Housing Background
2019-20

Compilation of notes and Council member research for review and discussion

06/19/20
Excerpt from 06.18.19 meeting minutes
"Subcommittee Development"

Ann Pierce walked through the assigned subcommittee members for the 3 groups that formed at the last meeting:

Housing: Tim Lomas, Lauren Weinstock, Kendall Rames
Transition Services: Ann Pierce, Betty Lehman, Kate Williams
Mental Health: Kendall Rames, J.J. Tomash, Lauren Weinstock (added at the meeting upon request)

Per the needs assessment, each subcommittee will focus on:

- Housing to explore supported housing for those within Denver with IDD, to explore landlords accepting vouchers and integrate them with others within the communities in which they live.
- Study Transition Services to see where in Denver Mill Levy dollars can best help enhance services, learn about best practices, self-directed planning, and family involvement.
- Mental Health connect mental health partners with the IDD providers and create partnerships to better integrate services.

DHS clarified that the Council is not limited to the needs assessment. However, the needs assessment recommendations should be guiding the work and may be helpful as the Council explores each topic. The Request for Information (RFI) overview can be used as well to inform the work.

Ann Pierce asked about what parameters the Council should be aware of as they engage professionals to present. Subcommittees can work with DHS to engage subject matter experts (SMEs) to come in and share information about a topic. Additionally, subcommittees can determine what they want to do, if anything, to further engage the community on their topic.”

Excerpt from 07.11.19 meeting minutes
"Housing: Tim Lomas, Lauren Weinstock, Kendall Rames"

Lauren Weinstock and Tim Lomas referenced meetings they had attended through Developmental Pathways, the Arapahoe and Douglas counties Community Centered Board. Their plans to attend these meetings were noted at the last Council meeting on June 18. Ms. Weinstock and Mr. Lomas both expressed interest in engaging Desiree Kameka with Madison House Autism Foundation, who they met through these meetings, as a potential subject matter expert. Mr. Lomas mentioned the meeting he attended discussed many housing models and that conversations helped address fears about security that individuals, parents, and families may feel. Ms. Weinstock mentioned a 5-part video series this subcommittee shared out to the Council via email, which can be found online at https://youtu.be/ePlncJcPu5U.

The Housing subcommittee requested a community meeting on housing and that DHS look into speaking fees for subject matter experts.”

Housing questions for Mill Levy Advisory Council subcommittee to explore (from 07.2019)

- What types of housing are available (independent, host home, congregate care, housing with services...) and if serve specific demographic. Inventory of types of housing.
- Which, if any, of the above are regulated/licensed by CDHS?
- What services attached to different housing?
Summary of Housing-related discussion and work in 2019 (from meeting minutes)

- What is the need for various housing options (is there a waitlist for different types or general waitlist)?
- Effectiveness of different types of housing, exploration of different housing models
- What are the demographics of those needing housing (age, gender, level of need)?
- What is happening city wide to address affordable housing and homelessness?
- What is the overlap between accessible AND affordable housing options in Denver?
- How could technology and SMART homes allow more people to live independently? What might this upgrade cost per unit/household?
- Do current affordable housing practices consider universal design and shared living models?
- How do people with IDD currently find or access housing options in Denver?

Excerpt from 08.01.19 meeting minutes

“Housing: Tim Lomas, Lauren Weinstock, Kendall Rames

Tim Lomas reported the Housing subcommittee members scheduled an introductory meeting with Congresswoman Robin Kniech and Congressman Paul Kashmann on August 26, where they hope to share their goals and learn about available resources. DHS staff have been invited to attend.

Kendall Rames called the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) who oversees the Department of Housing in Colorado and asked if there were any specific set asides for people with IDD housing vouchers and after they checked there are not any. The majority of vouchers known are for people experiencing homelessness. She is interested in checking into having vouchers set aside for folks diagnosed with IDD with the proper supports in line because those dollars come down through HUD.

Crystal Porter met with the Digital Inclusion Manager for the Denver Housing Authority, who works with people in a lot of ways. The meeting was mostly about what Colorado can do around digital equity across populations, and that would include supporting people with IDD. She was interested in how this could tie into technical support for SMART homes. Lauren Weinstock mentioned a service for people with mental health issues where there can be 24-hour computer monitoring, kind of like the Life Alert button. Amy Packer saw a link in a DHS employee bulletin to a talk given by a DHA manager about the revitalization of the housing around the DHS building. DHS will send the link to the Council for review.

Lauren Weinstock met with folks from the Douglas County CCB and will be sending notes out to the subcommittee for further discussion. She also plans to attend the State Outreach Housing meeting to get up to date on what’s happening with various funding streams for affordable housing. She wants to make sure when we are saying affordable that we are also saying accessible.”

Excerpt from 08.22.19 meeting minutes

“Housing: Tim Lomas, Lauren Weinstock, Kendall Rames

Lauren Weinstock shared a handout with the Council on statistics the Council has gathered through their investigation, including through Desiree Kameka with Madison House Autism Foundation. The document summarized housing models and possibilities for housing, including person-centered planning. On August 21, she attended a State Housing Outreach meeting where she said the meeting was largely a legislation update. The presentation from this meeting will likely be posted on the Housing Colorado website. During the session, there were breakout tables for discussion. Lauren Weinstock reported there was not a breakout table for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). There were other professionals that mentioned they get phone calls for this population, and many shared they were not currently able to help or answer questions. The subcommittee has not met and has focused on information gathering.
Ann Pierce said that the number of people living with caregivers, particularly over the age of 60, was astonishing, and asked whether the statistics were broken out by family members or caregivers in general. Lauren Weinstock was unsure about the breakout. Ann Pierce asked a follow up question about whether the figure was due to a lack of resources and lack of funding. Ms. Weinstock agreed these were contributing factors. DHS added that there may also be different timelines throughout one’s life for various transitions. Crystal Porter spoke about her experience working with a lot of people who had lived at home with their family their entire lives and what it was like to help them transition. As a family caregiver ages, something that may have worked for decades no longer works for them. It becomes a transitional period for the family and there are a lot of factors.

