

## December 7, 2023 Fairview Community Council Executive Board Meeting

Meeting began at 7:09.

Attending: Sharon Chamard, Karen Gonne-Harrell, Allen Kemplen, Kelly Ittenbach, Dave Rittenberg. Zoom: James Thornton, and SJ Klein.

Graceful Touch was invited to speak to the board to share information with the new folks that are here at the meeting to address the concerns of the neighborhood.

Tasha Johnson from Graceful Touch... we recapped what was talked about in the last meeting in addressing the complaints that the community had. The community does not approve of the location. We went over more security issues. More cameras have been added to the property and adding 4 more cameras for more views. Also, the property manager talked about adding fencing. The community asked that no walk ins happen - that this location serve referrals only IF it opens as a warming center.

Stephanie Williams-executive director of Graceful Touch: We've been at this location for a year. We haven't had one police car or crisis mobile unit. No one has OD'd. There have been arguments among clients, but for the most part, there haven't been problems. I'm not saying that problems won't occur when the warming shelter is open, but since we didn't have problems before, so I think that we won't have problems. Our max will be 50, staff included. We are talking about starting small, then seeing where it takes us. Security: we feel that rather hire a security company, we'll train all our staff on de-escalation, and crisis intervention, among other things. We will model some of the bigger agencies in town and train all staff that way. During the warming center hours, two monitors will be available to engage with the people, while one focuses solely on security. It works for other agencies, so I'm comfortable that that will work for the warming center. There is a need for the warming center- there isn't enough shelter space. It's freezing out there. CSS has extended to us that we can work a shuttle. We also have bus passes available.

Sharon: What exactly do you do now?

Stephanie: referrals to social programs, housing navigation for the coalition, case management. Keep data on Acamis.

Stephanie and Tasha: We also have a behavioral Health doctor ...Shante who works at Mountain View Behavioral Care. We do referring.

Sharon: That sounds great, but the clientele that you have been serving have more acuity. They want to change - get out of their situation. This would be a big enough draw for those clientele - these people are beyond. How are you going to deal with this?

Tasha: We do have a plan to address this.

Stephanie: For the challenging people, there are people that do just want to get warm. If you change the expectations, they will adhere to that. If not, the police will be called. I'm a big believer in 2nd chances. I'm a big de-escalator. We're going to deal with this professionally trained that many colleagues are using in other agencies. It's not 100%...people have bad days and when you can articulate the skills and empathy, you can change them around, at least to calm down. We are trained to offer different options.

Jami Norman: I will be an employee. We will have one staff with 16 skitzos and whatever else. Majority come from the streets or jail. Also worked with Assets and pediophelia?. They had cameras. If you deal with them with respect and give them consequences, they usually respect that. There might be 10% that are crazy that day. Do unto others as they do unto you. All we're trying to do is help these people through the winter. I've been there. Sleeping in your car is not good.

Dave: In a warming center, it's not necessarily the castoffs from the shelter - these are going to be more folks that there just wasn't capacity for. Less acuity, more volume coming through the neighborhood. Dealing with acuity in a quiet space is one thing, but with volume, how will you handle that?

Stephanie: We decided we would start with the step up model and see where the need went, and increase the volume as necessary. We'll monitor the whole way and putting things in place that are needed. If more start to come, then we'll have to revisit, but always knowing we can't go over 47. I don't think there will ever be over 25-30 people. I think they'll come in spurts. We talked about finding a bigger building. It's been said there is a lot of shelter space. There are supposed to be 100 open beds soon, so we'll have room. Opening permanent housing opens more space at the shelters, making the warming center necessary for 25 people. That's the hope. The first step model is already in progress, so I know there will be more room in shelters.

Sharon: The warming area troubled me. It seemed inhumane in a way. You can come here, but can't sleep here. People are coming here, not just to warm up- they want to sleep. Sleep deprivation is a real problem. How are you going to keep people from sleeping?

Stephanie: They will not be allowed to sleep. They will be given options of things to do so they won't sleep. If not, they will be kicked out.

Sharon: It's tough to deny folks the lack of sleep.

Jami: These are the rules. If you can't follow the rules, you'll be kicked out.

Sharon: It's difficult to keep people from sleeping.

Stephanie: Several times we have people wanting to sleep, but rules are rules. We will enforce the rules. They will be asked to stand up, and if they can't, they will be asked to leave.

Dave: Is there a time limit on how long folks can stay?

Stephanie: Two hours.

