lot of what is done now includes behavioral health with programs that train people with heavy equipment, etc., and external communities are helping clients feel valued and welcomed.

Following are problems identified in the meeting – some related to DZC specifically and some related to context in which community corrections are operating:

- Demand has increased again. What is the pent-up demand? (ANS: the prison population).
- Population is about 750, but we only have capacity for 650-730
- We cannot expand (Pecos) because there's no space to add programming. We have no space to expand.
- We cannot expand our Williams Street facility because we don't have the space to expand physically.
- It is true that places cannot expand because they (those in residential areas) are non-conforming. Maybe we can talk about enabling non-conforming expansions?
- At the Tooley Hall location, we don't need the parking, but zoning requires it.
- University affiliated programs are 501c3s, but all the others are for-profit organizations - one local, the others are larger, out of state corporations.
- NEW DEFINITION: we may need to redefine what constitutes "community corrections"
 - Cluster Living: having more than 3 unrelated "program graduates" living in a single residential unit. They're still being monitored (community corrections), still serving their sentences under DOC.
 - Is there an opportunity to revisit language? Is "community corrections" too misleading for the work that's desired (and being done) by our providers?
Answer: Nothing mandates the language.

MEETING CLOSING

The group agreed that they will look for opportunities for joint meetings with other subgroups and will hold a focus group with community corrections clients after they have identified a focused set of questions to ask clients. Prior to the next subgroup meeting, committee members will consider the above ideal state and identify specific issues in code that are barriers to what we are trying to achieve. *Where are the disconnects between what you do and what you want to do?*

Next meeting scheduled: Wednesday, April 18, 2018, 4:30 pm, at 1776 Williams Street (parking on the street or behind building)