Lauren Weinstock confirmed the statistics presented on her sheet were statewide figures for Colorado from 2015/2016. She also pointed out that many family caregivers at age 60 are still healthy, but they are not driven internally or externally, or know who to talk to, to begin planning. Betty Lehman mentioned that persuading people to plan is what she does for a living. Whether someone is in good health or not, that transition could become necessary at any time.

Betty Lehman discussed planning for an emergency change and/or a natural progression of change and talked about how people can be very resistant. Thinking about mortality is hard, and people think they have more time to plan. She talked about how families sometimes turn the DD waiver down when it is offered because they are not prepared. There can be concerns about health and safety, that their loved one will be lonely and will not get support. Betty Lehman stated there is a need for a change in cultural thinking about what is normal or expected for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in their families, to support the planning concept. She concluded that when people do not plan, situations that could be less fraught become emergencies and the person and their family are in crisis. Plans to transition over time are critical.

Betty Lehman suggested most of the need around housing and natural supports has to do with planning and expectations and said it’s important to understand the DD waiver does not solve all everything. Authentic planning can be a solution to housing problems, to many of the transition problems. Lauren Weinstock agreed with her and suggested the upcoming housing meeting in September discuss pathways to plan for housing along with housing models. DHS shared their desire to see the mill levy partner with existing avenues and resources to address housing. DHS also mentioned that subject matter experts could reach out to request to present at the upcoming housing forum.

Betty Lehman asked RMHS about the State’s stance on intentional communities and mentioned that, historically, the State has communicated that they did not see these communities as in alignment with person-centeredness. Shari Repinski with RMHS said she was unaware of any shifts in the State’s philosophy and that Colorado has historically taken a very community centric view of services. She provided examples of rules that make the issue more complex, including: the Department of Health’s prohibition of group settings from being within 750 feet of other facilities and the Social Security income rule for how many people receiving social security income can live in proximity of each other. These and other rules challenge the idea of congregate communities. In 2014, the federal rule that regulates the Medicaid waivers around settings requires all residential settings to meet very specific requirements that would be difficult with intentional communities. Shari Repinski said that organizations coming in may have different funding streams or be available through private pay. Betty Lehman said she knows assisted living allows for this model, and without parent planning, the additional funds are not there. She stated the myth that the government automatically covers costs needs to be addressed.”
Summary of Housing-related discussion and work in 2019 (from meeting minutes)

See Housing Forum minutes (09.24.19) No excerpts provided.

Excerpt from 10.17.19 meeting minutes

“Housing. The Housing subcommittee hosted the housing forum on the 24th of September. There were three presentations given: one on accessible housing and healthy design, communal spaces, co-housing, one from Denver Housing Authority on the variety of housing programs they offer in addition to Section 8, and an overview of statistics from a neighboring community as well as potential housing models. Barb Ziegler from Stepping Stones attended from Jefferson County. Potential next steps:

- Institute an RFP for planning grants. Should be used by community members to kick start process to develop housing according to their needs. Maybe $1-200,000.00 dollars per applicant. Grass roots effort working with community. Proposal could then be reviewed.
- LIHTC-Low Income Housing Tax Credit for IDD. This is in Florida. There is nothing like this in Colorado. Meet with Colorado Housing and Finance Authority to see if this can be done.
- Council members may reach out to Department of Housing through Department of Local Affairs which is a State agency.
- Crystal connected with Desiree Kameka Who states that the housing usually works with providers of affordable housing and not directly with families. Part of this is because taking it back to families is so new. There is just no model for doing that right now. She will be sending more information to DHS on this.
- Attention Homes in Boulder just received LIHTC funds. We can explore that.

Families at the forum expressed desire to come up with their own plan. They are willing to do the work but need supports and resources. Potential for some version of the Empowering Communities Initiative completed in Douglas and Arapahoe counties to be reviewed in Denver.

- Educate the neurodiverse communities
- Assess preferences and support needs
- Approach housing industry with consumer data
- Increase stock that meets local needs

Potential recommendation for a housing educator/navigator that would serve the I/DD community. They work within an office already established within the City of Denver; DOLA, or whatever. That way they can integrate what they are doing and then they can share what they are doing.

There is also a need to build provider capacity in out of home placements for children with I/DD and DHS wants to engage their interest in exploring further. Goals are to keep children with their families and not go into congregate care of foster care. Family First model is changing the landscape.”

Excerpt from 11.14.19 meeting minutes

“Housing. Lauren Weinstock went to the Squeezed Out workshop held at CU Boulder. It was a one-day community building conference on housing, diversity, and affordability. She also volunteers with a parent group called Parents United for Supported Housing (PUSH) with three other individuals. She reported that of the 24 people in the audience of a recent parent presentation PUSH gave in Castle Rock, 2/3 of the group were over the age of 60 with their children still living at home. One focus of PUSH is person centered planning, including a series on how to do person centered planning. Lauren Weinstock shared a conversation she had about the challenge of people not facing or planning for their
own mortality, and how much more essential and complicated this becomes for people caring for children or adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. PUSH also focuses on informing and educating people to help them assess housing comments and co-living as a best practice- this means a bedroom and bathroom for individuals, and then shared spaces for eating, socializing. Senior housing, group homes, and student living are examples of co-living. Inclusion is important, which could mean having diverse people, including people with I/DD, engaged in co-living. Lauren Weinstock reports PUSH has been discussing developing a culture of caring. The group will also educate on the benefits of and promote opportunities for independent living.

She shared the conclusion that housing is not a one size fits all, and a unified solution would not meet every person’s need. DHS wondered whether there was a planning process the mill levy could establish as an addition to other planning programs that exist, such as the mill levy-funded Probate Power with the CCDC. Determining how to connect families to resources remained important. When DHS met with Desiree Kameka, one of the speakers from the September housing forum, she said that returning housing planning to families is a relatively recent shift. DHS wondered whether there is an opportunity to develop a program for housing counseling that could support individuals and families. Kendall Rames proposed the Council consider embedding housing specialists within advocacy organizations as one possible approach. The Council chose to table this issue until 2020 so members could do more research on the need.”
Where do folks with ID/D live in Colorado? A video by Desiree Kameka

Desiree Kameka [Madison House Autism Foundation] who currently lives in Colorado may be one of the best informed people in the U.S. about residential options for adults with ID/D. You can find videos on the Madison House website or YouTube, in particular Residential Choices for Individuals with ID/D (Spring 2019). While it is 2 1/2 hours long, luckily this thing called the Internet allows for stopping and starting.

