

MHSA Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

September 2, 2015

10:00-11:30am

20 N. San Pedro Road, Point Reyes Conference Room

Introductions and review of the agenda and materials provided to participants of the meeting. Participants at the meeting included committee members along with Suzanne Tavano, Dawn Kaiser (QI/Quality Management), DJ Pierce (Alcohol and Drug Administrator), Denise Zvanovec (MHSUS Fiscal Officer) and our speakers, Marc Rand from Marin Community Foundation, Craig Meltzner from Craig S. Meltzner & Associates and Roy Bateman from Marin County Community Development.

The agenda for the meeting was to focus on our three presenters and get their insight and past experience related to the successes and challenges of housing projects in Marin County as the committee plans for a community stakeholder process for the \$1.4 million coming back to us from CalHFA. Q and A occurred throughout each of the speakers presentation.

First speaker: Marc Rand – Marin Community Foundation

- Current Projects: Homeward Bound of Marin – Oma Village (Novato) 14 units family affordable; Habitat for Humanity (Novato) 10 units single family homes
- In Process:
 - “Preservation Strategy” Marin IJ article recently addressed the gentrification happening in the Bay Area – which is not only making housing unaffordable for low income families, but many middle class and higher cannot afford to live in Marin County.
 - San Geronimo Trailer Court Project
 - Whistlestop Senior Housing in San Rafael through Eden Housing
 - Fairfax working with RCD Berkeley to build Senior Housing
- New approach to housing - Lily Pad – creating Jr. 2nd Unit (Creating separate living areas within a home (with bed, bath, and kitchenette, also a door leading outside). Put a wall up to separate living areas. Doesn’t require a new building and very little renovation.
- Bay Area is facing a housing crisis – see it referenced in the newspapers almost daily.
- Section 8 vouchers – people with them have nowhere in Marin to use them and no new vouchers have been issued in a long time – a long wait list continues.
- MH community most at risk
- % of units available for MHSUS CTS.
- Housing for undocumented parents with US citizen children when using Federal dollars for the project can be tricky. Suggestion is to ensure all funders for any housing project understand the target population for the building and know understand that for example, the housing will be for undocumented parents with documented children. Some funders

will be okay with this – others will not and this can greatly impact your project and funding.

Marc had to leave the meeting after his presentation but offered to come back and speak again or would be available for any further questions the committee may have going forward.

Second Speaker: Craig Meltzner – Craig S. Meltzner & Associates

Craig introduced himself and referred to the meeting handout that gave an overview of who he is and his experience working on housing project and MHSA housing projects in the Bay Area.

- Affordable housing consultant – 26 years of experience – worked housing projects statewide – 6 projects
- Some examples of the projects he's work on were:
 - Shared housing – purchased a 4-plex unit (4/2bedroom units) = 8 shared housing units. MHSA capital funding, MHSA operation services. 3 year start to finish timeline for this project.
 - 19 unit new construction housing for MHSA clients using Non-Profit developer. 1 bedroom units for individual living. Funding largely by MHSA funds and some city/Federal funds. 7 year start to finish timeline for this project
 - “Carve out” – Multi-family rental project in Guerneville. 8 units out of 48 total units designated for MHSA clients. Multiple funding partners including MHSA funds. 5 year start to finish timeline.
- Suggests any development is made to be affordable.
- Focus on units created for target populations.
- Find willing partners – use MHSA funding with other funding partners.
- Using non-profit housing partners that focus on the specific needs population.
- Keep an open mind – the willingness to consider variety of models – like shared housing.
- If developing a supportive housing project – ensure the support services for the finished project will be strong.
- Suggests considering a Rental Assistance model per and reviewed some of the financial benefits this model has in the big picture.
- Commercial conversion – Office building converted to housing – can be done, but some challenges come with this type of project. Achievable but challenging.
- Homeward Bound of Marin articulated they would have interest in partnering around the CalHFA housing funds potentially.

Third Speaker: Roy Bateman – Marin County Community Development

Roy introduced himself and advised he's been with the county for over 30 years and would be retiring in March 2016 and looked forward to sharing his experience with the committee.

- Partnership – use experienced non-profit developers who have more knowledge and expertise. Don't waste time working with for-profit developers.
- Keep it simple as possible, money is the challenge not design.
- Goal defined before to ensure viability of services before partnering.
- Housing is very stabilizing for residents.
- If housing is for undocumented parents with documented children funding source will need to confirm they are ok with serving undocumented residents and for services too.
- Rental assistance is a limited solution and Jr or 2nd units for mentally ill clients may not be the best way to house clients – not for everyone.
- Family members of MHSUS clients may be a resource for 2nd units rentals but logistics can be challenging.
- Keep possibilities open – have a Plan A and keep a Plan B: Group home, Plan C: Rental Assistance as options.
- Be entrepreneurial with approach.
- Timing is important.
- Do all that is needed before getting the MHSA \$1.4 million funding because we only have 3 years to use it.
- Transitional housing – a model that isn't as embraced currently as it once was. Residents know their housing has a fixed timeline as to when they must leave, which adds stress.
- Supported housing is the preferred model – it's not permanent, but no timeline is identified and the residents are encouraged to move forward as they get better and more stable with the hope of moving on into larger housing.
- Vacant Hotels can be a good housing option when available. If residents are in place, they are entitled for housing relocation funds and then it can get tricky and expensive.
- Community development block grant funds are available depending on the project.

All the speakers appreciated the invitation to talk about housing projects in Marin and are available to come back or answer questions going forward.

At our next meeting we will discuss next steps related to the CalHFA housing funds.

Next Meeting Date: September 23, 2015, Point Reyes Conference Room, 20 North San Pedro Rd., 1:30-3pm.