Stay Inn Good Neighbor Committee

May 16, 2024

Those present at the Good Neighbor Committee were:
- Tyler Drum, Cydni Richardson, Chris Urias and Maricruz Herrera – neighbors
- Charish LaBranche and Dianne O’Neill – Bayaud Enterprises
- Lieutenant Kevin Hines – police
- Tiffany Caudill – District 8 Council Office
- Cole Chandler – Mayor’s Office
- Steve Charbonneau – facilitator

I. Welcome, thanks for coming and check-in
   a. Steve will provide a brief summary and everyone present is encouraged to share this with those they represent. It will be posted on FindSolutions.org, and a link on the Council Office’s website.

II. Security data
   a. 911 call data was shared from the previous two weeks and year to date. There was one 911 call from Stay Inn for each week. Lieutenant Hines noted that there was not a lot of police activity.
   b. Steve will try and get 911 data from the immediately surrounding area.
   c. Cole explained 311 and the Mayors Office response. He shared a map which indicated no calls from the geo-tagged area regarding encampments. Cole’s office is putting together an informational piece regarding 311 explaining the importance of using this number to report encampments or other non-emergency concerns within the 311 area. The Council Office will also help us spread the information.

III. Stay Inn program information
   a. Dianne gave a comprehensive report on what Bayaud is doing at Stay Inn. Please see the attached information.
   b. Charish shared the numbers and data.
   c. We discussed how Stay Inn is designed for 54 residents and currently has 26. Their average is around 35. Cole explained the Mayor’s Office is calculating numbers on several encampments and will be moving additional homeless into Stay Inn in the near future.
   d. Tiffany from the Council Office said she had some smaller encampments she’d let Cole know about and hopefully they can be moved to Stay Inn and in this way stay within the district.

Thank you, Steve
GOOD NEIGHBOR COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEMS

LOCATION: N/A
DATE: 05/16/2024
ATTENDEES: N/A
TIME: 12:00 PM

1. GUEST AND SERVICES
   1.1. **Average Number of Guests: 30-35**

1.2. **Increasing Number of Guests:**
   1.2.1. As of 5/15/24 We currently have 26 residents in the community, and we have had 30 exits from the Micro Community!! 2 self-exits, 7 transfers, 3 residents in jail, 8 residents absent, 9 for rule violations and 1 resident housed.

1.3. **Decreasing Number of Guests:**
   1.3.1. As of 5/15/24 We currently have 26 residents in the community, and we have had 30 exits from the Micro Community!! 2 self-exits, 7 transfers, 3 residents in jail, 8 residents absent, 9 for rule violations and 1 resident housed.

1.4. **Successes, Data, Metrics, and Stories:**
   This will be my most extensive response to the committee today, as I have enlisted input from all members of my team to address this question. Before I document their responses, I would like to emphasize that each day brings both significant, life-changing successes and smaller victories filled with laughter and camaraderie.

   Lisa, a Housing Navigator II and an LCSW, encountered challenges with engaging KG in Case Management initially. KG was struggling with the need for stable housing and felt ashamed of his situation. Dealing with chronic pain and opioid use, KG had resigned himself to potentially passing away on the streets. His struggles with depression and hopelessness stemming from the 2008 Housing Crisis and subsequent addiction were
also significant. However, with support from Case Management, KG was able to find temporary housing and expressed vulnerability regarding his drug use and depression. Through coordinated efforts, KG accessed healthcare services, received a Housing Choice Voucher, and secured employment opportunities, ultimately leading to an improvement in his sense of purpose and hope for the future.

Zach, a Housing Navigator I, highlighted the remarkable progress made by "D", a resident who demonstrated unwavering dedication and a commitment to personal development despite experiencing homelessness. Despite facing challenges in his pursuit of employment, "D" continued to persevere and recently secured a job as part-time event staff in Downtown Denver. Additionally, "D" displayed exceptional work ethic and leadership skills during his tenure on the Denver Day Works crew, receiving praise from the site lead and contributing positively to the community.

Dianne, a Housing Navigator I and Programs Manager, shared a success story about a resident named "E" who exhibited tremendous courage and determination in his journey towards sobriety and self-sufficiency. Through incremental steps such as health check-ups, meetings with substance abuse specialists, and participation in support programs, "E" made significant progress. Following his involvement in the Denver Day Works program and receiving a Housing Choice Voucher, "E" committed to attending AA meetings and received support from a sponsor. His resilience and perseverance serve as a testament to the true essence of success within the Micro Community.

2. WRAP-AROUND SERVICES PROVIDED

2.1. List of Services:

The list of services offered by the Programs team is constantly evolving as staff and residents continuously seek new ways to enhance the long-term success of the program. The Micro Community, located further away from downtown, presents challenges in accessing services, prompting us to collaborate with external providers such as CCH/Stout Street Medical Outreach team, SUN Team (Substance Abuse Support), DHS Outreach team, Social Security Outreach team, and the Denver Day Works Program (Bayaud Enterprises Work Program). Additionally, the Projects Team has three Housing Navigators who provide daily support in connecting residents to resources, assisting with acquiring vital records and telephones. We are currently establishing a stronger partnership with THRIVE to enhance employment support. In the near future, residents will have access to computers for job searching, housing inquiries, and other needs. We also aim to launch life skills workshops and group events for community members. Above all, our priority is to listen and provide support, whether residents are facing challenges or celebrating achievements.
2.2. Approximate percentage of individuals involved in some of the Key:

23/26 = 88% Engagement Rate, attribute this to the size of the community.

