

Best Practices to Promote Health

March 4, 2015 (11:30AM-1:30PM)
Peter Paul Development Center
1708 North 22nd Street
Richmond, VA 23223

Executive Summary

The Richmond Promise Neighborhood (RPN) quarterly meeting convened on February 11, 2015 and hosted over 60 individuals representing over 30 organizations to review the three main housing redevelopment priorities: Trauma Informed Community Building, the Invisible Population, and Mental Health and Substance Abuse. Breakout sessions identified 'next steps' for each priority area, which were re-visited during today's monthly meeting. Urban Institute joined the group and discussed their experience with working with public housing development. The group discussed additional action items/next steps that should be addressed in order to move forward with redevelopment, including developing a Relocation Rights contract, working to secure additional funding for supportive housing, and developing a community approach towards mentoring.

Welcome & Introductions

Today we will review the Action Steps surrounding Trauma Informed Community Building, Supportive Housing, and Mental Health and Substance Abuse that were identified in the Richmond Promise Neighborhood (RPN) quarterly meeting on February 11, 2015. We will also hear feedback from the Urban Institute on their experience in public housing redevelopment, and identify any additional action items and next steps.

Trauma Informed Community Building

General Discussion

- Should ensure that all efforts surrounding housing redevelopment are coordinated so that different meetings do not compete
- Informed Neighbors Corp would like to be a part of developing principles for redevelopment
- Difficult for residents to trust housing authorities after a long history of broken promises
- Important that residents understand what 'lease compliance' means; Housing Advocates are a current resource for residents; Informed Neighbors is creating a 1 page document on lease compliance, entitled 'Being a good neighbor'

Feedback/recommendations from Urban Institute

- Important to decide what outcomes you are interested in with housing redevelopment: Does it make sense to build back the same number of apartments as before? Or does this



create the same problems that existed? How do you make sure residents have safe/healthy housing?

- Public housing redevelopment is not a new situation; there are other cities throughout the U.S. that have both successfully and unsuccessfully gone through this process (ie: Chicago was a city that was able to negotiate their priorities and what they wanted)
- Everyone involved in the redevelopment should understand what the residents have been through
 - Important to come up with a strategy to build trust. This is going to take time to repair and build these relationships.
 - Everyone is trained in trauma-informed care and what the residents need
- Importance of creating a Relocation Rights contract
- Important to think about the definition of 'lease compliance' as part of planning process

Additional Action Steps

- Work to develop a Relocation Rights contract in order to protect residents and provide accountability

Supportive Housing for the Invisible Population

General Discussion

- Discussed some of the pipelines for how people become part of the Invisible Population, including:
 - When being legally added to lease would be a breach of contract/lease to current lease holder
 - Staying with a family/friend as a temporary solution
 - 'Doubling up' provides support for people legally on lease (i.e. help with rent, childcare)
 - People with felony records that can't legally be on lease, find other housing options, well-paying jobs
- Discussed if 'doubled-up' housing is working for residents, is it possible to make this work on a policy level by legally adding them to lease?
- Determining the size and scope of this invisible population is difficult when there are legal ramifications. Granting some form of amnesty may encourage those who are 'doubling-up' to come forward and allow for an accurate count – TCB would like to see a demonstrated need for supportive housing of invisible population
 - Public schools have an idea of families with children who are doubled up, living in hotels, etc. (McKinney-Vento office would have data)
- Stressed the importance of language when trying to support invisible population; housing policies should be inclusive of homeless population AND invisible population/those in need of supportive housing, so as not to exclude anyone from services or housing



Feedback/recommendations from Urban Institute

- Chicago had a large invisible population, and was able to build supportive housing and address lease requirements
- Veterans housing has been very successful (federal money – VA housing programs; HUD – vouchers for veterans; RUP)
- NYC: Allowing ex-offenders on lease
- Important to get a better sense of who the invisible population is and why they are doubled up
- Recommend partnering with Community Solutions, Supportive Housing Authority

Additional Action Steps

- Reach out to Office of Health Innovation to have discussion about funding for substance abuse/housing for women
- Meet with T.K. (Director of RHHA) to discuss potential funding streams
- Work with RHHA to open the channels between current residents and housing authorities, without any legal implications to residents (temporary amnesty)
- Work with RHHA and the Resource Center to conduct special meeting with residents and providers to discuss what lease issues exist
 - Conduct ‘Lease sessions’ where residents can familiarize themselves with the lease and how to add people to their lease if they would to
- Informed Neighbors to be a part of the developing the lease
- Additional Funding opportunities to investigate further:
 - National Low Income Housing Coalition
 - Virginia (state) housing funds
 - Department of Housing and Community Development
 - Richmond Economic Development

Mental Health and Substance Abuse

General Discussion

- We need to think about interventions at the primary, secondary, and tertiary level, and adopting a prevention model, where additional trauma and mental health issues are prevented from progressing

Feedback/recommendations from Urban Institute

- Clinicians coming into the community and visiting with residents in their home has been a successful solution for addressing mental health needs of residents in other communities

Additional Action Steps

- Continue the discussion around developing a ‘culture of mentoring’ – community approach of built-in mentoring



- Connect with mentoring programs that currently exist at local universities (University of Richmond, VCU, VUU) and public school system
- Formalizing the informal community leaders and mentoring already taking place with Informed Neighbors
- Potential funding opportunities:
 - Virginia Mentoring Association
 - Corporations for National American Services
 - Management Round table

Next Month's Meeting Topics:

- Issues surrounding trauma and community safety
- Asthma