Within this video are numerous examples of current housing. Also a discussion of Where do Coloradans with Residential services live? The statistics are from 2016 and as follows;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family home</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>2,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own home</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>4,867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host or foster home</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>2,874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 Group Home</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>1,393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6 Group</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-6 Group</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>2,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-15 Group</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 + Group</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 10,500 persons with ID/D live in out-of-home settings

Next chart: Estimated number of persons with ID/D by age group living with caregivers FY 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caregiver age</th>
<th>To Age 41</th>
<th>Age 41-59</th>
<th>Age 60 +</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27,634</td>
<td>21,636</td>
<td>12,407</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 61,677 persons with ID/D living with caregivers

She asks; Can current growth rate meet Colorado demand? Adding up every setting, only 3,500 individuals total have been given residential supports to move into any other setting in the past 15 years.

Can individuals with ID/D afford housing? Working for $10.20/hr, a person would work 74 hours/week to afford a modest 1 bedroom rental in Colorado. Affordability means paying 30% of income in rent. Housing choice vouchers are extremely limited, and there are limited affordable and accessible options.

So what are the possibilities?
- 50/50 private home and public funding for support. Housing remains privately owned or leased [consumer-controlled] and Long Term Support Services funded by Medicaid.
- Mix of public and private funding- home acquisition options;
  - Add a tiny home or ADU
  - Bequeath, buy or donated home
  - Buy house with others using LLC, 501c3, etc
  - Choosing
  - Other intentionally planned community
  - Renting to others
Zoning laws may restrict the number of unrelated persons living in one house. Three roads to explore: 100% Private Pay—own home, hire staff or provider privately about $35K to $100K/year. Transitional Program—teaching intensive independent living skills with hope of living independently in the future. Tuition based residential—investing a lot of money, must be sure model fits person.

- Create a Person-Centered Planning—do it with the person with disability as it is their future
- Learn needed Life Skills NOW (a strength-based free app—game identifies strengths called Identifor)
- Create a Legal and Financial Life Plan working with Planner with training in special needs
  Write a 5 minute non-negotiable list if something happens to current primary caregiver
- Grassroots Organizing Builds Community and Local Solutions
- Build Your Natural Support System

Budding Projects in Colorado; L’Arche in Ft. Collins, Sky Cliff Center, Rooster Ranch, Garden Inc, Wellspring Community, Tall Tales Ranch, Blue Spruce.

Link to Resources: AutismHousingPathways.org. [very comprehensive]

2- Housing Colorado Outreach - Denver, August 21, 22, 2019

Update on legislation and funding for Affordable Housing.

Small group break-out. I attended Creative Ideas; There was no table for -Housing for Persons with ID/D

- Charter school— their teachers cannot afford housing. Trying to create housing solution.
- Habitat for Humanity getting phone calls about folks with disabilities needing affordable housing
- Kaiser Permanente developed Thrive Local, a social health network aimed at connecting health and social services providers to better coordinate and improve patient care. [housing is good health]
- Central Presbyterian Church—home sharing between seniors and college students
- GES Coalition for Health and Housing—concerned with community displacement [gentrification]
- Colorado Dept of Local Affairs [DOLA] Co-housing—density- need better land use discussions
- State gov’t. employee on green housing and how to engage people.
- Denver Housing Authority—has retail shops on first floor of buildings for mix of retail/residential.
- Homeless advocates—Must be pro-active; Who’s at risk for losing housing? [Instead of waiting for person to be without a home.

Activist - a person who uses or supports strong actions to help make changes in politics or society
Activist synonyms; advocate, backer, champion, promoter, supporter, crusader, dreamer, visionary
The housing subcommittee for the DHS Mill Levy Advisory Council hosted a housing forum that served two purposes: information sharing, and engagement through discussion and extended comments. The first part of the meeting included three (3) presentations which focused on information that might benefit the engagement portions of the forum. This was an opportunity for community members with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), along with family, friends, and professionals in the community, to come together in learning and to share details about their housing needs as well as the gaps or opportunities in current offerings. Engagement opportunities on the topic of housing are still available for all community members in the following ways:

- Completing a brief housing worksheet and a short survey (uploaded on the DHS website). The survey link will expire on Tuesday, 10/15 at 2pm. The worksheet is available indefinitely and can be submitted to mladvisorycouncil@denvergov.org at any time.
- Submission of a written comment to the subcommittee via mladvisorycouncil@denvergov.org or crystal.porter@denvergov.org.
- Public comment at Mill Levy Advisory Council meetings on October 17 or November 20.

The housing forum was held at the Denver Human Services (DHS) East office at 3815 Steele Street, Denver, CO 80205. Materials from the forum were published with these minutes on the DHS website.

**Welcome & introductions**

DHS Mill Levy Program Manager Crystal Porter facilitated the meeting and introduced DHS Executive Director Don Mares for opening comments. Mr. Mares’ remarks included thanks to those participating and referenced DHS’s strategic vision, HumanTogether, in relation to the Mill Levy Advisory Council’s work. DHS serves over a third of Denver residents, and wishes to work with their community to be proactive with supports and services when possible.

Ms. Porter gave an overview of DHS’s Mill Levy Advisory Council, including the structure, work, and priorities set by the Council. She then reviewed the goals for the housing forum and the agenda.

