

**Regional Dialogue – Region 1  
Bethlehem Baptist Church  
May 30, 2006**

**Housing Options:**

Moderator: Dean Klein

Speakers: Michael Milliner, Building Partnerships, LLC  
Herb Cooper-Levy, RPJ Housing

**Michael Milliner:**

Residential Studio Units: RSUs

- ✓ 250-300 square feet
- ✓ Small apartment with zoning exceptions for parking, within walking distance to shopping, etc.
- ✓ Mixed income – some market rate, some below market rate
- ✓ Mixed use – retail and residential
- ✓ Drop-in Centers
- ✓ Day Centers: life skills, job skills, etc.

Zoning and Regulatory Issues and Political concerns need to be overcome in Fairfax in order to allow for this type of housing.

Michael's Plan: Identify a nine member panel, panel members appointed by each supervisor, to begin working on political changes in each of the nine districts to effect the political will to help eliminate homelessness.

**Herb Cooper-Levy:**

“Homeless people are just like us” – many of us who own homes couldn't buy them back now. Many people double-up or triple-up in order to be able to afford a home.

Are we spending enough money at the federal level? What needs to be done?

- ✓ Continue to lobby
- ✓ Make this an issue in Richmond
- ✓ Increase the 1 penny to a 2 penny tax
- ✓ Understand the net cost to “shelter” people – we could use resources more efficiently through Housing First.

**Community Dialogue:**

- ✓ Was the California project new or part of a renovation? A - It was new; but renovating in areas where services are available is a good option.
- ✓ Do other communities require zoning changes? A - Yes, this is a community-wide issue; but not sure how long it took to effect the change. Housing First is more cost effective than managing homeless services.
- ✓ Are you referring to zoning changes to allow for increased density? – look at what happened to the Lorton Project: many of the nonprofits wanted to use existing

- buildings for housing. It didn't happen – NIMBYism. The county chose to use the land for parks and a golf course rather than affordable housing. It is a myth that affordable housing decreases property values – that's been proven not to be true.
- ✓ We have mixed use and mixed income public housing in Fairfax County.
  - ✓ Where could this type of housing be built in Fairfax? A – Zoning makes it impossible to build residential efficiency units. We can't build in just one area for low income housing – we have homeless individuals and families throughout the county.
  - ✓ We must make the best use of increased density for multi-use and multi-income housing.
  - ✓ Why is Zoning such an issue? Currently we are moving low income families out of their housing for redevelopment. A – Politics – we must ask for what would be the most helpful; single resident occupancy (SROs) need to be located near transportation, services, and jobs.
  - ✓ The community needs to be involved. Build a network and good communication system in order to develop support.
  - ✓ The community needs to be educated and understand that affordable housing does not lower property values:
    - We need transitional housing to help people get back on their feet.
    - In Richmond, property values went up and crime went down in an area where they built SROs. Michael Milliner has a document on the “10 myths of affordable housing”.
    - Housing children in motels on Rt. 50 is not acceptable
  - ✓ SROs work better in large cities than in suburban areas like Fairfax. Cities have redeveloped old hotels or apartment complexes. We need to think differently in Fairfax.
  - ✓ Consider the economics of the working poor – localities need to offer local housing assistance.
  - ✓ How were the studio units on Pender drive developed? A – HCD owned the building and use as short term residencies similar to a hotel.
  - ✓ We have 10 years to figure out how to end homelessness. Consider:
    - Build RSUs in apartment complexes and aoane for 1 parking place per unit – not the current 1 ½ parking place per unit.
    - The county owns 700 small parcels of land: some could be used for apartment complexes, others for RSUs. There will be a BOS hearing on this soon – community support is needed.
    - The county is closing six schools – consider a reconfiguration of the schools or use of the land for housing similar to the way Lewinsville was developed.
  - ✓ What about using hotels or motels for SRO/RSU development? Owners want a high price for their land; they don't want to sell reasonably.
  - ✓ Two things need to be done:
    - Develop a Master Plan: Citizens need to come out in support of the Plan and attend meetings such as the North Hill development meeting. It took 5 years to get approval for Lewinsville. There needs to be more citizen support. When an area is identified for SROs/RSUs, start working on the community right away to mobilize support.

- Convince supervisors to work inside the county structure regarding zoning, planning and development, DPWES.
- ✓ What about those of us who need housing NOW? – for those who are homeless now? There is no political inertia to move this forward, organizing citizenry is critical.
- ✓ Lorton coalition kept Lorton from SRO Development – more people are opposed for SRO/RSU development than for affordable housing.
  - Don't give up – work with our congressmen
  - Low income as well the homeless have difficulty finding homes
  - The people served by the 1 penny tax are those who earn 60% of medium income. Nothing is available to those who earn 10% of medium income.
- ✓ Organizations and churches could adopt a homeless person or family.
- ✓ We learned in the hypothermia program that homeless people are really just like us – we need to have the community understand that.
- ✓ What about families? We have a mobile home area on Route 1 that would be good for low income families and they are planning on removing it and building more retail.

