

HOMELESS POLICY GROUP
PINELLAS COUNTY
January 7, 2005

The Homeless Policy Group for Pinellas County met in the Area Agency on Aging Conference Room, 9887 4th Street North, St. Petersburg, Suite 100, at 1:43 P.M. on this date with the following members present:

Kenneth T. Welch	Commissioner, Pinellas County
Ronnie Duncan	Commissioner, Pinellas County
James Bennett	City Council Member, City of St. Petersburg
Carlen Petersen	City Council Member, City of Clearwater
Frank Hibbard	Mayor, City of Clearwater
Katherine Alexander-Ponder	Homeless Program Coordinator, Bay Pines/Veterans Administration
Patricia Gerard	Vice-Mayor, City of Largo
Don Shea	President/CEO, St. Petersburg Downtown Partnership, Inc.
Ron Dickman	Executive Director, Religious Community Services
Jack Humburg	(For Gary MacMath) Boley Centers for Behavioral Health Care, Inc.
Sandra Lyth	Pinellas County Coalition for the Homeless
Bonnie Collins	Integrated Health Plan, Inc.
Okey Ryan	Interim President/CEO, Community Health Centers of Pinellas, Inc.
Bob Dillinger	Public Defender, Juvenile Welfare Board
Elizabeth Gunderson	Vice President of Community Impact, United Way of Tampa Bay
Joanne Olvera Lighter	President/CEO, Allegany Franciscan Foundation
Virginia Rowell	At-Large Member

Members Absent:

Virginia Littrell	City Council Member, City of St. Petersburg
Jean Halvorsen	City Commissioner, City of Largo
Beverly Billiris	Mayor, City of Tarpon Springs
Katie Cole	Interim President, Clearwater Chamber of Commerce
Rev. Louis Murphy	Mr. Zion Progressive Baptist Church
Sid Klein	Police Chief, City of Clearwater
Dr. Theresa Bradley	Vice President of Medical Affairs, St. Anthony's Hospital
Jacqueline Rivera	Executive Director, Clearwater Housing Authority

Also Present:

Herb Marlowe	Consultant, Facilitator
Cliff Smith	Assistant Director, Pinellas County Human Services
Jean Vleming	Programs Analyst, Pinellas County Human Services
Beth Eschenfelder	City of St. Petersburg
Howie Carroll	City of Clearwater

Joshua Johnson	City of St. Petersburg
Mike Dove	City of St. Petersburg
Kathy Mitchell	Pinellas County Human Services
Mary Russell	(For Janet Clark) Pinellas County School Board
Karl Nurse	President, Council of Neighborhood Associations
Anthony Jones	Pinellas County Community Development
Tom De Yampert	City of St. Petersburg, Housing Department
Arlene Smitke	Board Reporter, Pinellas County Board Records
Other interested individuals	

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Marlowe called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees, which was followed by a self-introduction of those present.

2. Adoption of Agenda Items

Upon motion by Ms. Gerard, seconded by Ms. Petersen and carried, the meeting agenda, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record, was adopted as presented.

3. Approval of the Meeting Notes of December 3, 2004 Meeting

Upon motion by Ms. Rowell, seconded by Ms. Petersen and carried, the notes of the December 3, 2004 meeting were approved as submitted.

4. Nomination of New Members

Mr. Marlowe announced that the Housing Authority representative appointment is pending; whereupon, Mr. Dickman moved, seconded by Ms. Gerard and carried, that Janet Clark be appointed as the Pinellas County School Board representative; Ms. Peterson moved, seconded by Commissioner Welch and carried, that Duke Tieman be appointed as the Clearwater Neighborhood representative; and Ms. Gerard moved, seconded by Ms. Rowell and carried, that Karl Nurse be appointed as the St. Petersburg Neighborhood representative.

5. Report on the December Strategic Planning Committing Meeting

Mr. Marlowe conducted a PowerPoint presentation, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record, and discussed various critical housing trends and future housing scenarios.