**Presentation: Desiree Kameka, Madison House Autism Foundation**

Desiree Kameka presented on “Expanding Residential Options for Neurodiverse Citizens.” This presentation included a short handout for reference. She emphasized the importance of communities coming together and how exciting ideas can become reality. Her presentation included:

- Statistics on Crisis/Opportunity in Colorado
- Innovative Models from Across the Country
• Empowering Communities Initiative: Data from neighbor community
• Considerations for Action

Ms. Kameka described the difference between a consumer-controlled setting, where the housing and services are disconnected, versus a provider-controlled setting where the housing and services are intertwined. In the latter case, if a person discontinues services with a provider, they are highly likely to be displaced from their home. Service delivery types include agency-based rotational staffing, consumer-directed services, host home families, shared living and roommates, and paid neighbors.

Ms. Kameka reviewed risks that arise when persons with I/DD cannot access affordable housing and presented a snapshot of Colorado’s statistics for persons with residential services and without residential services. Over 61,000 Colorado individuals with I/DD live with a family caregiver, and of that group, over 12,000 live with a caregiver over the age of 60. Ms. Kameka emphasized that Colorado must grow residential supports and services to meet this future need. Videos on experiences and models were linked throughout the presentation (slides 10, 15, 18). Ms. Kameka recently worked with Developmental Pathways in Douglas and Arapahoe county on the Empowering Communities Initiative. The resulting report was anticipated to be published fall of 2019.

Housing options or models Ms. Kameka covered include: transitional settings to support individuals in moving gradually toward more independent living opportunities, co-housing opportunities with families sharing resources, intentional neurodiverse communities, SMART home technology, onsite resources (clinics, culinary schools, markets, etc.), built in supports outside of residential waiver supports, I/DD housing market analysis. See presentation slide 27 (Considerations for Next Steps) for a full overview of potential housing support opportunities.

Presentation: Renee Nicolosi and Loretta Owens, Denver Housing Authority (DHA)

Denver Housing Authority’s representatives provided an overview of programs available with DHA, starting with a review of the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) or Section 8 program with Loretta Owens.

• Over 23,000 people registered for the HCV lottery on September 17 & 18th. The lottery is at the same time every year (always in September, the third week on Thursday and Friday). Posted live on the DHA website for a full 48 hours.
• DHA is not the only organization with subsidized housing options.
• Most in the room were familiar with the Section 8 program.
• Local preference vouchers are vouchers that are allowed to service providers. This is another point of access for individuals that meet eligibility criteria.
• Programs are income based- DHA explained area median income (AMI) and requirements for vouchers related to AMI.
• Voucher worth varies from person to person and aims to pay market rate rents.
• Recipients are responsible for completing annual recertifications packets.
Renee Nicolosi then reviewed demographics on the populations DHA serves, as well as additional programs and services through DHA, including:

- DHA provides subsidized housing for over 12,000 families in Denver (26,000 people): half (1/2) are children, one quarter (1/4) are seniors and people with disabilities, and another quarter (1/4) are working age persons between ages 18-60.
- DHA’s Residents & Community Services include:
  - Economic Self-Sufficiency programming (financial literacy and home ownership)
  - Aging in place
  - Youth development
  - Community building
  - Bridging the digital divide
- Housing counseling for anyone (HUD-approved housing counseling agency). Contact Charlotte at codonn@denverhousing.org.
- Employment programs are also open for anyone. Contact Denise at dsalaz@denverhousing.org.
- For homeowners, there is a new pilot called the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) program available in west and southwest Denver neighborhoods. This pilot is through the West Denver Renaissance Collaborative. Contact mywdrc@gmail.com.
  - Helps low to moderate income homeowners sustain homeownership and provide affordable rentals in the City & County of Denver.
  - Financial assistance for people that are eligible.
  - Owner or tenant must be low income.
  - Owner or tenant must maintain a level of low income over time.

If anyone has questions about this presentation or the programs available, please contact rnicol@denverhousing.org. These presenters had time left over and answered the following questions at the end of their presentation:

Q. Will the program expand ADU beyond southwest Denver?
A. Currently in pilot, hope to see it expand in future. Unknown at this time. Model could go national.

Q. What would DHA do with mill levy investment?
A. Good question. One of the things we do at DHA is try to provide upward mobility empowerment and independent living opportunities for residents of the housing authority. We have our fair share of residents with mental health, substance use, and other issues that can hold you down. DHA is always looking for opportunities to partner, limited clinic services on site, food services, gardens at most of our sites, so we are always trying to bring resources and services into the sites to provide opportunities for residents that live there so they can age in place and live independently.
Presentation: Johnathan Sims, Domus Vitae

Johnathan Sims presented on “Housing Opportunities Within Reach.” This presentation is very visual, with information related to accessibility through universal design, healthy and affordable architecture, zoning impacts, and a four-element wheel. Mr. Sims is an architect with experience building and designing senior living facilities throughout the nation for over 20 years and has also served as a planning and zoning commissioner for over 10 years. He has professionally pursued universal design practices that promote healthier living. Details from his presentation include:

- Story on how Mr. Sims developed his passion for healthy and affordable design.
- His wife owns Guided By Humanity and brings adaptive yoga and mindfulness to underserved communities, including neurodiverse individuals. His oldest son is on the Autism spectrum and has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) in school.
- Been thinking about where his oldest son and other kids are going to live in the future.
- Learned a lot about universal design and wanted to design for folks beyond the wealthy.
- Affordable and inclusive housing needs intrinsic evolution beyond stacked autonomous boxes.
- Less than 2% of housing units in this country are accessible.
- Some of us need more support, and most of us will experience a disability in our lifetimes. There are different types of abilities and different abilities. Homes should be set up for this, design beyond siloes.
- We need to critically study our lifestyles, our resiliency, how and where we live.
- National average life expectancy has been on the decline for 3 straight years. Physical and mental health crises, social health crises, isolation, and loneliness – we can and must do better. We need inclusive, responsive homes that support everyone’s wellbeing and longevity. Power in the hands of parents and individuals, not with developers and the market.
- Acknowledging: Stepping Stone Communities for their innovative models in Colorado, Tall Tales Ranch.
- Scalable options: remodels, new additions, new construction. All needs to embrace indoor/outdoor connection, healthy architecture, day lighting.
- Every room designed in our homes is built for sedentary activity.
- We live in a society that drives single family homes which are isolating.
- Cartoon illustration: Great metaphor for housing. We need ramps where everyone can get in and that is healthy living.