### **Major Themes**

- ✓ Zoning Issues for multi-use and multi-income housing is a barrier.
- ✓ Need to get more citizen support for housing for the homeless and low income families
- ✓ Need for more creative solutions, especially in a suburban community like Fairfax
- ✓ Need for more direct involvement and commitment by elected officials.

Community Dialogue on Homelessness  
Region 1  
May 29, 2006  
Bethlehem Baptist Church

## Group 1- Prevention

Moderator- Linda Wimpy

Speakers: Kathy Van Curan –DSMHS – CSP (Coordinated Services Planning)

Richard Dobber- United Community Ministries

Recorder: Sarah Allen, DSMHS

People who have homelessness challenges have a multitude of needs- Mental Health, Substance Abuse, etc.

Language Capacity is important (CSP Social Workers and UCM staff) once staff connects with someone who is homeless – embrace the multicultural issues. For example, they may be embarrassed to get help due to their culture.

What are the outreach efforts of the CSP & UCM (are the homeless getting the information to call if they have no home?) CSP & UCM work extensively with many entities to get the word out. CSP is open to all income levels, CSP packages can be pulled together in 1-3 days to help with evictions, etc.

**Suggestion:** Families/People should not wait to ask for help because the prevention packages can take time to find.

**Challenge within the System:** It is challenging to get services if you have already received and lost public services.

If you have housing it cost less to save housing then to get new housing (considering first and last months deposit).

**Challenge within the System:** Moderate income and the working poor- what is being done to help them with housing?

There needs to be Accountability on 2 levels-

Accountability for the person receiving services by getting them help with Budget, cleaning their homes (to keep their housing, etc) – people should take participate with these services and be held accountable for their participation.

Community Accountability:

Rent Control Program? There needs to be community pressure applied to get a program like this.

Force the County to not displace people when property changes hands

Have the County put teeth into the Affordable Dwelling Units Program.

There needs to be a Living Wage Legislation.

***Question from the audience:*** Developers – Are there processes where they give back to the community where they are being displaced?

Some people have found that the processes to get help have been very difficult. One person compared it to DC where they found help easier than in VA. She did not feel like the system is immediately accessible.

Literacy programs for the homeless would be helpful.

***Question from the audience:*** What about case management to keep people in housing? To follow and support people to prevent losing their housing?

CBO's do have programs like that at UCM and Good Shepherd Housing.

Very Important- Teach people to Fish vs. giving them a Fish. Offer people supports & education to help them keep their housing or get it and sustain it.

There is a margin of time where the "client" should be stayed with to give them assistance with life skills, budget, preparation for a Section 8 Certificate.

***Question/comment from the audience:*** Mobile Home Residence Displacement – w what can the County do? Have County buy housing.

Most long-time residents in the Gum Springs Area left because it became too expensive- As a community we have to pull together to advocate for housing!

In Shelters there are expectations and timeframes put on clients that are unreasonable (to one audience member) they have 30-45 days to get a job- which is often minimum wage which would not be able to sustain housing in this area; people do not have adequate training to get better jobs; Many people are not being care for with their mental health issues and that issue is not being taken into consideration when using the timeframes for residents.

People who are in Office – elected officials- respond to signatures and petitions to keep their jobs- therefore advocacy is vital.

If we are looking to 'break the cycle' we need to look at education as the key and ensure the children go to college. One Program that does this is Training Futures with Buckman Road Apartments and Good Sheppard Housing.

**Solutions:**

- Rapid Re-Housing
- We need to really hear the problem & hear it before we come up with solutions- all homeless are not substance abusers and with MH problems, it only takes one thing of bad luck (illness, divorce, foster care)
- Make sure that we look at the causality of homelessness and address those issues
- County needs to be a serious Partner
- Grants- investigate funding by Faith-based groups to make the pool of assistance larger for CSPs to pull from. They can replicate programs and expand them.
- Look at 1 set of solutions for the Temporary Homeless vs. the Chronic Homeless. Different strategies are needed for each.
- The Shelter timeframe system needs to be changed
- Training and long-term supportive services (mentoring, modeling life-skills, case management) are needed to really change the problem
- Long-term case management works- as a preventive measure- bring this service to high-density low-income communities to help them sustain their housing and prevent evictions
- Faith-based organization partner with existing agencies to multiply efforts
- Advocate for change

## REGION 2 COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

First Christian Church of Falls Church

June 12, 2006

### HOUSING OPTIONS

Michael Milliner and Al Smuzynski

**Al, Wesley Housing** is primarily a development company that has developed 11,000 units of low income housing in Northern VA. They also manage low income housing.

Homelessness is a Real Estate problem: most homeless face economic difficulties and cannot afford to own a home or rent an apartment.

