



Health & Human Services and Public Safety Committee Minutes

Tuesday, January 22, 5:30pm, Council Chambers, City Hall

Committee Attendance:

Belinda Ray, Chair (District 1), Brian Batson (District 3), Pious Ali (At-Large)

Councilors in Attendance: Jill Duson (At-Large); Kim Cook (District 5), Justin Thibodeaux (District 2)

City Staff: Director of Health and Human Services, Dawn Stiles, Planner, Christian Roadman; Administrator of Social Services, David MacLean, Acting Director of the Oxford Street Shelter, Meaghan Void; Rob Parritt, Consultant

AGENDA ITEM 1 – Announcements

Chair Ray announced that the search for a new Chief of Police will be collaborative within the community and competitive amongst the candidates.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – Approval of Minutes

Councilor Batson made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 8, 2019 meeting; Councilor Ali seconded and the motion passed unanimously with the following amendments:

- Bill Linnell name spelling
- Correction on Exotic Animal Ban
 - Strike large and exotic animal ban as that was done in a previous year.

AGENDA ITEM 3 –

Public hearing likely in March

City Manager announced that in addition to the three organizations looking to partner with city, two more have come forward.

Dana Totmen, Avesta

- 36 rooms in a residential care facility
 - Challenged but not needed for long term care
- Housing first model
 - House all people 55 and over



- 15 unit assessment center
- Medicaid waivers used to pay for housing first models
 - Looking for creativity in this barrier
 - Dhhs Policy Adviser
 - Existing waivers that might be on the table that can be utilized
 - Engaged a local architect
 - Analysis resident demographic
 - Engaged a consultant
 - The possible funding streams
- Chair Ray asked how people got to the 15 person assessment center.
 - They will be referred by appointment from the City's Homeless Services Center
 - The MOU is being worked on.
 - The 15 beds will be indivual referred by the City's emergency shelter
- Councilor Cook asked if the 36 bed count include the 15 bed assessment Center.
 - No
- Councilor Ali asked what they learned from researching this model
 - Identified a similar model in Cambridge, MA.
 - Ruggles Assisted Living
 - Two components are the same: multi-level unit of care for seniors only.
- Councilor Duson asked about the 15 bed assessment center.
 - Is the assessment tool standardized?
 - Yes
 - Will assessment lead to referrals to outside organizations?
 - Yes
- Councilor Batson asked if there are any locations or qualities that they are looking for when they select their site
 - Accessibility: must be on a bus-line.

The Opportunity Alliance: Mike Tarpinioan President and CEO

- 15 bed residential treatment facility for homeless adults with substance use disorders.
 - The current 12 bed bridge program is moving at which time it will d add 3 beds, bringing the total to 15.
 - This is not an emergency Shelter
 - The bridge is a treatment facility.
 - At least 70% of operational funding will be from Medicaid
 - Draft MOU and business associate's agreement for data sharing already sent to the City.
 - Have had meeting with State DHHS
 - Substance use and mental health services.
 - Medicaid expansion is looked to as means from the state to make this proposal successful



- o TOA is looking for land from the City
- o Someone else will build the facility and lease to The Opportunity Alliance
 - Request sent to the state for referrals to come directly from the shelter
 - Looking to confirm the above details during a meeting on February 1, 2019.
- Councilor Cook asked if
 - o Current 12 bed program is moving from 54 Maple Street to Brighton gaining 3 beds to a new total of 15.
 - o A location for a new 15 bed program has not been decided on yet.