Jeff Anderson: to Dave...what would you recommend? The difference between being inside and outside is huge. They have a microwave, bathrooms, hot water. You don't want people to fall asleep outside. They can die. There's a lot of people that have this need to be in a warm place. It's lifesaving. As for security, they have good people. To have something in this community, spreads out the services. There's also a warming tent in Mountain View.

Dave: Folks would be welcome to use the warming tent in Mountain View by Davis Park.

Jamie: They've had toilets and a hand washing station since the summer.

Dave: Happy to hear other neighborhoods are taking folks.

Jami: There's been some troubles - a fire and other things.

Jeff: As for security, will there be three security people at all times along with the regular staff?

Stephanie: Yes. That's what we do already.

Pastor Jerome Lopes: There are people already sleeping in cars. It would be helpful to have the social services. I applaud you for what you are doing. There are churches that have young people to help out. It could move forward. You need exposure.

Sharon: I'm trying to think of a happy medium. We all agree this is a good idea, but the location is a concern. You plan to start out with 25 people. Does it work for your business model to cap at 25?

Stephanie: How we determined the number, it is just the capacity. I won't be closed to 25. This is your backyard and I know you have experienced things with the Sullivan. Would the council be amenable to increasing the number?

Sharon: I haven't been affected by the Sullivan like other folks have. Rene: are you opposed to it entirely?

Rene: We are opposed to it entirely. We have dealt with the negative impacts for years now.

Stephanie: What did you experience?

Rene: Dealt with lots of vandalism and theft. We had patrols after the Sullivan closed. When you pre-advertised the facility, we saw this again. If you want to run a warming center, but please find a different location. We do not want it in our neighborhood.

Stephanie: If you can get patrols, would that help? If the patrols stopped it before, then I'm wondering where are the patrols now? Did they just stop? Can we get these patrols going? I can be in touch with Sgt. Reynolds to have the patrols started.

Rene: We don't want to have to live in a neighborhood that needs patrols.

Pastor: It's unfortunate. When the Sullivan was open, we went through a lot, even where I live. It's like a stigma on us. Those people are still out there. These people feel like it's a home to them. The Sullivan put a bag mark on everybody's psyche in Fairview.

Rene: We have the Econo Lodge and Black Angus. Our neighborhood has spent so much money personally to keep this out of our yards. We don't want to have to see the police every day dealing with this. You can't guarantee that it won't come back. Experience shows us that it will. We're happy to support you in a different location.

Allen: We have different things to discuss.

James: We really want to help folks, just not here.

SJ: We've gone to the Hand commission and yesterday we talked about the issue of Graceful Touch. The commission decided to endorse Alexis' letter from a week ago. I'm concerned about the location. It's tough.

Dave: I appreciate what Graceful Touch is trying to do. There are issues with the location. I'm trying to move the discourse along. We're having a changeover in the program manager in the Third Ave. resource center. I will miss her. Ariel - She was great. We have an internal hire that

will start in January. I Had a conversation with Robin our, CEO, related to the number of people outside and the lack of shelter beds. Sweet spot for doing well is an interim process. 240 we can't do well. Just because the fire department says limit is a certain number, that doesn't mean it is optimal. It didn't work. We are looking at the number again. We are confident we can do 130 permanent beds. We feel a responsibility to serve and serve well, mitigating impacts with the resources we have. There will not be an increase to staff: Right now we have a staff to client ratio of 1:25. We want to keep the community council involved in the conversation. We got another request from leadership to look at numbers again, so we are. After all, they are the ones that help us keep staff. So we are discussing it again...do have space for bunks, have staff, etc.

Allen: There has been a specific request. Robin called me regarding our good neighborhood request, and I want to put this before the board.

Karen: I've seen your space. Will there be the same vetting process for those ten more coming in?

Dave: We'll keep the 10 beds in the ? program.

Sharon: Pre pandemic, there was a 30 day in, 30 day policy out.

Dave: Is the policy doing the thing it's supposed to do? Mostly, it's causing conflict, so now we do longer: 60 days in, 30 out.

Sharon: What is the average length of stay? Three days?

Dave: 49 nights. Served 868 individuals. 2500 in previous years. 68 people were moved to more permanent housing . Complex Care, where we have 83 beds, we now have only 48; we don't know where they went. 48% went into permanent housing. .

Allen: We had a conversation about the neighborhood gardens. My experience is that when we don't have the right tools it creates conflict.

Dave: Our meeting with Henning didn't happen because of the Houston visit. It's on the agenda to talk about on Monday.

Allen: Relevant to how do we mitigate these off site impacts? Is CSS serious about participating? Are we able to move forward?