The BOS is supportive of preservation and construction of affordable housing. The difficulty is with those who are in the lower 20% of medium income. They have critical needs: some live on the streets, some in shelters, others are dealing with social problems and need help with addictions, job training and life skills. They need housing with services. The County must include:

- ✓ Permanent Supportive Housing
- ✓ Lower income affordable housing
- ✓ Market rate housing

It seems that we are ready to no longer manage homelessness, but to end homelessness. This is a huge leap and calls for a different model which is counter to how we operate now:

- ✓ Housing First Model: get people off the street even if they don't have all their problems solved.
- ✓ Arlington and Alexandria have already adopted a Housing First model.
- ✓ Wesley wants to be part of this!

### Michael Milliner

You are all familiar with the term SROs or single resident Occupancy. It is often associated with homelessness and subsidized housing. I propose: SRUs – Single Resident Units. They have built these in California – they are small transitional or permanent units. They can be mixed use and mixed income. They are around 300 sq feet and are for anyone who wants to or is willing to live in a smaller space.

- ✓ Retail on the lower level
- ✓ Housing on the upper level
- ✓ Some come with a variety of services on site

Challenges to RSU housing: Zoning. There is a commitment from Supervisors; but lack the zoning for construction.

**Dialogue:**

Does retail on the ground level help subsidize the apartments? Is there a vehicle to do that? Where is the business plan?

- A. In most mixed use and mixed income in developments, the commercial component helps support the entire project.
- A. The retail can also be specifically arranged to help provide jobs for residents on the upper floors.
- A. There is usually some government subsidy as well.

Myth: property values go down in areas where affordable housing is developed and there will also be a problem with crime. This has proven not to be true in Richmond, VA where SRUs were built. The opposite occurred – the development brought an additional revitalization to the area.

How many units per project? A - From 20 units up to 75 units. However, we don't want to move a large number of homeless into one area.

The SRO Task Force found that Montgomery County had one of the best SRO developments in the country. Gaithersburg readapted a former Econo Lodge into a mixed use development called Seneca Heights. They converted the structure into 40 SRO apartments offering services 24/7. Another 17 units serve families for a total of 57 units. It cost them \$150,000 to refit the structure, we could do a similar development here in Fairfax County.

Some of us attended a task force meeting in the Baileys Crossroads area to discuss a similar development – similar to the Opportunity Center in CA. It fits into the SRU concept. The problem was there is no zoning for it. The Region 2 Human Services building would be a focal point for the Center. It was an ideal location.

The county does provide assistance for very low income people at 60 % of the medium income; however, not for very low income individuals and families. They want to be close to services and, as many of them do not drive cars, want to be able to walk to a grocery store, medical services, and/or bus route. Zoning requires 1.6 parking places for each apartment. SRU units would require fewer parking spaces – not everyone has a car.

Have you faced opposition for Drop-in-Centers? A – we haven't gotten to it yet. People need to realize that the homeless are here and are already in their neighborhoods.

Explain what the zoning problem is. How can we help? How many developers can participate?

- A. We had 4 developments we wanted to go forward with. Nimbyism has kept that from happening.
- A At the next Zoning or Planning Commission meeting we need people to come out and advocate for this type of housing.

How many developers are on board with this concept? A – Wesley Housing, RPJ, Michael Milliner, Building Partnerships, LLC and other for-profit developers.

In WW2 doubling up in small war and post war houses was allowed. Why not do a two prong plan: offer both SRUs and shared housing for non-related adults. Turn some of the McMansions into shared housing. Individual homeowners can provide housing for the homeless right now – it's faster than building an SRU complex.

Use what's available to readapt housing for the homeless, scatter them across the county. Non-profit organizations can provide services (furniture, skill training, etc.). It is less difficult than building a whole complex. Multiply that throughout the County. We need a personal approach and a personal commitment to work with an individual family. A - for SRUs, we can take an apartment complex and divide a 900 square foot apartment into three 300 square feet apartments with no extra parking required. That would house a greater number of the 2100+ homeless quicker.

We worked with the hypothermia program. Are you tapping into the churches that participated? A – yes, we have been involved with those churches and individuals.

How can our churches and congregations be mobilized? Tell us what we can do. A -Talk to the BOS, Talk to neighbors. Spread the word.

What about families? A – The Opportunity Center in Palo Alto, CA has the same type of living space with an additional bedroom(s) according to family needs.

We need a diversity of housing – not just one model.

- ✓ Need to break down the stigmas around homeless people – make residents realize they are human
- ✓ The hypothermia program helped.
- ✓ Dispel the myths and stereotypes; i.e., over 80% of the homeless are working.

What is the ADU ordinance? A - It states that 10% of units in a development are to be set aside for affordable housing; but does not apply to mid-rise or high-rise developments. That needs to be changed.

Michael: we need to appoint one member of each supervisory district to form a 9 member panel responsible for developing SRUs in each district.

The benefits of mixed use development need to be available for people of all economic positions, not just for a few.

As a public health nurse, most patients see live in one room. Are they counted in the 2000 count? A – No – overcrowding is not counted. Often overcrowding is of immigrant families, sometimes 2 to 3 families on one home. We work around the situation by developing ordinances around how many square feet of a front yard can be paved over for parking. As a nurse, this type of living situation often results in illnesses from roaches, mice and other rodents.