Donna Yellen, Acting Executive Director of Preble Street

- Proposed Specialized Shelter Women's Shelter
 - o Early in process.
 - Community needs assessment
 - Identify service provider and consumer needs
 - Quantitative data from 14 organizations serving women experience homelessness
 - o Look at the intersection of women seeking shelters and other target demographics
 - Could they have sought shelter
 - Qualitative data via focus groups of people who are or have experienced homelessness, including the domestic violence and other sub populations served in this.
 - Financial viability assessment
 - 272 people sought shelter on Monday due to the extreme cold.
 - 59 were women
- Councilor Batson asked about the timeline of the financial viability and what type of funding stream they will seek (capital campaign?)
 - o The financial assessment takes longer to complete and those details will be considered later in the process.
 - Will be further defined in the next month
- Councilor Dusenbury understood that there is an array of specialized shelters and associated services.
 - o The assessments may not be standard across those different programs.
 - o Certain assessments must be standard but specialized needs and programs will not be the same as other programs.
 - Preble Street has expertise in assessment and has observed some unreasonable expectations of the shelter system to medical level assessments.
 - o Preble Street triage individuals now



- Women aged over 65 (70) belong in a specialized facility and program not an emergency shelter.
- Community Housing of Maine (CHOM) Cullen Ryan
 - Not originally part of the public-private partnerships presented at the January 8 meeting.
 - Homelessness can only be solved by a collaborative community response.
 - CHOM is the largest housing provider
 - Populations served
 - Victims of domestic violence
 - People with disabilities
 - Long Term Stayers in the shelter system
 - Supportive housing (services wrapped around housing).
 - Advocacy: Legislation to help create housing and grant access to existing housing.
 - \$15 million bond specifically needed for this type of housing.
 - Medicaid eligibility for services
 - Rental subsidies
 - Long term stayers
 - Pushing permanent supportive housing resources to those who stay in the shelter system vs the circumstantially homeless
 - This housing
 - Housing:
 - Blended housing developments
 - 76 are supportive housing
 - Model: someone who has learned into affordable housing matched with support services leads to successful permanent housing.
 - Looking for land to become available
 - Great Portland Addiction Collaborative
 - One person from the Long-Term Stayers initiative connected to recovery program and is now a peer in Amistad's peer support program.
 - Working with Amistad, Mercy Hospital and CHOM.
- Councilor Ray asked about the City land acquisition
 - Levels?
 - Small supportive housing developments
 - 4-10 units
 - Large low-income housing tax credit developments
 - Blended up to and over 50% of the above (4-15)
 - Councilor Cook asked for clarification on the number of units in these pipelines and their funding sources.
 - Cannot give an exact answer
 - Low income tax credit.



- Will include as many individuals staying at the Oxford Street Shelter as possible.

Amistad, Brian Townsend and 66 State Street Property owner Kevin Bunker

- Women's housing program.
 - o Meredith Pesce Assistant director will plan and manage the program
 - o Women have been disserved despite best efforts.
 - o The more women experiencing homelessness are part of the dialogue of their needs, the better services become
 - o Project will allow collaboration with the city and coordination entry to allow exponential benefits to the comity
 - o Not proposing a shelter
 - Readymade housing for women with peer supports built in.
 - Meals on site
 - Ability to serve mothers with children
 - Many women who are homeless on any given night are already ready for permanent housing.
 - Most women experience homelessness in Portland are
 - o vulnerable
 - o resilient
 - Paradigm Shift
 - "SRO Type" model
 - Belief that women will be successful
 - Women can count on their own bed to come home to (unlike the shelter)
 - Kevin Bunker of Developer's Collaborative
 - 66 state street (Amistad's former location)
 - o Bought the building
 - o Came to an agreement with Amistad:
 - 2 years given for Amistad to leave and then the site would have been turned into condos
 - The West End neighborhood has many types of properties that are successful (apartments, condos, etc.),
 - Wanted to work with Amistad to keep them there in some capacity
 - Amistad had already found a possible location to move.
 - Women's Housing project instead
 - o SRO like model
 - Continuum of housing services on site.



