

Group Living Advisory Committee – Transitional and Special Care Subgroup Meeting #3

Date and Time: Wednesday, May 23, 2018, 1:00-2:30 PM

Location: Webb Municipal Building

Attendees

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chris Coddington

Scott Kiger

Lex Papesh

Brendan Bartic

Paul Scudo

David Eisner

Bill Rutherford

Bill Dolan

DENVER PLANNING BOARD MEMBER

Don Elliott

DENVER STAFF MEMBERS

Andrew Webb

Kyle Dalton

FACILITATOR

Meagan Picard

Meeting Summary

1. WELCOME

Meagan Picard opened the meeting, welcomed committee members, and shared the agenda:

1. Welcome
2. Draft problem statement – staff presentation
3. Draft problem statement – discussion → consensus
4. Next steps and close

Committee members briefly introduced themselves and checked into the meeting.

2. DRAFT PROBLEM STATEMENT – STAFF PRESENTATION

Andrew gave an overview of the draft problem statement created based on previous subcommittee discussions and staff input.

3. DRAFT PROBLEM STATEMENT – DISCUSSION → CONSENSUS

Meagan reminded the group of their group process agreements and opened discussion on each of the eight elements of this group's draft problem statement.

1. **Sober Living Homes are not clearly identified and regulated as a Group Living Use.** The group agreed to this element, following discussion about diagnosis as the distinction for special care facilities, how the community doesn't see treatment as recovery, Fair Housing Act challenges, and cautions about over-regulation of small residential facilities.
2. **Two-year stay for Transitional Housing does not conform to real-world needs.** The group agreed that this element should not be included in their problem statement. While it is a problem for other populations and service providers, it is not a problem for this providers or clients in this group. They acknowledged that the goal of transitional housing is to give enough time to get to permanent, stable housing, and at least in this context, more than two years is more permanent than transitional. They also acknowledged the two-year designation for transitional housing in state licensing.
3. **The distinction between services provided in a Transitional Housing setting and a Special Care Home facility are unclear.** The group agreed to this element, following discussion about whether or not medication is given as the distinction between the two and how difficult it is to regulate. The discussion highlighted how lack of clarity is a problem.
4. **Small Residential Care Facilities contribute to the concentration of services and "institutionalization" of neighborhoods but face far fewer requirements than Large Residential Care.** The group agreed to this element, with some caution. The group discussed how this may be more perception than reality, since there is no data to back it up. Also, one neighborhood resident explained that it is more of a concentration issue: "too many" small, sober living facilities is a concern for neighborhoods, particularly when there are issues with property maintenance. Whether or not data supports the concern, the group agreed that neighborhoods need to be heard on this issue – it needs to be addressed to determine if there is a good solution.
5. **Establishment of new Large Residential Facilities near adequate transit and services is limited by zoning, spacing and density requirements.** The group agreed to this element, following discussion about how the only places left for these facilities are in undesirable, industrial areas without good access to transit and services. They also discussed how the definition of large facilities could be the source of the problem. (Possible solution: consider square footage or number of bedrooms) They also discussed how the family definition of people in small recovery homes creates a loophole in regulation, which some in this group see as a disconnect in the view of small residential facilities.
6. **Neighborhood role in permitting decisions is unclear and difficult to explain to the public, especially for Small Residential Care Facilities.** Agreed – no discussion.
7. **Minimum 6,000-square-foot lot dimension for Large Residential Care Facilities may have the effect of concentrating such facilities in suburban neighborhoods.** Agreed – no discussion.
8. **Section 11.2.8.1.F, specifying compliance with the Denver Building and Fire Code, is redundant, as all residential uses must comply with the Building and Fire Code.** The group agreed to this element, following discussion about how this

may be a technical issue (implies that the Building and Fire Code isn't applicable elsewhere), though the group recognized the need to emphasize these regulations and considered whether enforcement issues need to be addressed in this forum or elsewhere.

4. NEXT STEPS & CLOSE

Having reached consensus on the draft problem statement, this group will not meet again until the solutions/recommendations phase of this project. Next up are the full committee and public meetings.