There should be a way to get Dialogue participants to take this message back to their churches and continue to expand the conversations/communication. Help teach church members how to run a similar workshop at their church.

**Ways you can help!**

- ✓ Develop and support development plans and ideas for mixed use housing and low income housing.
- ✓ Educate others, expand the advocacy group
- ✓ Advocate whenever the opportunities arise: Planning Commission meetings, BOS meetings, neighborhood meetings.



## Community Regional Dialogue

Monday, June 12, 2006

First Christian Church of Falls Church  
6165 Leesburg Pike  
Falls Church, VA 22044

### PREVENTION Break-Out Session

Preventing people from becoming homeless due to family, economic crisis or because of health or disability issues.

#### Mel Cotner, Falls Church Community Services (FCS)

- Gave an overview of the agency's history, funding, referral process and activities
- FCS was founded at Holy Trinity Lutheran in 1969 with the purpose of thinking through what was going on in the area and how can we do something about it. - "How can churches help serve the community?"
- Offering short-term programs with a goal of moving people toward self-sufficiency
- Received referrals through County/City social workers and area churches
- Food (closet @ Knox Presbyterian, meal vouchers given to ministers), financial assistance (for rent, utilities, medicines, car repair), transportation (bus tokens/metro cards), clothing (currently doing vouchers only), furniture program.
- Funding – Initially just churches. Now only ¼ of funding comes from the churches.
- There has been an increasing dependency on grant funding from both public and private partners.
- There have been several programs that "graduated" from FCS including the Child Care Center @ Willston, Homestretch (to provide all these things required

to get families back on their feet), the Winter Shelter in Falls Church City, and Safe Haven @ First Christian.

### Evelyn Swieter, Coordinating Services Planning

36 Social Workers are located in 4 regions answer the 703-222-4363 line

- They provide information and referral, financial assistance, food, clothing, etc.
- 222-0880 received 200-3000 calls a day, 20% are financial assistance cases
- Most of the time spent preventing eviction
- CSP does a full assessment of the family situation including health, mental health, domestic violence histories
- Language capacity of 11 different languages plus Language Link
- CSP works with outside agencies to fund rental/mortgage assistance need to meet Criteria.
- Usually CBOs only allow 1 time/yr
- As an example Evelyn told the story of a typical client who required enrollment to the health clinic, Medicaid for her child, a chance to work with HCD to help her find a place to accept her Sec 8 voucher, a connection to SkillSource for employment and a referral to DFS for TANF eligibility.
- In 2005, 2500 calls came in and CSP served 1377 families

### Strategies to Prevent Eviction

“We will end homelessness in Fairfax County the question is how? - Peyton Whitley

- ACCA has doubled its spending on prevention, but are serving the same number of families (increase in cost of living is a major burden). – This is inadequate!
- The minimum wage needs to increase. Incomes have not increased. Housing and utilities has!
- Need to pressure and convince County to pass a Living Wage.
- Prevention starts early, so there is a need for more training to increase the youth exposure to skills that lead to higher incomes and minimizes at-risk behavior.
- Good prevention needs good data. Does the County have data on the root causes for homelessness in Fairfax? - yes, it is in the packet
- Another strategy would be effective discharge practices from mental health and/or correctional facilities.
- There is a need to emphasis budgeting and money management like the Homestrech program
- Housing First for those with a greater ability to be independent.
- Structured programs for those who can need that
- Have to Change the mindset of the community. It is a question of social justice where as someone must be fine with using tax dollars to fund, at the appropriate level, initiatives to prevent eviction and chronic homelessness
- Tell the story – Make the issues more prominent with in the County (an awareness of the problem as a community issue and not just those families’ issues).

- The political will is there.

What is needed to support the community?

- Mentors - those who can support others to share “life lessons”
- As far as housing options and constraints, Fairfax County has below market rates for: Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8), the Preservation Program, Public Housing apartments, private tax credits to consumers, senior and assisted living.
- But there is a 3-5 year wait for many housing programs.
- 13,000 units of assisted housing for 350,000 households is a working first step.
- Faith Communities in Action (FCIA) can be used to encourage mentoring with facilities, say in small groups of 5.
- Friendship Seniors may be a model.
- Remember to build upon the good work of the volunteer CBOs and DSMHS.
- The CASH program which was a great success and the second phase is financial management.

If we think of a more forward-thinking prevention model, how do we encourage individuals to participate in programs/counseling, etc. when they are only at-risk for eviction?

- CSP can't help when there is no crisis (only with pay or quit notices).
- Do we need to change policies?
  - CBOs should have a willingness to help before the crisis.
  - HCD worked with CSP and DFS to try early intervention, but ran up against CBOs resistance. They want pay or quite notice.
  - CSP also only has one resource that will provide for more than a month – what is the sustainability?
- Key is the get the word out!
- System in Fairfax is to manage homelessness and eviction prevention depends on the faith provider's criteria.
- We need to know what is working, what is not and what needs to be changed.
- The policies may not be flexible enough
- A dialogue needs to occur about developing short term case management that may offer more than one month of aid to provide a better opportunity for sustainability
- CBOs also need help on accessing funding sources.