Mr. Sims then dove into elements of architecture that can promote affordable and healthy living:
• Humans need space, walls and roof. We do not need excessive design – costly and unnecessary, greater maintenance. (slide 35)
• Basic design: Sheds rain, has windows to see out and let ventilation in, summer and winter sun can come in, air conditioning. (slide 35)
• Good design: Takes it a step further- extend the roof overhangs to block hot summer sun, but allows low, warm winter sun to come in. Ramps instead of or in addition to stairs, move conditioned air to exterior walls because that’s where we have the most temperature fluctuation. (slide 35)
• Better design: Still keeping architecture simple. Extend the overhangs over a porch, embrace that indoor/outdoor connection. We all spend way too much time inside, open living spaces up so we can be inside and outside. Make windows larger, taller and wider. Summer sun is intense. Can open up to nature. Much healthier but simple architecture move. With interior space, bring in [clerestory windows] to activate inner spaces with natural lighting- this becomes more energy efficient and healthy. With daylighting, we’re all in tune to the circadian rhythm. Add trees, plants. Activate the middle space for social connectivity. Other plus elements: internet and flat panel TV, ceiling fans, solar panels, SMART sensors, etc. Embrace people living together in co-housing: guided yoga, dance, tai chi, prayer, somewhere for people to come together and connect. (slide 35)
• How to make something cost effective? Structural repetition is key. Nature is structurally repetitious and efficient with resources.
• Common living and dining, with central active space. Fully accessible bathrooms.
• Can be residential and non-residential. Fully accessible, energy efficient, healthy space.
• A lot of opportunity when you tap into “the internet of things.”
• Pods can be combined, build what you want when capital and need is there. You can create secure environments with corridors or breeze ways.
• Finding opportunities for building co-housing by cross referencing land for sale with zoning districts that allow group residential facility or group home. (see: Douglas county example slides 45-49.) Don’t let that term scare you, it’s just zoning talk that means healthy co-housing.
• Monthly payments due can go down quickly with multiple-residents. Example: 2 car garage, 4 units: $900 a month. Denver land is expensive, studying a lot on Zuni. What if we had 4 units with common living and dining environments. How low can monthly cost be?

See [Funding/Housing/Land/Supports map] Mr. Sims developed (slides 63-70) to empower parents and caregivers, to talk to others, come together, and map out their plans. Mr. Sims wants families to know there are actual affordable, scalable, versatile solutions. He wants them to know they have options and that there are ways to keep costs low while achieving optimum healthy design. Co-housing can lower costs. Individuals do not have to wait and hope, families can act now and act together.
Overall takeaways from presentations

This is the beginning of a conversation. A housing effort could be bigger than anyone individually, bigger than the mill levy. The goal of the forum was to start thinking, brainstorming, dreaming—how can we start laying the groundwork? What can we do individually and as a community to build up housing options and capacity in Denver for people with I/DD?

-Break-

Q&A with Desiree Kameka and Johnathan Sims
(DHA representatives answered questions post-presentation and had to depart during the break)

Q. Can you talk about restrictions/challenges that facilities traditionally have for groupings of buildings? [paraphrased]

A (DK). Follow up: in general, I don’t like to use the word facility. Our future should not be facilities, but homes. When we’re talking about consumer-controlled housing, it’s not licensed assisted living, it’s nothing like that. You’re building housing and people can use their supports, or you’re building supportive housing where there’s that built in support. There isn’t necessarily a facility definition for what the future could be. We’re moving in that direction where we’re building housing and then people can choose the supports they want. When we talk about what we want to do, we want to use language like what you and I would use for what we want to live in. The housing industry in general has no idea this population exists. It’s a lot of education that has to be done for the private sector to come in and try to pick this up.

A (JS). From a zoning standpoint, zoning unfortunately and a little bit by design can be restrictive. When we’re talking about our population, our population benefits from living amongst others. Living in environments that are supportive and integrated. The biggest challenge with zoning is probably the space restriction. If you want to build a group home or co-housing, that group home by definition often cannot be less than 750 feet away from another group home. If we can get out of that mode, that mode had some good intentions but is having some unintended consequences, so we are not benefiting from the opportunities that should be available to us through healthy co-housing. Definitely from a zoning standpoint, opening up the spacing requirements, do we really need them in today’s times?

A (DK). Parking as well. Our population doesn’t always have 2.5 cars.

A (LW). At the State Housing outreach meeting, there was no representation for us…Co-housing would provide- I am an artist, I see things in pictures. I think about weaving colors, different types of fibers together, and that’s co-housing. My adult son could live independently with a responsible neighbor network. We need to work together— we need to stop saying senior housing over here, rich people over there, poor people over there, and there’s no place we’re designating for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities because they are invisible. So we need to be educating, they are there. They want community just like we do.
A (DK). It’s like the ramp that John had in his presentation, right? Everyone needs housing. Everyone wants good housing. Everyone is dealing with isolation in some way.

Q. There’s a website called cohousing.org?

A (DK). That website is very specific to homeownership with consensus decision making, that’s like a co-housing. And that’s how I described it on my piece of paper. I think what John is talking about are families coming together to purchase a building or unit and develop housing where there is some common space as well. I think the definition of co-housing is very fluid.

Q. Can you describe more about planning grants and how they might be helpful in terms of eventually developing housing for families?

A (DK). When there’s a group of families who want to develop a co-housing model that they can access funding to be able to do the feasibility, to get the architectural rendering, to do the surveying, to hire the person that’s going to do the project management, it’s called a planning grant. Because otherwise, those things are coming out of Stepping Stones pocket, right? Having to fundraise, and fundraising is slow, then it messes up the whole timeline, and time is money when it comes to development. So having a fund where groups of families can potentially access funding to do feasibility, that way they can build the housing they want and need, where they want, how they want it, all that. That is one way the mill levy dollars could be used.

