

Group Living Advisory Committee – Shelter for the Homeless Subgroup Meeting

Date and Time: Tuesday, April 3, 2018, 4:30 – 6:00 PM

Location: Webb Municipal Building

Attendees

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Terrell Curtis
Terese Howard
Michael Henry
Michael Garcia
John Hayden
Mimi Florance
Mike Malloy

DENVER ELECTED OFFICIAL

Robin Kniech

GUEST

Chris Conner, Denver's Road Home

DENVER STAFF MEMBERS

Andrew Webb
Eugene Howard
Kyle Dalton

FACILITATOR

Meagan Picard

Meeting Summary

1. MEETING OPENING

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

1. Introductions
2. Charter Housekeeping
3. Subcommittee Worksheet

2. 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 neighborhood impact, clarity on shelter/housing needs, consideration for balance between neighborhood and shelter/housing needs, advocacy for removing barriers to developing good shelter/housing options, and information to support decision-making.

3. 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. Several members provided signed agreements, and we'll reach out for those we have not received.

4. WORKSHEET DISCUSSION

Discussion opened around these questions: *Where have you experienced challenges with the zoning code as it relates to shelters for the homeless? What's needed that's not currently allowed (regarding group living arrangements)?*

Challenges identified:

- a. Relocating to a temporary space is a challenge – related to definitions under group living (Transitional Housing) less than 2 years and shelters. Some facilities do both. One overnight accommodation is not the same as temporary housing (less than two years).
- b. Majority of facilities are co-locating services, programs, storage needs, professional services for clients and conflicts between short and long-term shelter/transitional housing. "I hear communities ask for a depth of services within facilities, not fewer." "The places we've seen succeed are those that are smaller with wrap-around services. The ones we see causing more challenges are the larger ones that are mono-purpose. Our code should be promoting best practices."
- c. Two-year deadline is arbitrary. (HUD is moving away from this timeframe requirement.) Transitional Shelter vs Transitional Housing vs. Permanent Housing.
 - NEED: maybe we need a "transitional shelter" category or definition.
 - Clarifications on shelter types from provider perspective: Emergency Shelter (night to night), Emergency Plus, 24 hour shelter (open day and night) and long-term shelter (longer term, case management).
 - Transitional Housing is where the 2-year limit kicks in (Dorm environment, 1- to 2-year program; long-term temporary; new name being used: "bridge housing")
- d. Coastal Issues that could find their way to Denver: RV Homelessness. We don't have any way to address this kind of homelessness
- e. Quality of facilities is a concern.
- f. The need for repeated extensions is a problem.
- g. Council Districts are not an appropriate tool for shelter use spacing, as they are redrawn at least once every 10 years per City Charter.

Questions raised:













- a. What is our goal as a city? Emergency rescue or transitions out of homelessness? Are we really talking about flavors of Transitional Housing?
- b. What is the code trying to protect? Prevent? Still Relevant? What are the purposes of the restrictions? Do we still need distinctions?
- c. How a shelter is defined by the services provided - what was the purpose of this? Do we still need it? There needs to be supportive services.

- d. Are most facilities providing diverse services? Answer: programs are headed in that direction. (See item b. under “challenges identified” above.)
- e. What is the population of persons exp. Homelessness? Answer: 5,100 7 County Metro Area; approx. 3,300 in Denver.

Scope clarifications made:

- a. Housing and Emergency services are totally different. Income restricted housing is not a shelter, no matter the owner/operator , therefore not in scope of the project. Transitional housing, after group discussion, was determined to be within the scope of the subcommittee.

Following open discussion, the group discussed what we are trying to achieve with our population and what are we trying to achieve through zoning, as well as related best practices and the gap between current code and these goals and best practices. The following table represents that discussion:

What we are trying to achieve			
Safety (emergency shelter) 	Path to stable housing (for those who are ready) 	Enable supportive services (when needed/desired) 	Be good neighbors (respect neighborhood needs) 
Best practices			
Offer range of shelter/housing options, along with supportive services; allow shelters to move, evolve, grow and adapt to best practices with as little disruption to people's lives as possible (enable people to remain/recover in their communities if desired). Options should be welcoming and dignified.   			TBD 
Gaps (problems in current code)			
Not enough hours allowed 	Short-term residence is problematic; may need new category for transitional. Is emergency shelter distinction necessary? 	Support services disincentivized 	TBD 
Code citations for gaps/problems identified			
TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

Assignment given to committee members: Consider above table and identify specific issues in code that are barriers to what we are trying to achieve and to implementing best practices. Additional issues will be added in future subgroup meetings.

5. MEETING CLOSING

Request was made to view maps; members invited to stay late to do so. Eugene explained that maps that are not complete and some information (e.g. domestic violence shelters) is intentionally not on it.

Next meeting scheduled: April 17, 4:30-6:00pm, at the Webb Municipal Building