## REGION 3 COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

St. John Neumann Catholic Church  
June 7, 2006

### HOUSING OPTIONS

Michael Milliner and Michelle Krocker

Michael Milliner"

- ✓ SRO's: Single Resident Occupancy – identified with housing the homeless
- ✓ RSU's Residential Studio Units: more generic and includes
  - Market Rate apartments for seniors, students, workforce housing
  - Homeless component

San Diego, CA: A RSO with:

- ✓ J Street Restaurant in the first floor
- ✓ Residential units on upper floors
- ✓ Around 300 square feet
- ✓ Most are furnished

Opportunity Center in Palo Alto CA: May be a good fit for Fairfax

- ✓ Drop in center for women and men with showers, phones, etc
- ✓ A day center
- ✓ A day shelter
- ✓ 89 RSUs including some small 2 bedroom units for families
- ✓ Some permanent and some transitional housing

How to Hit a Home Run: we need

- ✓ Zoning changes in Fairfax County Government
- ✓ Close to (walking distance) mass transit
- ✓ Close to or included in commercial development
- ✓ Reasonable requirements for parking (not 1 and ½ spaces per unit but 1 space per unit). Many of the residents won't have cars.

Michelle Krocker:

- ✓ Community support for this type of mixed use development, (Commercial and Residential) is essential.
- ✓ Current zoning laws do not support mixed-use housing.
- ✓ Provide housing for people of all incomes in Fairfax – provide for low income housing through sensitive development.
- ✓ Contact local supervisors. Encourage their support of development proposals for this type of housing when it is proposed.

- ✓ Consider how we want development to happen: attend BOS meetings, planning commission meetings, be actively involved in non-profit organizations. Be part of the process.

## DIALOGUE

Staff person to the Planning Commission: regarding the planning commission; everyone that comes before the planning commission is for mixed use except not in "our" neighborhood. It's not the politicians as much as it is the community and the Washington Post printing negative responses low income development.

Political leaders need the backing of their constituents. As advocates we must come forward. The opposition is strong and organized and very vocal.

In 2000, Coan Pond was developed as a RSU in Fairfax. There is office space available now in Reston that could be used for RSUs – especially since it can't be leased – it could be targeted for readaptive use.

Our congregation recently decided to support RSUs – I am an advocate but new in Fairfax - who should we contact for help. A – Contact your district supervisor.

We offered hypothermia support – what about the 12 schools that FCPS are turning over? Couldn't they be renovated/readapted?

John Callaghan: Use the Home Run Concept: propose a mixed use structure in each of the nine supervisory districts. We need each community to support the concept.

There are a number of mixed use developments being proposed. The ADU Ordinance requires a percentage of certain projects be reserved for ADUs; but that only applies to town houses and single family homes. It does not apply to mixed use developments. Therefore, we need a zoning change, and it is not happening.

Michael Milliner: These Dialogues are helpful in beginning to address the NIMBYism problem. I had four contracts to build a San Palo development concept and all were turned down by pressure from NIMBYism and Zoning.

There are 20 beds at Bailey's for overflow; but can only be used in cold months, they are needed for individuals who are homeless now.

On Route 50 near Greenbrier are Kensington Town Homes. They are new, haven't been sold yet, now they are on a lottery system; why can't they be used?

We now have more group homes than ever in Fairfax, and it is still not enough. We need more to serve individuals with disabilities.

Zoning has to include an incentive. The market is still strong and Tyson's is a hot market. There has to be additional value for development there. The Reston covenants for the business corridor around Sunset Hills and Sunrise Valley excludes residential and hotel housing. Some of the office space in those buildings is vacant. The property owners there would have to vote to change their covenants to readapt for housing; and it doesn't look they are interested in doing that.

Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance is an advocacy group for affordable housing in Northern VA. They can be reached at [info@nvaha.org](mailto:info@nvaha.org). Citizen assistance is needed at events where they try to get support for the development of affordable housing, RSUs, etc.

There is a greater disparity between high income and low income people in the County. Would Embury Shelter be build today? Why can't we put enough pressure on Zoning and government to make this happen? What is the value of mega mansions while we loose garden apartments?

I have heard of people who sleep in their cars. What will happen to them? Most homeless people are bus people, why is 1½ parking spaces per apartment required around areas of mass transit? The vast majority of homeless people don't have cars anyway.

John Callaghan: How many of you have been homeless or have a family member or know someone who has been homeless? A large number responded. This information needs to be made known to NIMBYism along with a demand for mixed use development.

There is a Ten Year goal to end homelessness. It may take years to end. We haven't raised the minimum wage in 7 years. We have to start supporting the "Have Nots". We need more voice with government. How about limiting the size of a home that can be build – are the large mega mansions environmentally sound?

Is the RSU a good environment for families with children? A. Michael Milliner: There are 2 bedroom units in mixed use that can be an alternative to the RSU. In a Chicago complex, they house small families in garden apartments and larger families in larger apartments until they are able to move into town homes next door.