Q. To piggyback on this video navigation as well as this comment from this woman here, can we get the people who are receiving services- we’re talking about designing homes really. Let’s talk about designing programs for peer support and let’s get these folks that may have a challenge with whatever it is- forms, mobility, or whatever, but they have a strength as well. Let people that are similar or perhaps in some cases very dissimilar, let’s talk about programs that help them have what we all love to have, which is meaning in our lives and purpose because we have something valuable to contribute.

A (DK). So the Mill Levy Advisory Council, pay attention to Brian. Brian is a LEND (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities) fellow. He is working on a self-advocacy program, a peer mentorship kind of program. I think having self-advocates at the table is absolutely essential, as well as parents. It has to be both because we have to be asking them “what do you want?”. Sometimes parents think they know what their loved one wants, but I’ve seen many projects that wasted a lot of money on a greenhouse that wasn’t necessary that could have been used for a movie room. Getting self-advocates to the table is absolutely essential. Peer support, peer direct support is also where we can go. Another suggestion: Medicaid is very restrictive with how money can be used in the waiver program so it’s very hard to innovate new service delivery models using waiver funding. Those who are wealthy can private pay but if there was a service delivery innovation fund where an idea can be proposed for a new way to deliver services in which there would be outcome measures and all of that, I think that could be really helpful too. I know the downtown Denver by Elitch Gardens is doing a whole new housing live work play development there in the future- go to that developer and say “set aside some of your affordable housing units for this population. We have this program we want to
implement.” Then you don’t have to do the housing part, but the built-in service delivery part. You can go at it from both angles.

Q. Can you talk about the model in Florida that sets aside funding for people with I/DD? Colorado currently does not have this.

A (DK). The specific housing program I talked about was LIHTC (Low Income Housing Tax Credits), it’s one funding stream for building affordable housing. There are other funding streams. In the affordable housing world, there are funding streams set up for veterans, for people who are chronically homeless, for seniors. There should be other funding streams, like in Florida, for people with I/DD to build I/DD optimized housing. So in Florida, 5% of their LIHTC money, which doesn’t sound like a lot, but is actually $15M, is set aside every RFP round specifically to build housing that is optimized for people with I/DD. That means all these developers are partnering with nonprofits and they’re vying for this money in order to build affordable housing optimized for the I/DD population. Here in Colorado you could do that, you could set aside a percentage of funding. And the vehicle to do that for LIHTC money is called the Qualified Allocation Plan – now we’re kind of getting in the weeds. But you can do that, it’s already done with other populations, and I encourage you do it here. That way you’re not competing…I think that’s a really good strategy. The people who do that are Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA).

Q. The idea you had about the- having measurements to be measured out for Medicaid to have outcomes, because that’s all they’re based on. My son is on the spectrum and he has severe scoliosis, and is 4 years old, and I am getting all into everything because I know eventually it’s going to happen anyways. He’s going to need somewhere to live…That was one of my ideas a few months ago. We have a service coordinator now with Rocky Mountain and she’s introducing us to the waivers and all that good stuff, getting the chiropractor paid for and everything. But to get something actually done and talking to someone, what avenue is there?

A (DK). Yes, that is point of contact, really really hard. Other states have a program called No Wrong Door…does Colorado have that? (Colorado has it in pilot- it hasn’t been rolled out). Apparently it’s coming, the No Wrong Door program. That is a major challenge all across the country, not just here in Colorado, unfortunately. You might get different answers from different people so...

Discussion groups & report out

Mill Levy Advisory Council members Tim Lomas, Kendall Rames, and Lauren Weinstock introduced themselves and shared their interest in working on housing as members of the Council. Each of these Council members led a small discussion group with community members in attendance, including family members of people with I/DD, advocates and other I/DD professionals, housing professionals, and DHS staff on thoughts, questions, ideas, barriers, hopes, dreams, whatever the group decides is most important.
**Report out: Tim Lomas group (Tim Lomas reported out for this group)**

We had common agreement from most if not all of us that the co-housing model was something that would be good. Having people with I/DD along with other neurotypical people, whether they’re seniors or not would be a good model. Barbara talked about the model for Stepping Stone, it sounds like a great model. They’re going to have 80 units, 40 of which will be set aside for people with I/DD. And we talked a little about if it would be a good idea, going back to planning grants, whether that would be a good expenditure of money—where people could apply for a planning grant and use that money to get off the ground to develop homes and communities in Denver. Others in the group were invited to add comments, no one opted to do so.

**Report out: Kendall Rame group (Linda Brooks reported out for this group)**

We talked about the Stepping Stone project, and opportunities to raise money for that. Have that be a guiding light for the state, navigating systems was one of the areas we talked about. We talked about how you go about doing that. We talked about youth in shelters, that’s not available for them and how stress is such a major issue for youth, let alone for adults. If there is a housing continuum, one size does not fit all. We need accountability, when projects are building affordable housing, are they really doing that? If not, are they just getting away with it by paying their fine, and not actually building affordable housing? This leads to the problem of still not having enough affordable housing. Education is a key component, not just getting individuals into housing but also the mental health supports, medical supports, education on how to maintain the home. All those things play into keeping housing. Others in the group were invited to add comments, no one opted to do so.

**Report out: Lauren Weinstock group (Lauren Weinstock reported out for this group)**

We talked about who we were and what our situations are and a bit about what we want, what we like and what we don’t like. Heard a voice about the need to have person(s) with I/DD on the Mill Levy Advisory Council. We were chosen because we volunteered, I try to channel my son all the time, and his siblings who care about his needs. We found ourselves to be a little different, each of us. Why are we fundraising apples and oranges and cupcakes to build the housing our children need? Our kids and adults. I love the idea of LIHTC having a set aside. Everyone agreed meeting more parents, doing more work, educating is one way to go. Another in this group added: one question you put to us was what we could do with $3-5M and the answer was basically it’s not enough to do what needs to be done. What could we do with $3-5M quickly? For the infrastructure of the program, the administration has to already be there. You could maybe quickly buy a property or something, but to really set up healthy living, that’s—we need more. So one idea that came to the top was what about doing something like housing navigation, which could be like, might be better said as housing outreach or community engagement so that with the money, you could create more awareness to then create more money.

