

Walnut Creek Homeless Task Force

Regular meeting 2:00 to 3:00

December 7, 2022

Facilitator: Donna Colombo

Introductions and Welcome

Presentation: Stephanie Brynen, Housing Manager, City of Walnut Creek

In her 3-week tenure with the City's Planning Department, Stephanie has been meeting with her new colleagues to review recent State legislation and develop comprehensive housing ordinances. The goals are to ensure compliance and develop new streamlined processes. Stephanie's perspective is to support families and make affordable housing more accessible. She is learning about previous and existing projects. She is looking to the Task Force (TF) to inform her on local conditions.

Donna directed Stefanie to the TF's website for our history and expressed our willingness to offer support and provide input on our concerns and questions of the City's housing policies and practices.

Marco: led a discussion of our goals and priorities (see website for listing) both short and long term.

Donna: our major focus has been to reduce the negative impact of homelessness on the city. The primary way to reduce homeless is to increase affordable housing. It's time for the TF to focus on working with the City to increase housing through strategies such as ADU's and tiny homes as well as permanent supportive housing.

Has homelessness increased over the last several years? Leslie Gleason of Trinity Center said that they are seeing more people (up to 70 to 80 people a day) with more intense needs. There is more need for mental health services, without Trinity having mental health resources from city or county. Newcomers to Trinity need mental health support to engage with the advocacy Trinity has to offer, as a result there is more churning in the Trinity population: they tend to not stay long enough and not come back to get services. Donna pointed out that Trinity has one part of the homeless population in the city, police and CORE staff see other segments of the homeless population.

Evening and weekend meals/services project: TF has been working on this for some time. But we have not been able to develop a sustainable effort.

UPDATES

Trinity Center: Evening program starts 12/12/22 at the Armory. Currently have 24 applicants for the 38 regular beds. There are 12 "emergency beds" for referrals from WC police or CORE team. Walnut Creek city staff have been very helpful in securing the Armory site for the Evening program again this year. Trinity held a "Coffee with the Cops" event to build community for Trinity Staff, Members and the HOP team. Trinity's holiday party is scheduled for 12/20/22. Trinity has lined up churches in the area to cover dates when the Armory is not available.

Jaime Janette, County H3: Point in Time count planning is underway. This year there is a particular focus on documenting the number, location and safety concerns of unhoused people. PIT count will be held in

February. County's Council on Homelessness is planning a memorial event to acknowledge deaths among the unhoused. They are seeking names of people who have died while experiencing homelessness.

Donna: TF committee of housing and shelter has met recently and expressed their interest in meeting with Stefanie to align mutual goals. Two priorities for the committee are the streamlining/improvement the process of permitting ADU's so that cost and paperwork barriers are reduced. The city has on their web site approved ADU plans. The committee would like to propose a less expensive (in cost and time) alternative ADUs including prebuilt potentially working with Casita Coalition that has vast experience in the ADU arena. We do not expect the City to endorse specific premade ADUs but we'd like to see alternatives to the new build strategy. The other priority is to follow up on the Housing Element's goal for increasing the supply of permanent supportive housing in the city. We want to explore the most likely sites from the housing element and work with the city and developers. SB4 outlining 100% affordable housing on properties owned by faith communities is pending a vote in the state senate. Donna will send out a template for support letters.

Note: The Task Force will not meet in January. The next meeting will be February 1st.