Homeless individual: I was in architecture – started to develop issues, am dually diagnosed. I tried to get medical help and couldn't get it. Embry Rucker has given me help. Hopefully the walls of justice can be brought down. I have been living in fear. Michael Milliner reiterated the Richmond study that dispelled the myth that RSUs increase crime in a community.

Be sure that beyond the structures/buildings that support services are available. Supportive housing must be offered.

Michelle Krockner: Reston was built on the mixed use concept. Be sure to be present at the Whiele Ave. discussion. We have a problem here in Virginia because we are subject to the Dillion Rule and many initiatives must have the approval of the State.

**Community Summit to End Homelessness:  
Community Regional Dialogue held June 7, 2006  
St. John Neumann Catholic Church, Reston, Virginia**

**Recorded notes from the Breakout Session on Prevention  
Robin W. Patton, Regional Community Developer, Region 3  
Fairfax County Dept. of Systems Management for Human Services**

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**Moderator: Jane Kornblut**, Planning Committee to End Homelessness

**Anne Hochstrasser**, Team Leader

Fairfax County Department of Systems Management for Human Services,  
Region 3- Presentation on Coordinated Services Planning (CSP)  
703-222-0880

Social Workers answer the telephone- basic need assistance, information and referral assistance. Language capacity on staff or they use interpreters. They receive approximately 250-300 phone calls per day; ~25% housing issues & ~25% health care concerns. Social Workers do a broad-based phone assessment. Partner with over 30 community-based organizations to raise funds and put together complete packages from various groups to help clients with basic needs. Clients need to meet criteria for assistance: in a crisis beyond control, can normally make ends meet. Talk with client about this and resources. Often medical needs are the cause of homelessness. Other typical needs include employment, budget counseling, and food. Presented case example.

**Ellie Moody**, Director of Food and Emergency Services Program, Reston Interfaith - Presentation on Food and Emergency Services  
Staff provides food pantry services and information and referral services to help clients towards self-sufficiency. In the past 8 months they have assisted 826 new households, each household averaging 6 visits for food. Provide walk-in emergency food assistance and discuss other financial needs. Partner with CSP on some cases. Use Reston Interfaith emergency funds, some FEMA funds. Services include rent packages to prevent evictions. Clients may receive referrals to their case management staff to receive services such as budget counseling. Presented case example.

**Jane Kornblut** opened up the dialogue session by asking people to share examples of other services in the community.

- LINK- 17 churches in the Herndon, Sterling, Reston area. A pantry in Herndon UMC with volunteers. Families can pick up groceries twice a year.

- Herndon/Reston FISH- help pay rent, a lot of utility bills, drive people to medical appointments. Provide furnishings.
- FCS- Falls Church Services- support services too.
- Floris United Methodist Church, GRACE Ministries- food and clothing distribution and job training
- Our Daily Bread
- FACETS
- Reston Interfaith's Sponsoring Religious Organizations collect food, donations; Good Shepherd Lutheran raises funds

**Jane** noted how important it is to help people stay in their houses. (A Freddie Mac study describes risk characteristics of losing housing, including young kids, young head of households, lack of supportive social networks, and poor housing history.) How do we move beyond putting together “packages” for emergency assistance funds from community-based organizations?

- Need a holistic approach. Once people move there are transportation issues. Why do certain institutions differ that encourage people to move. We have to find a way together to find solutions to problems. Developers build rental housing with amenities that cost a lot, e.g., pools.
- The “No Forgiveness” policy prevents people who had a crisis from renting again
- We as individuals can advocate for policy changes
- I was a sub-lessee evicted due to others’ non-payment. And Mark Winkler properties are selling out to become condos.
- Families have a lot of issues & challenges. They may not be grateful for assistance, dealing with substance abuse and mental health challenges. How do we create connections with a network to support them in the community?
- We’ve learned that “life coaches” or mentors work in other communities.
- Black Women United for Action does tutoring, mentoring in certain locations
- One potential barrier is the “come see us” approach
- Working in neighborhoods brings people together
- Networking is done at Homestretch
- Medical matters were key in the case examples presented earlier. Could a special pot of funds be established for medical crises? Would that require more taxes?

- Can resources be distributed to care for our neediest neighbors? We can do this, these aren't huge numbers. There are existing access points to triage cases- shelter can do this and has a role in the future.
- Homeless children - opening communication is important. Do they have a Social Worker? Needs to be good communication with school staff educating homeless children.
- I was drinking and drugging- the shelter saved my life. The Alcohol Counselor has a lot of cases and not enough help. Abuse is the cause of a lot of homelessness.
- The Herndon Free Clinic started locally and has nurse volunteers.
- Idea: maybe if people donated \$100 per month to help keep people in their homes, such as a Giving Circle.
- Advocacy- to support elected officials. Think about existing programs and resources in the community and community connections.
- Often bad credit is a problem, maybe businesses could buy into a middle ground position to help families gain permanent housing
- Involve businesses and landlords
- Living wage- need a policy change
- Not many agencies help with budget counseling and money management
- FDIC Program trains trainers
- The charts that describe eligibility limits: such as \$10 for food stamps- those tables are too low. This is not working in our community.