- o All of this came together independent of the Homeless services Center conversation.
 - o Enough analysis to shift from condos to this housing project.
- Chair Ray noted that the community partners in this in project include developers who want to do good things
- Some of the women housed in this program may not come from the City's Homeless
- 40 +/-
- Major leverage for the Long Term Stayer Initiative
 - o Development catered to LTS needs
 - o The way some women experience homeless makes them invisible in our continuum as they do not accumulate enough consecutive bed nights to be included in that group.
- Councilor Cook remarked on the genuine excitement around this project
- State funded with very defined areas
 - o Safe and distinct for women
 - o gender
 - o will know more in a few months.
- Councilor Batson asked Cullen Ryan of CHOM if all the projects came to fruition, would a 150-bed shelter still be needed?
 - o Yes
 - Long Term Stayers could be diverted from the emergency shelter system to one of mental health providers; it could be possible to get the number down to 120-150 beds.
 - A myriad of other resources and factors need to be available for the above success.
 - CHOM recommends the original 200 bed model that included a flexible space that can accommodate potential capacity that may be needed and also be suited for support services
 - Be able to meet the needs of the population
 - Focus on housing Long Term Stayers

Staff Presentation

- City manager Jennings announced he and Dylan Monahan, the Preble Street staff coordinator of Homeless Voices for Justice to set up a meeting in February and March to include consumer input on the services and development of the homeless services center.
- Because of potential partnerships and looking at other locations, staff no longer holds the position that the Barron Center campus is the best possible
 - o 650 locations to start with (everything regardless of viability)
 - Logistical and other restrictions distilled that to practical list of possible options.



- Jeff Levine, City Planner noted they started with 700 parcels and applied methodology of use, 16 bed shelter model and square footage needed.
 - These parameters can be adjusted within the selection methodology.
 - 650 land parcels of 20,000 SF. & up and screened parcels from these groups
 - Land Bank
 - Parks a cemetery
 - Wetlands
 - Islands
 - Existing buildings.
 - Parking garages would have a large demolition cost and take away the large public service
 - Thames Street Parking lot went to the next round as it is flat and available for development.
 - Big parcels
 - Edge of town due to availability and restriction
 - List of Big Parcels:
 - District Rd.
 - Land Leading to Airport
 - Riverside Recycling Facility
 - Former West School
 - 0 Westbrook St.
 - 0 Rand Rd. (Office Park)
 - 1819 Westbrook St.
 - 622 Auburn St.
 - Possible land acquisition at County Way
 - Deed Restriction: Serious limits based on funds used to acquire sites.
 - Paul Bradbury, Director of the jetport - Airport: very land constrained
 - Land was acquired for an aeronautical need
 - Would need to demonstrate the land is surplus in the needs of aviation.
 - Most comparable airports have 20,000 square acres
 - Portland Jetport has 1,000
 - Would have to buy at fair market value
 - Moving to the another site would be prohibitive due to sound decibels.
 - Land Bank
 - 13 sites, including Franklin Reserve at the Franklin Arterial.
 - 3 Hutchins Drive
 - Rosemont Fire station has land behind it.



- o Downtown Parking lots (3 of 5 are on map, not on map are the too parking lots near the reiche school in the West End.
 - o Privately Owned Parcels
 - 6 didn't immediately get cut off.
 - Others not selling
 - o Warren Avenue sight is the most feasible and is the only one that carried forward.
- Chair Ray asked why the other 5 buildings were did not make the cut.
 - o Christian Roadman, Planner explained the building and development constraints that demonstrate they unviability.
 - o Warren Avenue is a quarter mile from transit lines.
- 14 feasible sites that if desired could move to a next round of analysis.
 - o Looking for policy direction from the committee.
 - o Most other sites in the city have obvious issues that calls their viability into question.
- Chair Ray hoped to eliminate some sites from the list in order to request a deeper analysis on a smaller number of sites that are truly viable, qualified by 9 criteria on the site matrix.