**See Attached Stay Inn Metric Sheet

2.3. Update on exits: (numbers, general outcomes such as alternative housing solutions, employment, reunification, etc.)

2.3.1. As of 5/15/24 We currently have 26 residents in the community, and we have had 30 Exits from the Micro Community!! 2 self-exits, 7 transfers, 3
residents in jail, 8 residents absent, 9 for rule violations and 1 resident housed.

2.3.2. We were able to reunite one of our residents, unit 52, with his adoptive father back in Nebraska. Our biggest goal is setting up our residents for long term success. Wherever they feel most comfortable and confident is where we want to help them reach. Of course, our long-term goal is to get everyone in the All In Denver/House 1000 program into stable housing, but this process exists on a continuum. Some of our folks need additional assistance and resources to develop life skills before they can move onto bigger goals, such as maintaining a full-time job and keeping up with the responsibilities of having their own place to live within a community. With that said, most of our residents just need the support and they will flourish. However, we are beginning to learn that not everyone is ready to commit to change and that’s ok. What we strive to offer is a safe and encouraging space for residents to gather and learn from, as well as learn with each other. An exit from our program is our last resort because everyone thrives in different environments. Therefore, it is up to us to support each other as well as this program’s residents to create a community we can all be proud to be a part of.

2.4. **Complaints addressed and resolved**: None

2.5. **Significant changes in the direction of “the program” or services offered**: As previously mentioned, our community experiences ongoing changes on a daily basis. The majority of our residents are progressing in their journey towards growth and development, resulting in increased opportunities. It is remarkable to consider that we have only been at this location since December 31, 2023. Each resident presents a unique situation that requires individual assessment and support. Some residents arrive with existing employment, while others are still dealing with trauma resulting from years of experiencing homelessness. Most residents are actively making positive changes to attain long-term success, whether through accepting medical services for substance abuse treatment or reestablishing connections with their families, as they find themselves in a more stable phase of life. I believe this progress is not solely due to changes in our program offerings, but rather a novel approach that is unfamiliar not only to our residents but also to the broader Denver community. We are fortunate to have the support of HOST and our colleagues at Bayaud Enterprises as we guide and adjust the trajectory of our program. The exciting aspect of this initiative is that we are still in the early stages of development and continue to learn what strategies are effective.

2.6. **Significant event and alignment of facts**: One of the most significant events at the Micro Community was the participation in an HCV Fast Track event that occurred on April 22nd at the Denver Housing Authority. This event, supported by the Denver Housing Authority, is a newer concept that has shown success and is becoming more widely
adopted. As a result, additional DHA Fast Track events are being planned for other communities involved in the House 100k Initiative. The Programs Team became aware of a Zero Income-based Housing Choice Voucher early on and promptly began working on the application process. After submitting 23 applications and going through several rounds of edits and learning experiences, the team was invited to participate in a full-day DHA Fast Track event. During this event, all 23 applicants were brought to the DHA building where they received assistance from DHA employees to meet the requirements of the Zero Income HCV. These employees were knowledgeable about the barriers and stigmas faced by individuals experiencing homelessness, which allowed for a more personalized approach to the application process. The Zero Income HCV provides recipients with affordable housing while they work towards stability in their lives.

2.7. **Challenges and opportunities:** One of the main challenges we have faced is securing consistent resources for mental health support. This issue is not unique to the homeless community, but it does present additional obstacles in our efforts to assist individuals in healing from trauma, which can be deeply rooted and cyclical, particularly in underserved and marginalized communities like ours at the Micro on 38th and Peoria. Biases often shape public perceptions of the unhoused community, influenced by portrayals in mainstream media. To counter this, our services team focuses on highlighting success stories and exemplary residents who can inspire positive change. Building a sense of community is crucial for individuals experiencing homelessness, and we aim to bridge the gap between our residents and working-class communities through collaborative efforts and shared resources. A promising opportunity we see is organizing community events, such as gardening sessions and cookouts, to facilitate positive interactions and foster a sense of belonging. Our primary objective is to advocate for our residents and humanize their experiences, as we recognize that any
of us could face homelessness due to a sudden medical emergency or financial setback in today’s volatile economy. Community involvement is key to driving meaningful change, as it will require collective effort beyond just local neighborhoods to address the underlying factors contributing to chronic homelessness and mental health challenges. Just as the proverbial saying goes, it truly takes a village to address these complex issues and create lasting solutions.

2.8. **Other information as appropriate:** The Stay Inn-Micro Community has achieved success, despite facing some challenges along the way. Initially, we experienced difficulties due to a lack of adequate lead time, which hindered our ability to engage with residents promptly. This resulted in the departure of the first 10 residents either voluntarily or due to rule violations. HOST has recently recommended prioritizing transfers over discharges for addressing unruly behavior within the community. While we recognize the potential benefits of this approach, it may not be effective for all individuals within the unhoused community who may not wish to receive assistance.

Another issue we are currently facing is the low resident population at our community. With only 29 residents occupying 54 units, there is a significant imbalance that needs to be addressed. The Programs and Projects team frequently receives inquiries about how individuals can join the program, indicating a lack of communication regarding the admission process. Although we are aware that there is a plan in place, the specifics have not been shared with us.

As a newcomer to the non-profit sector, I have found great fulfillment in my current role at Stay Inn-Micro Community. The residents have proven to be kind, genuine, hardworking, and ambitious individuals, making my job a truly rewarding experience!