**Jane** wrapped up: We need to break down barriers. Will you please spread the word about this in the community?

## TOP TEN WAYS TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS

1. **Raise public awareness** and gain commitment to the need for affordable housing in each part of the county for all levels of the workforce. Reduce NIMBY.
2. **Take a holistic and planned approach** to how and where development and revitalization happens and make sure that affordable housing is a priority.
3. **Work on domestic violence prevention** and intervention, as this is a frequently cited reason for a family to become homeless. Job training for DV victims.
4. **Educate and engage** those in landlords, property owners, business people about the risk of homelessness and where to refer people for help before its too late.
5. **Increase awareness and availability** of medical care and prescription assistance for the uninsured or underinsured. High medical bill costs contribute to the loss of housing.
6. **Improve availability** of affordable, community-based substance abuse and mental health treatment.
7. **Close the gaps** in the transportation network that make it very difficult to find and keep a job in some parts of the County. Locate employment centers near affordable housing, childcare, etc.
8. **Increase availability** of quality, affordable childcare so that people can continue to go to work. Businesses have taken this on in other community to insure adequate workforce supply.
9. **Provide financial planning**, budget and credit counseling more often and in different languages. Provide ongoing case management, mentoring, or a representative payee where needed.

**And the single most important thing that is needed to prevent homelessness in Fairfax County..... .is:**

10. **Expand the stock of affordable housing** for adults and families, including persons with disabilities. Implement the recommendations in the SRO report.

**Region 4 Dialogue  
June 14, 2006**

**Housing Options  
Michael Milliner, John Callaghan**

**Michael Milliner:**

There is an alternative to SROs, which has a negative homeless connotation, and that is Residential Studio Units or RSUs. Examples from California are:

- ✓ The J Street Inn in San Diego. The ground floor is a restaurant (J Street Inn). The upper floors are residential.
- ✓ Pensione K – has retail on the lower floor and upper floors are residential.
- ✓ Opportunity Center in Palo Alto is a mixed used center. The ground floor has two drop in centers: a day shelter and service center. The upper floors are residential.

There is support from the BOS and the Planning Commission for this type of development; but we don't have the zoning to allow for it.

**Questions**

**What are the specifics needed for zoning?**

- ✓ Commercial zoning to also allow for residential because it is mixed use. These developments must be close to public transportation and residents must be able to walk to services, grocery stores, etc.
- ✓ The current parking requirements are for 1.6 parking spaces per unit. This type of development does not need that many spaces. Many residents will not have cars and will be using public transportation.
- ✓ Consideration also has to be given to set backs from other properties, etc.
- ✓ *By right* means if you have the property in a specific area you can build whatever you want or a *special exemption* is needed.

**How many people would occupy such a unit?**

- ✓ One person would occupy an RSU; however, these would be mixed use and mixed income with about a fourth for low income or homeless and the rest for market rate units, and some with more than one bedroom.

**Did the California Communities Center have zoning difficulties?**

- ✓ Not sure; but Fairfax has the resources to be able to make this type of development happen.

**What type of residents are in these developments?**

- ✓ We need multiple projects all over the County. The types of residents will vary from one development to another.

**Supervisor Bulova:** mentioned a concern about inadequate parking causing over parking; especially once the homeless find jobs and begin working. We may need to be flexible with zoning issues. Examples are of cities, are there any of suburban areas?

- ✓ Developments such as extended suites are similar to RSUs in exterior and interior construction - an RSU development could be constructed to look similar to Extended Suite construction.
- ✓ Montgomery County converted an Econo Lodge into a RSU – Seneca Heights. New Haven, CT has a similar development. This type of development can apply to existing properties.

**Is this type of property subsidized by the County?**

- ✓ Mixed use retail helps to support the project along with federal, state and local funding. The penny fund projects are for people at 60% of medium income. We need to provide for those at 10% AMI.
- ✓ It helps to use a patchwork of financing: Individual SSI, grants, churches, etc. Churches can help purchase a unit. The Opportunity Center in Palo Alto was built by churches.
- ✓ We should provide opportunities for this type of housing in all areas of the county and strive for zoning changes across the county.

**How many projects are needed to end homelessness in 10 years?**

- ✓ Many options for a variety of housing need to be considered.

**John Callaghan: Key elements of the Summit**

- ✓ One size doesn't fit all. We need to consider a variety of options for singles, families, children, victims of domestic violence, and people with physical disabilities.
- ✓ We need to determine if we can use shelters and transitional housing differently. Some jurisdictions use shelters as short term triage facilities, and some have turned their transitional housing into RSUs.
- ✓ Housing First: move people into housing as soon as possible.

**Will you improve transportation in Fairfax?**

- ✓ This design depends on access to public transportation. Bus tokens and Cab vouchers can be used for the homeless. Teach disabled how to get around on public transportation. Sometimes shelter vans are available.

