

## Meeting Minutes

### Rebuilding Lives Funder Collaborative Meeting

Wednesday, September 7, 2016

11am – 1pm

Mid-Ohio Foodbank

#### Attendees

Rebuilding Lives Funder Collaborative (RLFC) Members: Antonia Carroll, Becky Westerfelt, Buck Bramlish, Carl Landry, Ron Lebsock, Christy Hendricks, Donna Mayer, Emerald Hernandez, Val Harmon, Matt Kosanovich, Jeff Cutlip, Jeff Pattison, Rollin Seward, Jonathan Welty, Callie Query, Kim Stands, Mary Vail, Mary Wehrle, Michael Brooks, Michelle Heritage, Patrick Jarvis, Nicole Harper, Steve Sielschott, Sue Darby, Terri Power, Veronica Lofton

Community Shelter Board (CSB) Staff: Lianna Barbu, Amy Price, Heather Notter

Guests: Sam Shuler, Noel Welsh, Walt Whitmyre, Community Housing Network (CHN); Linda Jakes, Concord Counseling; Mike Hochron, Franklin County Commissioner Brown's Office.

#### Welcome and Agenda Review

Michelle welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda. Matt Habash from Mid-Ohio Foodbank gave a brief presentation on the Foodbank's current initiatives and priorities and how issues of food insecurity intersect with issues of homelessness and housing.

#### Administrative Issues

Michelle asked if there were any corrections to or comments on the minutes from the June 1, 2016 RLFC meeting. Mary V. moved to approve the minutes, Patrick seconded, and the RLFC agreed.

#### Continuum of Care (CoC) Application

Lianna reviewed CHN's Project Plan to replace the current Parsons project with a new development. The RLFC previously approved CHN's Concept Paper for the project. The new project would increase the number of units to 60, an addition of 37 units over the current project. The project would be sited near the existing facility, on Reeb Avenue. The project would target chronically homeless men and women, a change from the current population of men only. The project is projected to open in 2019 or 2020, depending on Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA) tax credits.

- < CHN is requesting RLFC funds in the form of City and County capital funds and HUD supportive services and rental assistance funding. Lianna compared the proposed costs to previous development costs for permanent supportive housing (PSH) projects, explaining that they are consistent with historical trends.
  
- < Heather reviewed feedback on the project from the Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) and Providers. CHN presented the plan to the CAC on August 8 and to Providers on August 9. Overall, both groups support the Parsons project. They agreed that the project would address tenant needs, proposes to serve the most appropriate homeless population, and would be in a good location for the population.

- ⟨ The CAC recommended that CHN look into whether pets other than therapy pets could be allowed and discussed the need for clarity over tenant rights and responsibilities. The CAC suggested that CHN work with shelters to develop training and/or orientation sessions on apartment living, rights, responsibilities, and expectations before move-in. Providers recommended sharing the Tenant Selection Plan with the community, if CHN hadn't already done so, given the low-barrier nature of the project. They also asked whether the project would be tobacco-free and whether CHN would implement a harm reduction model.

Noel presented details of the proposed Parsons project to the RLFC.

- ⟨ Terri asked what would happen to the current building. Noel and Sam explained that they don't know yet, but CHN will work with the community to identify a good use for the site.
- ⟨ Buck asked if 15 years is a normal time frame for a good return on the investment from CHN's previous renovation of the site. Sam explained that the life of a development varies, but that 15 years is good for a historic building like the current Parsons site. The 15-year timeframe is part of the OHFA tax credit process and developments generally assess the state of the building and needed renovations at 15 years.
- ⟨ Emerald asked what the expectations for tenants would be. Noel explained that no PSH tenant is required to engage in supportive services, but that CHN makes every effort to engage each resident. Michelle explained that this is a HUD requirement, but that most tenants do engage. Terri added that national research indicates that over 80% of clients in Housing First projects choose to engage in services.
- ⟨ Emerald asked what would happen to current Parsons residents and Noel replied that CHN would move them to the new project.
- ⟨ Michelle highlighted a change that CHN wants to make to the Tenant Selection Plan that was submitted to the RLFC in the Project Plan. During discussions with the community, CHN has consistently stated that the following populations would be excluded from the project: sex offenders on the national registry, arsonists, and individuals with felonies in the last 3 years. The current Tenant Selection Plan for Parsons, however, bars individuals with felonies in the last 18 months. CHN would like to use the 3-year standard to alleviate community concerns over the project.
- ⟨ Antonia asked if any felony within 3 years would be excluded and Sam replied affirmatively. Sam added that the standard would be 3 years from the date of conviction, not 3 years from the individual's release from prison. So an applicant who was convicted 5 years ago and was just released from prison would be immediately eligible for the project.