Dave: The biggest question is staff. Last summer we got \$400,000 to mitigate offsite impacts that got put towards traffic enforcement. Could the Council be a grantor to provide some operating dollars...partner with Henning to operate a pilot project? Operationally, we can put something together.

Allen: I Already talked to funders. He needs details. In order to move forward, we need to work on the framework with how the initiative would work. Does increasing shelter capacity mean increasing impact? We need Brother Francis to work with the neighborhood on these issues.

Dave: Complex Care staff do rounds around A street and Fireweed; they go out in the neighborhood and remind them to come back. If businesses have a challenge, we know how to connect people to resources. If it's a criminal issue, dangerous, call the police. We are not going to step in. We can engage with someone drinking on the corner, but we can't remove them from the corner.

Allen: If we're okay with this increase, will you work with us to negate negative impacts?

SJ: What is the response to the argument that if you add ten now, what's to say you won't add more? What's keeping that from happening?

Dave: As part of shelter licensing, there is a limit of 150 or we need the assembly to approve up to 200. We have experience working with 120. We have learned from our mistakes. We are the experts in our service delivery. It's not about getting as many getting into shelter. It's about being able to provide quality service to people. In the past year, we've learned a lot. We hired case management positions that have improved our experience and brings them through how to get laundry done, etc. We have an employment coordinator, that is trying to move BFS from being just a warm safe place to an engine that moves people out of homelessness.

SJ: We don't blame you for the Third Ave. mess this summer, but the fact that you are providing services there, but people camping between Third and Fourth, aren't your clients, but they're hanging out with your clients. You still get the brush with folks camping outside your facility. There's nothing there to attract them anymore.

Allen: Any objection to request increasing from 120-130.

No objections.

Dave: I appreciate that we can have these conversations. I appreciate how far we have come.

Sharon: You have impressed us.

Allen: It's a question of respect. Moving on, we are doing a winter festival. We want to bring attention to Hyder Street to create positive impression of Hyder Street. We are going to close Hyder south for about three blocks. We'll have dog sled rides, warming barrels, a snow maize with straw bales, and food trucks, Feb 24th, during Fur Rondy during design week. We'll have art and treatments along Hyder St. I'd like to move \$1000 out of the Better Fairview account to the festival.

Sharon: Not in general funds, but I can move it from.....

Allen: Want motion to move \$1000 out of the account for safety; we need \$2000 for permits, etc.

Rene: I have a sled dog. If it's during Fur Rondy, who has dogs available? You'll have to have an area so dogs don't get loose. Also, you have to have mushers.

Allen: I'm talking with Nathan Clements. He's willing to participate. I asked him to drive by the area and see if rides will work.

Dave: Is the plan to move snow to the street?

Allen: Yes. Helps to strengthen sense of community.

Rene: I might be able to use three dogs if conditions are right.

Allen: Reconnecting Comm Grant: US DOT had finally signed off on the agreement. Can start doing things associated with it. One thing is we'd like to kick off with a special community pot luck. Thinking of moving holiday potluck and combine it with kick off pot luck before our Jan general membership meeting. This will affect our Dec agenda.

Update on PEL: met with staff at HDR this week to go over their newsletter they are putting out about the project. It needed work. They are making changes. Too much text. Also, there is a collaborative meeting with DOT Monday here. We'll formally announce to DOT we have the money. Give update on work with museum and design week and focusing on the Hyder St corridor and bring more attention to it. DOT will be bringing out to the public early February or so with list of alternatives. Will keep window for public comment open for 45 days. During winter festival, want to make sure if there are things we want to emphasize, provide public input.

Community gardens: Moving forward for the administration to sign off on gardens. Last night, there was an open house on Eastchester Park. I Brought it up with Taylor and staff. Gave insight into their thinking. I'll be making changes and formally submitting a letter to the municipal manager next week.

James: I have over 100 signatures. I will email it to the board.

Karen: Lindsey said more coming in. We have a letter of support from Solid Waste.

Allen: We have signs made up to place in your windows or wherever.

Dave: One thing to be aware of is branding, Too many logos going on. Shirts Up prints locally if we want to order more tees.

Karen: Merrill Field is having their IFR meeting on the 13th in the afternoon.

Allen: Call to Action: a resolution introduced last month about homelessness. Our council was the only one not to act on it out of 7. Will be on the agenda. The Park Planning staff liked the planter boxes nice addition. I'm pushing for a sledding hill on the south side of the park.

Karen: We can make it multipurpose. We can have biking in the summer.

Allen: Make sure you make that proposal.

Karen: My grandson wants an ice maze where you pick up s'more makings.

Rene: After, you can donate bales for sled dogs.

Meeting adjourned.