Thereupon, Ms. Lyth reported on items of discussion at the December 2004 Coalition for the Homeless Strategic Planning Committee meeting; and indicated that a person must earn \$15 an hour to afford to buy a house in Pinellas County; that a \$150,000 home is considered affordable housing in Clearwater; that a plea needs to go to elected officials to adopt a mindset that incorporates that reality; and that many low income housing projects will require supportive services as well as renovation. She noted barriers to creating affordable housing and presented a number of options such as variable or mixed housing and a requirement that affordable housing be provided as part of new development projects. Referring to comments by Ms. Lyth, Mr. Nurse indicated that St. Petersburg is planning to change its zoning regulations to allow garage apartments; Anthony Jones, Pinellas County Community Development, indicated that the county has already done so; and discussion ensued.

6. Presentations on Housing Strategies

Referring to several graphs, copies of which have been filed and made a part of the record, Mr. Jones presented the results of research that he had conducted re residential sale prices, median salaries for various occupations, affordability and availability of housing, and fair market rental rates; and explained that he had used the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) standard allocation of 30 percent of income for housing costs, but acknowledged that the allocation is not valid in the very low income range. He indicated that housing is currently less affordable, home ownership rates higher, and more rental vacancies exist than in decades; whereupon, he highlighted several local market trends and factors.

Tom De Yampert, City of St. Petersburg Housing Department, indicated that we are now dealing with a regional market; that the cost of housing in outlying areas is increasing; that the average new Pasco County home cost is in excess of \$250,000 and the average cost of a new Pinellas County home is approaching \$400,000; that the incentives of larger lots and cheaper homes to justify a long commute no longer exist; and that as a result, upper-end homes are eating away at inner cities and land is driving the price. He noted that state and federal funding will be cut by five to eight percent next year; and related that the City of St. Petersburg is addressing the needs of the community by providing funding in the following areas:

- ◆ to nonprofit organizations set up to meet specific community needs
- ◆ low income housing tax credits to developers
- ◆ for training and education in home ownership and predatory lending practices
- ◆ for home rehab and emergency repairs to keep people in their homes
- ◆ foreclosure intervention
- ◆ to assist teachers and police officers to purchase or rehab homes

In conclusion, he stressed the need for corporate America to buy into the idea of employee assisted housing programs and other measures such as busing for service workers who cannot afford to transit to or live in the community.

Referring to a PowerPoint handout, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record, Jack Humburg, Boley Centers for Behavioral Health Care, Inc., provided information regarding his organization, which provides services targeted to individuals with mental illness and to the homeless. He pointed out that a HUD or other grant may not provide enough funding to complete and operate a facility; that additional grants must be sought from the city, county, and other sources; and that HUD is requiring a 25 percent local funding match to provide funding for services; whereupon, he noted various barriers to the work of his organization.

Referring to a recent news item, Ms. Vleming asked the three presenters whether they are familiar with the concept of linkage fees as a means to support affordable housing, and they responded in the affirmative; whereupon, Mr. Marlowe cited the complexity of the issue and lateness of the hour and proposed that the presenters return for further discussion at the next meeting.

7. Proposed Presentations Schedule

This item was not addressed at the meeting; however, information included in the agenda packet has been filed and made a part of the record.

8. Site Visits

Ms. Eschenfelder reviewed the schedule for the February 4 meeting and site visit, a copy of which has been filed and made a part of the record, and extended an invitation by Councilwoman Littrell and Councilman Bennett to arrive early and help serve lunch at St. Vincent De Paul. She indicated that transportation for the tour will be provided; that members can join the tour in progress or attend only the meeting, as their schedule permits; that a light lunch will be served at the 2:30 P.M. meeting compliments of the St. Petersburg City Council; and suggested that the meeting agenda consist of open discussion of the matters presented today and of the tours.

9. Developing the 10 Year Plan – Not addressed

10. Other Business

Mr. Marlowe, on behalf the City of St. Petersburg, invited those present to the Affordable Housing Committee meeting on Wednesday, January 13, at 10:00 A.M. at City Hall.

Ms. Vleming related that the Housing Authority has not appointed a representative to the Policy Group; and indicated that Commissioner Welch has agreed to contact the Authority in hopes of getting the matter resolved. She further indicated that Katie Cole, who represented the Clearwater Chamber of Commerce, has resigned and that Elizabeth

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Coleman is the new CEO; that Okey Ryan will no longer be affiliated with Community Health Centers of Pinellas, Inc.; and that he has been replaced by Patricia Mabe; whereupon, it was the consensus of the group that Ms. Vleming contact Ms. Coleman and Ms. Mabe and ask them to represent their organizations in the Policy Group.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 P.M.