- < Carl asked if the 3-year standard was a request from the community and Michelle confirmed that it was, explaining that it was challenging for CHN to convince the community to accept the new development. There is neighborhood concern over tenants with criminal backgrounds, despite the fact that there have been no problems with the current project. The community has invested heavily in improving the area and wants to continue improvement efforts and protect their investment. CHN took community leaders on a bus tour of other PSH projects so they could see how they fit into the neighborhoods. The CoC wants to keep all projects as low-barrier as possible, but insisting on an 18-month standard could derail the agreement with the community.
  
- < The RLFC Board recommended that the RLFC accept the 3-year standard, but stipulate that CHN must re-evaluate the standard and discuss it with the community after the project has been in operation for 3 years. CHN is amenable to this stipulation and Sam expressed confidence that they would be able to work with the community on this issue once they demonstrate that the project will be a good addition to the neighborhood. Jon moved to approve the resolution with the RLFC Board's suggested stipulation, Rollin seconded, and the RLFC agreed.

Lianna updated the group on the FY15 CoC awards, explaining that a HUD scoring error and re-scoring process resulted in funding for National Church Residences Commons at 161. The project did not receive OHFA tax credits to build the development, so we will not be able to use the funds in the first year. CSB asked HUD if the CoC can use the funding for other projects until Commons at 161 is built, but has not received a response.

Lianna reviewed new project applications submitted for the FY16 CoC application. In this application cycle, the CoC has \$86,023 available in reallocation funding from CHN's St. Clair project, which will be discontinued as of December 31, 2016. In addition, HUD this year allows our CoC to apply for up to \$572,632 in Permanent Housing Bonus funding. The RLFC received five new Project Applications requesting funds totaling more than the funds available and, therefore, has to select project applications according to the CoC Process for Funding Reallocation and 2016 Prioritization Options, which the RLFC Board approved in June 2016.

- < YWCA and CHN submitted applications for the reallocation funding. YWCA requested \$41,600 in supportive services funding for the WINGS PSH project. The RLFC approved this project in June 2016, pending eligibility and available funds. CHN requested rental assistance funding to replace 11 of the 30 discontinued St. Clair PSH units.
  
- < CHN and Lutheran Social Services (LSS) submitted applications for the bonus funding. CHN re-submitted the Briggsdale II project, which was included in the FY15 CoC application. Briggsdale II was not awarded FY15 CoC funds, but was awarded OFHA tax credits. CHN also submitted an application for rental assistance funding to replace 19 of the 30 discontinued St. Clair PSH units. LSS requested rental assistance and services funding for a new rapid re-housing project that would serve veterans who are not eligible for services provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) because of the type or nature of their discharge.

- < Lianna noted that CHN was requesting more funding for Briggsdale II than they did in last year's CoC application. Terri asked how the extra funding would be used. Lianna and Noel responded that the funding would add services to support the higher number of units. Noel explained that the requested supportive services funding was included in the previous Project Plan, but there were not enough available funds during last year's CoC competition for CHN to include the funding request. This year the CoC can apply for enough funds to include the supportive services request in the project application.
- < The RLFC Board recommended selecting CHN SRA III for the reallocation funding and CHN Briggsdale II and CHN SRA IV for the bonus funding. Terri moved to approve the resolution, Michael seconded, and the RLFC agreed. Jon abstained from the vote.

Lianna reviewed the System Performance Measures, a new HUD requirement. The measures differ from the local statistics that CSB issues in that they are based on the federal fiscal year (October through September) and they use persons instead of households as the measurement unit.