Committee Discussion

- Chair Ray hoped that the committee can eliminate some parcels from consideration.
- Councilor Cook clarified the list is solely considering the location of the City-run Homeless Services Center, not where partner agencies can locate their projects.
 - o The committee agreed.
- 9 criteria on matrix
 - o The committee agreed to remove the Barron Center Campus from the list (but not from the partner projects).
 - It is a preferable location for some proposed projects.
- Chair Ray asked about Franklin Reserve: Boyd Street Gardens, a park with restricted zoning
 - o Franklin Reserve not listed as a park but boyd street gardens is and they are the same park; its addition was an oversight.
 - o Councilor Cook would like this area to be examined as the actual gardens take up a limited amount of space within the parcel and there could be space for housing.
 - Councilor Cook requested clarification how much of the land is actually removed by the parks ordinance; it has not been considered yet due to ambiguity.
 - The committee is comfortable keeping it on the list and noted with an asterisk that it is unlikely the remainder of the parcel would be large enough for the homeless services center.
- Are the remaining sites big enough to accommodate the homeless service center?
 - o Must be in a quarter mile or, if within a half mile of metro service, provide transportation.



- Committee would like to add the Riverside parcel back into consideration.
- Councilor Batson would like to remove the site of the former West School from the list for workforce housing prospects.
 - Half of that location is in the CIP in the Dougherty Field plan to create an athletic field.
 - Selling other half could fund the rest of the field
 - City staff is recommending input on selling West School to fund workforce housing development.
 - Councilor Dusen understands that both the housing committee and HHS & PS Committee are considering use of the parcel.
 - Whichever is deemed to be in the greatest service to the public
 - Councilor Cook would like to see consistency of sites (such as the consideration that being in the middle of a residential neighborhood is a disqualifying factor.)
 - Chair Ray clarified that she believed the Barron Center had been appropriate as it abutted a residential neighborhood and was not in the middle of one; she believes partner projects are better suited to that parcel.
 - The committee are in agreement to remove west school from the list to allow the sale to fund Dougherty Field an open space for workfare housing development.
 - Only one area of Auburn street is flat and dry.
 - Do any parcels present accessibility issues?
 - Multimodal accessibility has not been screened but many would likely need sidewalk improvements.
 - Zoning was not used to formulate this list but will be in the next analysis.
 - 'Will zoning have to be changed?' to be added to the matrix.
 - How do people access the land behind the fire station?
 - Access road share with fire station
 - Possibility of creating a road.
 - What are the environmental concerns?
 - Noise pollution; constant sirens could be triggering to shelter guests.
 - The building cannot be retrofitted and must be fully replaced
 - The committee agreed to remove the fire station.
- Are there any other sites that could be easily removed?
 - County way is a large parcel and can be redeveloped for multiple uses.
 - Owned by the State
 - City has been in talks with the State; were it the will of the Council, it looks like a possible land trade



- Councilor Batson would like that safe outdoor spaces for guest and public use be considered.
- Councilor Batson would like to see the locations of services accessed by people in emergency shelter.
 - Chair Ray is happy to see this, but stresses that emergency shelter is not housing so such proximity would be weighted accordingly.
- Criteria remaining that were not addressed in this round of site analysis
 - Is site secure? Adequate space to build for indoor intake, day facilities and services, screened/private outdoor space, adequate buffer from nearby neighbors.
 - Are there any environmental concerns? Noise, pollution, nearby industrial uses, etc.
 - Do we have service provider buy-in for this location? Are our most relied upon partners in agreement this is a decent location?
 - Financial considerations: Can we afford to acquire (if necessary) and build at this site? Consider capital and operating expenses.
 - Staff will add these to plus/minus criteria as well as:
 - General estimates on cost.
 - The Committee requested HVJ input be included in the matrix.
- The committee will wait to remove the Angelo's Acre location but the addition of shipment activity due to the cold storage facility may reduce its viability.
- Councilor Cook suggested that the committee look at the satellite maps to gain a sense of their viability for adequate buffer space to nearby neighbors and environmental concerns.

11 sites remain for a next round of analysis.

Councilor Ray thanked the Councilors, City Staff and those who listened in attendance and on the town hall stream.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – Next Meeting, February 12, 2019

- Homeless Services Center to return on the February 26th meeting.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:05 PM.