Comments from discussion of reports out:

- I think we’re going to hit a massive recession in this city because of all the greed, but it’s going to take a while, and we can’t count on that. The cost of housing in our city is ridiculous, we can’t sustain this.
- One benefit to that is that they're used to dealing in numbers way more than $10M. If we say we have $10M to spend down, and places to help with the structure. We’ve got Stepping Stone who is breaking ground in Morrison area by June of 2020, if these developers are used to a lot bigger numbers, that’s what we need. Cultivate greed to use it to our advantage.
- Is knowledge about the linkage fee helpful to share?
- It’s already in existence and doesn’t need anymore support. A representative with the Denver Division of Housing, soon to be the Department of Housing Stability (HOST). Someone mentioned this population is invisible to housing developers, affordable housing developers, and in my experience that’s true. This doesn’t come up very much. We have a housing advisory committee and I will see if we can add some representation for this population, and I will advocate for this population to be more emphasized in our strategic plan for the new department. The City has designated funds for affordable housing that does not have the same restrictions as federal funds, there might be more options there. I cannot promise anything, but I am hopeful.
- One thing about our community, we are not a paper doll cut out. My son is different from her daughter and her child and the needs are different. But what we all want is for our children to fit in to some natural progressions, and to make you and the rest of the community aware that we’re not from Mars, our kids are not from Mars, and they want all the same things we want. Friendships, a sense of being adults in the community and being cared about.
- Sidebar on bringing our kids into the conversation: funds for that, transportation, and for most of your candidates, someone to come along with them and mentor them. That would be money well used. Otherwise it’s really hard for them to participate.
- I am a parent and I think smaller numbers, honestly. I think when I sit down with someone with significant needs, they have a plan they want to put together and I have a plan I want to put together. I just want my kid to have an apartment, and they just want their kid to have an apartment. I mean, that’s it. I am willing to go out and find it, I just need help to structure it, and when we talk about that $3-5M, I don’t know how to do it. I have no idea how to build co-housing or community housing, and I don’t have $3-5M, but I have enough to get a condo, or half a condo or a duplex or house or something, you know? In my mind, what I’d love to see more so than a big grand project, is I have a person that knows how to do this, knows where to start, can tell you who to call, going to tell you what paperwork and how to get through it. That to me would be invaluable, and not $3-5M, but something to speed up the process. Again, there’s 12,000 people that need something. I can take care of my one, I just need some help to do that.

Public comment

Three attendees signed up for public comment, one person no longer wished to comment because she felt she’d had opportunity to express her thoughts in other formats. The first comment was from an advocate who shared challenges she has experienced working with people on housing. She was at first began at Denver Options and did the campaigning, knocking on doors to get the mill levy passed. At
Rocky Mountain, it’s a huge team with wraparound services, and housing isn’t really an issue. If one host home doesn’t work out, you can go to another host home. Now, she works with individuals that are homeless. It’s a totally different ballgame, such an eye-opening experience in that these individuals don’t have a huge team, and advocates may be the only ones involved. They try to help them identify whether they have I/DD or if they already have a diagnosis, there are other barriers to success: trauma, mental health, legal issues preventing them from Section 8. They’re couch surfing, and at any moment, they could be back on the street. One is one too many for that to happen to when it’s housing. Then there are people that are ‘underhoused.’ They may have an apartment, but this is no place where any of us would ever want to live. They complain they do not feel safe there, maintenance is terrible because it’s old. Management feeling this person is less than, when you say someone doesn’t need a light at the front of their apartment, we all want to be able to see and be safe. When we talk as advocates, housing is the biggest challenge because there isn’t any. I am glad DHA came and talked about that, but that is frustrating too because people have to wait year after year.

The second commenter shared his perspective on peer support and the Intelligent Lives film. Intelligent Lives is a documentary that was recently released about 3 adults with I/DD and it asks the question – because we have this scale to measure somebody’s intellect, because they get put on this scale somewhere, does that measure their value in our community, in our lives, as a person? And the film really challenges that. So why recreate the wheel? Let’s use that to our advantage, educating the public. As it so happens, I work at the School of Medicine…and we bought that documentary and the rights to show it, so we have a potential venue there to host it. Get in touch and let’s host a community showing, and have some structure in place. Like okay, now what? Because you see a great movie, you eat your popcorn and leave or what do you do, what are the actionable steps? Again, peer support—one of the things that gives meaning to most anybody’s life is the ability to contribute to somebody else’s life. People with I/DD are so often seen as somebody we need to give to. When are we valuing them, that they have something to give to others? A classic example: most of the day programs are always saying today’s your birthday, today’s your graduation, today’s your whatever. When are they ever going to that person and saying, you know it’s your mom and dad’s anniversary, would you like to do something special for them? You know your buddy over here, remember how you graduated two years ago? He’s graduating. And help them give because that’s a meaningful life, a giver and a receiver. And so, could it be that the “problem” – forgive the use of that word- the people, are also part of the solution? Could they be meaningfully giving into my life, your life, yours, and to each other in a peer support way? Because that’s a life worth living.

DHS received two written public comments which were shared with the Council via email. If others want to send written comments, please email mladvisorycouncil@denvergov.org and your comments will be forwarded to Council members for review.

*Portions of the housing forum were recorded for reference in the creation of these minutes.*
From: Tim Lomas  
To: Crystal Porter  
Date: 10/17/19  
Subject: Items for review ahead of Mill Levy Advisory Council meeting, Oct 11*

Housing

Crystal, these are my thoughts coming out of the Housing Forum meeting –

- Exploring the idea of issuing an RFP for "Planning Grants". These would be intended for use by community members (people with I/DD and/or family members) to kick-start the process of developing housing according to their needs. The community group could respond to the RFP and if awarded, could then contact developers/architects, etc. and have funds available to get their planning and development process started. Barbara Zeigler was part of my break-out group and thought that if a "Planning Grant" had been available at the beginning of the process for Stepping Stones that it would have been very helpful. Barbara also thought, via discussions that she has had with other community members, that there would be interest in responding to an RFP for a Planning Grant.