**What do folks that participated in hypothermia think can be done?**

- ✓ There is a need for better coordination of services between MH and Social Services and education about those services.
- ✓ We need something similar to the Opportunity Center – that would help with next winter.
- ✓ Diana Lotito: we were shocked by the numbers and were under resourced. Churches are saying “enough is enough”. One church member's church has gone on record to support ending homelessness and the housing first concept.

**We must realize that housing first has to be linked to support services**

- ✓ Driving people to jobs, doctors' appointments
- ✓ Provide MH, SBA and social services
- ✓ A pastor of a church that rents space in Greenbrier states that half the congregation who are homeless. Our mission is to develop a safe place for the chronic homeless. Why does Fairfax County not have some kind of parkland with a structure in it for our homeless who live in the woods?

**Another opportunity would be sharing space.**

**Are there old schools that could be used?**

- ✓ Supervisor Bulova: FCPS gave schools to the County when they recently moved into their new administrative building in Merrifield. The County is now looking into what can be done with these properties. Each one is different. Most are located in residential communities, not close to transportation routes, and would need strong advocacy support to be used as RSUs.

**Coan Pond is in a C8 zoning district.** That allows for hotel, motel development. It is an unusual situation which allowed for its construction.

**Why not consider revitalization districts for mixed use:** They would have public parking, retail parking and transportation. Why couldn't we use strip malls for this type of housing?!

**Dialogue Themes:**

- ✓ Move the homeless into Housing First
- ✓ Advocate: support zoning changes, discourage NIMBYISM
- ✓ Complex Problem: The homeless populations have many varied needs. There is not a "one size fits all". We need a variety of solutions for all the variety of needs for the homeless.

## **Region 4 Homeless Dialogue**

~Session Notes~

*N. Tilly Blanding*

*“Prevention of Homelessness Due To Family or Economic Crisis”*

*Julienne Barbazette, CSP & Monica Herbert, WFCM*

*Question posed by Moderator*

*“What are some Prevention measures we can initiate in our community to end homelessness”?*

- Education and Advocacy are major issues.
- We need a well-oiled PR campaign with celebrity endorsement to inform citizens of the problem and the need.
- We need to educate citizens by keeping this issue in the public eye. Find ways to keep the media talking about the plight of the homeless. The “face” of the homeless needs to be changed. It could be you or your neighbor.
- Look for the Council of Governments report in the Washington Post on June 15, 2006.
- We need to have all entities who are addressing the homeless issue come through a “gateway” of sorts so that everyone will know who is out there trying to assist with this effort and what they are specifically doing.
- If you give them a “rod” to fish, they may forget how to fish. Family dysfunction is a great cause of homeless problem.
- Why are there no clergy here tonight? Church needs to talk about this problem more. The church would do more if the county would tell them what is needed.
- One participant in the group said that county executive, Verdia Haywood, states that this is not a situation where the county [government] will tell citizens how to solve, but rather a “community” should come together to find ways to solve the problem themselves. A community plan, not a county plan.
- There is still the feeling that the schools and citizens don’t want to admit that there is a homeless problem. There are students and their families living under an 18 wheeler in the county.

There must be an aggressive movement in education....it could happen to you. Relate this issue on an emotional level with citizens.

- The faith community must be educated further about this issue and what part they can play in this. They need to be taught the process and given the tools to handle the issue.
- Conduct classes with the faith community to teach them how to work within the system and understand how the system works.
- Even though the county wants citizens to take part in solving this problem, the county believes in “Housing First” and does not want to continue building homeless shelters. Permanent housing is best.
- It’s been said that Fairfax County is “resource rich” and “connection poor”. We must do a better job at connecting people to resources.
- Part of the problem is that citizens are not aware of all the resources the county offers. When someone comes for help, the church tries to do whatever they can.
- Need to understand Fairfax Counties’ “expectations” around this issue.
- Need to better partner with the business community to get them on board and involved with this issue. Marketing is vital.
- The “attitude” of the church towards the homeless needs to be changed. Again, change the face of the homeless.
- Sandy Chisholm encouraged faith groups to attend the FCIA meetings and join the Homeless Planning Committee that addresses the homeless issue. She gave her email and encouraged all to write to her about their interest. Get involved.
- Need classes in how to use the media to get the message out. Write stories that will create an interest, generate emotional feelings to get public to donate time, money, etc. to help.
- Faith groups need to know how they can encourage their members to step up and volunteer to help those in need.
- 222-0880 is hard for people to grasp, need a better clearinghouse to channel people through.
- 211 is Human Services; 311 is County Services
- If you dial 211, you will be put through to 222-0880

- Identify the influential sources in the county such as the media, police, faith groups, business community etc.
- Identify who is at the top of the “food chain” for the homeless in Fairfax County?
- Is the information being compiled tonight being forwarded to county officials? Yes!
- Stop thinking about “managing homelessness”. No more shelters. Help prevent your neighbor from losing their home.
- How can faith communities’ partner with a consumer run Mental Health shelters?
- Schools must get involved, as their students are the young and homeless. Children know how to hide their homelessness from others.