- < This is the baseline year, so HUD will not score CoCs this year and will use the data to evaluate and score CoCs starting next year. HUD will use the scores in the annual CoC application process, expecting improvements in performance from year to year.
- < Becky asked if there are national benchmarks so that our CoC can compare itself to the performance of other CoCs. Lianna responded that HUD only intends to use these measures to compare CoC's to their own past performance and will not compare CoCs to each other or publish national benchmarks.

Michelle introduced the draft FY16 CoC application by emphasizing the difficult and complicated decisions facing the RLFC. The application process is very competitive and the RLFC has to decide what projects to put at risk.

- < Lianna explained that this year 93% of the CoC's Annual Renewal Demand will be in Tier 1 and 7% plus bonus funding will be in Tier 2. Projects in Tier 2 are at risk of losing funding.
- < Lianna reviewed the process for evaluating and ranking projects, based on the 2016 Prioritization Options, which the RLFC Board approved in June 2016. Lianna reviewed each element that goes into the ranking calculation, including the percentage of HUD grant funds that the project spent and the FY16 Program Evaluation Rating. Based on these elements, the RLFC Board discussed 6 options for prioritizing projects in the application and recommended Option 1.
- < Option 1 lists renewal projects in the order of their scoring, with the reallocation project in Tier 1, CAIHS Supportive Housing Leasing in Tier 2, and both bonus projects in Tier 2. The CAIHS project's score is higher than two other projects' scores, but CAIHS is a large project and putting it in Tier 2 would maximize the funding in Tier 1.
- < Although CAIHS Supportive Housing Leasing has a lot of units (222), the probable approximate HUD score for this project is relatively high. Lianna calculated the project's HUD score based on the CoC's performance last year and the information HUD provided in the Notice of Funding Availability about how they will score projects. Also, in Option 1 part of the CAIHS project would fall in Tier 1 and part in Tier 2. HUD may choose to fund the part of the

CAIHS project that falls into Tier 1, possibly meaning that even if HUD does not fund Tier 2, the CAIHS project could continue with reduced funding, instead of being eliminated altogether. The RLFC Board assessed that putting the CAIHS project in Tier 2 will maximize the funding and units in Tier 1 and assessed that there is a lower risk of HUD cutting the CAIHS project given its estimated HUD project score.

Lianna reviewed the draft overall CoC application, highlighting areas where the CoC will do well and where we will lose points.

- < The composition of the CoC governing body (RLFC) and coordination with the City, County, and Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority are areas of strength. The CoC's Coordinated Point of Access, collaboration with overlapping systems of care, and HMIS management are good. All projects are low-barrier and implement the Housing First philosophy. Performance measures for first time homeless, length of time homeless, successful permanent housing placement or retention, returns to homelessness, and job and income growth are good. The number of chronically homeless individuals decreased in the 2016 Point-in-Time (PIT) count and the number of PSH units increased over the last year.
- < Discharge planning from correctional facilities is an area of weakness. Bed coverage in HMIS is good overall, with the exception of VASH vouchers. The number of unsheltered individuals in the 2016 PIT count increased because of a more effective counting methodology and challenges de-duplicating data between sheltered and unsheltered populations. This increase will count against us in the CoC application scoring. The number of rapid re-housing units for families in the CoC decreased and the number of homeless families increased. The CoC has not made progress on reducing the number of homeless veterans.
- < Emerald offered to help address discharge planning from correctional facilities and Michelle welcomed the assistance.
- < CSB requested assistance from the RLFC on question 3B-2.10 "To what extent have youth services and educational representatives, and CoC representatives participated in each other's meetings between July 1, 2015 and June 30, 2016?" CSB previously sent an email to the RLFC requesting input.
- < The RLFC approved the CoC application and project ranking Option 1. Mary V. moved to approve the resolution, Rollin seconded, and the RLFC agreed. Becky and Sue abstained.

Because of time limitations, the RLFC did not discuss the Occupancy Report, System and Program Indicator Report, or PSH project updates.

**Meeting Adjourned**