



Shelter Planning Task Force

June 24, 2015

Meeting Notes

Attendees:

Kim Cook	Off-peninsula		Dave Maclean	City of Portland, HHS, Social Services Division
Mike Tarpinian	Opportunity Alliance		Angela Giordano	City of Portland, HHS, Social Services Division, Oxford Street Shelter
Bob Fowler	Milestone		Nicole Evans	United Way
Sean Kerwin	Bayside Neighborhood Assn		Melissa Skahan	Mercy Hospital
Bill Higgins	Homeless Voices for Justice		Peter Driscoll	Amistad
Jim Hanley	Greater Portland Chamber of Commerce		Ginny Dill	Shalom House
Dawn Stiles	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept		Cindy Namer	MaineHousing
Dana Totman	Avesta Housing		Rob Parritt	MaineHousing
Cullen Ryan	Community Housing of Maine		Julie Sullivan	City of Portland, staff to Task Force

1. Welcome, (re-)introductions, updates
2. **Coordinated entry process** – MaineHousing, Statewide Homeless Council, Portland Continuum of Care, Maine Continuum of Care
 - Cindy Namer presented the coordinated entry process map (CAARES – please see attached) currently under development
 - Coordinated entry is one of HUD's main priorities
 - Assessment tools – including 5-10 question pre-screening
 - Prioritization based on assessment – longest-term stayers and most vulnerable first – permanent housing; if not available, rapid re-housing
 - Serve clients where they are (geographically)
 - Only exclusionary criterion is violence
 - Data-sharing among shelters is critical
 - No wrong door
 - Driven by client experience
 - Following initial assessment, more robust intake/assessment (VISPDAT)
 - Then housing stability plan
 - Then performance measurement
 - System performance measurement is another HUD key focus area
 - Entire system – i.e., anything listed on the Continuum of Care's housing inventory as serving homeless (even if not CoC-funded)

- Driven by Point-in-Time Survey numbers
 - Concern raised that those who are camping out are excluded
 - Projects for Assistance in Transitions from Homelessness is a federal block grant (approx. \$1.3 million to the State; about \$300,000 to Portland).
 - State subcontracts to Catholic Charities who subs to Preble Street in our area.
 - About six months of services, which for some clients is insufficient
 - Request to have Preble Street present on their PATH activities
- HUD system performance measurement guide
- HMIS = reporting database to HUD
- Discussion
 - Implementation time frame for this process? About two years. Trying to finish first chunk (activities that are supposed to happen within first 72 hours of client presenting) by end of calendar year; some components already being implemented
 - Who decides? How roll out? Working for buy-in from the two Continuums of Care and the three regional homeless councils (which comprise the Statewide Homeless Council) so that there will be consistency statewide in the client experience
 - Should lead to clients being better served locally and not sending them to Portland?
 - Database/data-sharing is supposed to be real-time
 - Required by HUD to serve most vulnerable
 - Overflow issue – Portland reports capacity of 246, though Oxford Street’s capacity is 154
 - MaineHousing rules re homeless shelters appear not to be enforced
 - Rulemaking is currently underway to change some of these rules
 - Violations need to be reported to MaineHousing so they can investigate

3. ESAC/Longest-Term Stayer Initiative

- Cullen Ryan provided an overview of the work underway via ESAC to place the 70 longest-term stayers from the Oxford Street Shelter into permanent, supportive housing
- Within 5 weeks, 14 of the 70 have been housed
- 9 organizations agreed to come together to make this happen, contributing 9.5 FTEs: City of Portland, Amistad, Opportunity Alliance, Milestone, Frannie Peabody, VA, Preble Street, Shalom House, MaineHousing (and PHA provided some additional Section 8 vouchers)
- All organizations have capacity to serve clients who are not MaineCare-eligible
- Goals are to be down to 52 long-term stayers by 7/1; 34 by 8/27, 16 by 10/29, 7 by 12/3 and 0 by 12/31
- There are plenty of rental subsidies to get this group housed
- The subcommittee meets weekly to go through the longest-term stayers list, which comes from Oxford Street and the HMIS system, and assess the levels of support needed by each individual
- How does this work impact shelter capacity?

- When the 30 long-term stayers were housed at Logan Place, the 3rd overflow shelter was no longer needed.
- When the next 22 were housed, the 2nd overflow has been needed only very sporadically
- By housing the medically compromised clients who need cots, capacity at Oxford Street is increased
- When we get down to 170-180 folks seeking emergency shelter, they can fit into a 154-bed shelter because of the entry/exit that happens throughout the night
- Keep going after 12/31 and target the next group of longest-term stayers, etc.
- Now, when someone has been staying at Oxford Street for two weeks (even if not consecutive nights), they are screened with the VISPDAT to determine what resources and supports they need to prevent becoming a long-term stayer
- Is this approach sustainable?
 - Depends on the continuing will of the participating organizations
 - Fits right in with 2013 statewide plan
 - There are ongoing issues with DHHS – if MaineCare eligibility were granted to the 262 long-term stayers statewide, there would be significant cost savings and improvements in their housing success; white paper provided to DHHS Sept 2013 and still no response
- Is there enough housing stock given the tight rental market in Portland?
 - There is only a 1% vacancy rate in Portland, but we are only talking about placing 70 people.
 - Landlords are often very responsive to guaranteed rent and a third party to assist with resolving any problems or removing an unsuccessful tenant and bringing in a new tenant
- Are the participating organizations able to provide enough support services to meet clients' needs?
 - The need for intensive services declines with length of time in housing
 - There is enough capacity currently to support the 70 targeted clients

4. Revised work plan

- Julie distributed an updated work plan reflecting the greater length of time spent understanding current services
- Concerns were raised regarding the Sept 8 deadline and the likely need to request an extension from Council to October or November
- Next meeting will focus on how much money is currently funding adult emergency shelter services in Portland via Milestone, Preble Street, and the City and the requirements of that funding in order to determine the current baseline funding as well as what is expected over the next two years
- Then we will focus on the components of the adult emergency shelter services model
- Followed by an examination of who should run the shelter, whether a new shelter makes sense at this time, where the shelter should be, and who the service partners should be

5. Wrap up and **next meeting**

- Weds 7/8, 9-11 a.m., City Hall, rm 24
 - Current adult emergency shelter services funding and expected funding over the next two years

- Web site: www.portlandmaine.gov/1512/Shelter-Planning-Task-Force
 - User name: taskforce
 - Password: portland15

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