- Meeting/Discussion with the appropriate entities ((CHFA (Colorado Housing and Finance Authority) i believe to be one) to discuss changing the laws/regulations in Colorado to allow a certain percentage of their funding to be dedicated to people with I/DD, similar to the situation in Florida that Desiree Kameka described. Desiree told me that the rules are set by the state, not by the federal government. If you recall, one of the questions that Councilwoman Kniech had was how it was done in Florida as according to her understanding a set-aside for people for I/DD would violate fair housing non-discrimination laws. So it may be a somewhat complex process, but it would seem that if Florida can do it, Colorado certainly should be able to.
Forwarded from Lauren for Council member review ahead of upcoming meetings. Included below is the housing report mentioned in Lauren’s update.

“Report from Lauren on recent meetings.

**Mental Health:** I participated in the Behavioral Health Task Force, Public Testimony, ID/D community. I spoke about my concerns with my son and the problems we experienced in getting help. I also mentioned being aware of the START model and had the highest opinion of the model based on the information I’d read on their website. I’ve been contacted by a Task Force member and Professor Pediatrics and Psychiatry, at University of Colorado School of Medicine. More on this after she and I make contact.

**Housing:** Below is the press release on the Housing Report inspired by Desiree Kameka and community members working with Developmental Pathways, Douglas/Arapahoe Counties and city of Aurora. There’s a link to the full report.

I am a member and continue to participate in the newly created **Inclusive Housing Coalition**. I’ll be on a task force within the coalition to both encourage self-advocates, family members and community members to tell their stories around housing needs, and also to brainstorm ways folks with ID/D can understand and participate in the housing they want and need. This is pretty exciting. *Lauren*”

Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 6:30 AM

Subject: Report Sheds New Light on Housing & Community Development for Residents with I/DD

Desiree Kameka
Director
Autism Housing Network
Division of the Madison House Autism Foundation

**For Immediate Release**

**REPORT SHEDS NEW LIGHT ON HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOR RESIDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL/DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

Centennial, CO – April 30, 2020 – Over 86,000 Coloradans have an intellectual and/or developmental disability (I/DD) and only 12% are currently accessing residential supports in any residential setting outside the family home. The clock is ticking on creating solutions as more than 12,000 family caregivers are over the age of 60. The urgent need for affordable, cognitively-accessible housing in addition to funding for diverse options of long-term support services cannot be understated.

Developmental Pathways partnered with the Autism Housing Network (AHN) to undertake a process called the Empowering Communities Initiative, providing essential training and data to understand how Developmental Pathways can best foster the emergence of opportunities for more housing and support service for their constituents in Douglas County, Arapahoe County and City of Aurora. Desiree Kameka, the Director of the AHN, provided training to members of the community followed by a needs assessment.
survey and analysis.

“It is important to understand what people with I/DD and their families actually need and want in order to put together a plan of action,” said Kameka. The results are now being taken to the local industry leadership and professional community. “The hope is to raise awareness that valuable neurodiverse residents are at risk of traumatic displacement due to lack of affordable, accessible housing and thus we need to ultimately increase access to housing opportunities so they can continue to be active participants in their community,” said Kameka.

Key findings:

- Barriers to development of neuro-inclusive housing must be removed and incentives created to meet demand and prevent displacement.
- Individuals with I/DD and their families want to invest in a home for their future stability; they need support to navigate the challenges of succession, social security and Medicaid regulations to help make this happen.
- Individualized long-term support services are Medicaid funded. Barriers to access must be removed and diverse service delivery models fully funded; cuts have an enormous impact on people with I/DD.
- Intentional spaces and opportunities are needed to foster neurodiverse friendships and community connections beyond family members for increasing access to meaningful community inclusion and development of circles of natural support.

The final report includes recommendations to increase the available housing stock accessible to people with I/DD, initiatives to continue educating stakeholders on lifespan options and engage in advocacy efforts, increase access to more diverse long-term support services, and increase opportunities to foster neurodiverse relationships and other life skills.

**View Full Report:**

On Wed, Jun 3, 2020 at 8:44 AM Porter, Crystal - DHS Program Manager <Crystal.Porter@denvergov.org> wrote:

Hello all! Thank you for your quick responses and flexibility. I hope many of you are able to attend. Attached is the agenda for the topic call, scheduled for Wednesday, June 10 from 6:30-7:30pm. If you are unable to attend, please send any additional thoughts or comments to J.J. and Courtney.
From: Lauren Weinstock
To: Crystal Porter
Date: 06/15/20
Subject: [EXTERNAL] No subject

Housing

Crystal-
this is for everyone.

1- Seed money; a grant to groups to provide early money for their projects to give a head start in the process of designing, building and providing housing for people with ID/D. Highest priority given to groups prioritizing inclusion in their projects.

2- ID/D Voucher System; according to housing expert, Desiree Kameka, a separate housing voucher system has been employed in another state. This would benefit those people with ID/D in Denver who are interested in renting an apartment and have the independence and/or support system to live without constant support staffing.

3- A Denver City/County Report on community wants and needs on the subject of housing by following this procedure;

   a) informative, educational meetings with individuals and family members, caregivers and community members,

   b) needs assessment,

   c) analysis and report.

The funding for the Report would end with the 3 above items, but hopefully a group of people will commit to continuing the work;

   d) form committees to study, report on and bring in others in key areas that will inform a wider range of interested people, speed new funding and building initiatives and guide community building on inclusive and affordable housing.

Last year’s housing committee came up with the first 2 recommendations, though we did not submit them at the time.

We've since learned that Vouchers for people w/IDD are possible and are being done.

The last recommendation is submitted by me.

The link I sent last week, to the Developmental Pathways Housing Report, was a result of their decision to make housing a priority and engaging Desiree Kameka to work this process which is detailed in the report, along with findings and recommendations.

Lauren