

Council to End Homelessness in Durham • October 15, 2015, 10:00-11:30am

Location: Genesis Home, 300 N. Queen St, Durham, NC 27701

Attendance: Fred Stoppelkamp (UMD), Jordan Kinser (DERC), Tim Wollin (StepUp Durham), Lloyd Schmeidler (City of Durham), Salimah El-Amin (Duke University), Tim Pittman (Durham Housing Authority), Donna Carrington (CEF), Janet Xiao (CEF), Ellecia Thompson (Durham VAMC), Courtney Millsap (DCRC), Latoya McNair (DCRC), Jean Adler Stean (CEF), Joyce Stancil-Williams (CASA), Marian McDonald (HFNH), Cynthia Harris (HFNH), Lorisa Seibel (Reinvestment Partners), Charita McCollers (LCHC-HCH), Carolyn Schuldt (OTM), Spencer Bradford (DCIA), Darius Hunt (Healing with CAARE)

Welcome and Call to Order: Fred called the meeting to order at 10:04am.

Tim Wollin (StepUp Durham), on StepUp's Beginnings in Durham:

- Just opened their Durham office on Monday
- StepUp started in Raleigh 25 years ago. They saw that the best contribution they could work on was employment, since a lot of people were working on housing/homelessness already. Also sought to impact people not in homelessness but needed a job (application, resume).
 - Ongoing supports with an employment counselor to keep the job once they have it.
 - A year from now, will do the life skills program & financial supports to housing, Green Chair Project etc.
- StepUp's Model:
 - 30 hour employment boot camp; first one starts 10/26, 11/16, 11/27. In 2016, we will do 2 workshops per month
 - Currently have capacity for 16-20 people
 - Begin with an hour-long 1-on-1 with each participant
 - Wed: ladies go to Dress for Success, men go to Judah's closet for workforce clothing
- Employers:
 - Strong relationship with Measurement Inc., who will overlook barriers as long as StepUp can vouch for a person
 - Close to cementing a relationship with Duke HR (\$12.15/hour with full benefits, prioritized), size/scale still working out
 - Some relationships in landscaping etc. that have carried over from Raleigh
- Local office: on Knox St. (between Whole Foods at Northgate Mall)
- Referral Process:
 - Call the office
 - Important to let participants know: arrive early
 - Q: Is it first come first serve?
 - Working to figure out how to get high # of people to show up; operate based on word of mouth in Raleigh
 - Durham is advantaged with tight community partnerships
 - Part of the balance is managing the number of MOUs that we have. OEWD would love to send 7 people, but trying to keep enough slots for other participants. How do we honor community partnerships well, but also folks who are just in a rough spot who didn't happen to come via the right referral?

- Requirements:
 - age 18-60 (post-high school; don't want someone dropping out to go through workshop)
 - 90 days clean and sober
 - StepUp will take people at their word, but do random drug tests, and if someone doesn't pass a drug test then ... This is in support of job stability.
 - This holds up the process, because takes 60-90 days to get out of your system
 - In a state where they do legalize, do employers still have the right to test and accept employees based on marijuana testing? Yes
 - No pending charges – again, a stability issue
 - 90 days free of domestic violence. Want a person in DV situation to be safe.
 - Cannot work with registered sex offenders, because many sites where they host workshops have children around
- Q: Is there a goal for \$ per hourly wage?
 - Ideally, would love for everyone to be at a living wage, but recognize that it's a difficult process
 - Avg wage in Raleigh: \$9.50-9.70 per hour
 - That's part of why they're talking to Duke; knowing there are better opportunities out there. Entry level is often folks' starting point.
 - Example: there was a job with WakeMed, took two years to find someone for the job. Was someone from Syria with good medical background, and they're making \$13/hour. Participants can say, "Can we wait, this isn't a good fit for me" to await an opportunity that pays more; we don't abuse/dishonor participants by trying to force them into a bad fit that doesn't fit them financially, skills-wise, or environment.
- Q: Is there assistance with transportation once they're employed?
 - StepUp can assist through the 1st paycheck; after that, can have more substantive conversation about budgeting etc.
 - StepUp does have some funds set aside, recognizing the reality of people's situations
- One of the key things, if you're going to make referrals to StepUp, is you want folks to be prepared. The 5-day workshop is tough, they keep them accountable and will send people home if they're "not ready."
 - People get sent home for 3 main reasons:
 - Incomplete homework (not when someone has done the best they could do, but because they didn't)
 - Time (need to arrive in timely manner)
 - In-class behavior
 - Easy to pass; need to see honesty, teachability, humility, respect
 - The workshop targets the things that would get you in trouble in a job
- Q: Does StepUp still have HVRP programs?
 - Not anymore
- Q: Does each participant work with an employment counselor?

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- Everyone has an employment counselor; can meet in person (UMD, library) or over the phone. Point of contact. Counselor is in best position to know what the client needs, whether it's filling out an application or updating resume etc.
- Meeting 3-5pm on Wednesdays – access to job leads, counselor
- Q: Any sense of, on average, how long it takes for someone to get their first job?
 - By end of Nov.: at least half of the people who have gone through that 1st workshop to have jobs; by end of Dec, the other 25%; by end Jan, the last 25%
 - The team is shooting for 90 days. This timeframe doesn't always work out, however, even if someone does everything right.
- Q: Time of connection?
 - We stay in contact with people for as long as they want to stay in contact with us
 - Including working with people to search for a better-paying job
 - But we're not going to make them sign a contract; no de-merit system
- Q: How are you funded?
 - At one point, 70% private donation; the rest through various grants
 - When we had HVRP, we also had WIA, so at the time closer to 35-40% of our funding was through those two grants. But the barrier we faced was the strings attached to the money. Private donations allow us some flexibility. It also allows people across political spectrum to support us.
- Durham exploratory committee has been helpful over the past 2 years in figuring out space, language etc. The steering committee will still stay involved; some will likely join the Board.

Lorisa Seibel (Reinvestment Partners), on Affordable Housing Advocacy near Transit Station:

- What does Reinvestment Partners do?
 - We do reinvest in the community, but we're really an advocacy group. We advocate to make the financial market fair.
 - Have a free tax clinic: VITA tax site at Northgate. Also have tax assistance year-round (1,000 households per year).
 - HUD housing counseling agency, serve 1,000 households per year through that
 - Homeowners, helping prevent foreclosure, helping deal with mortgage companies, loan modifications
 - We don't get funds to deal with rental housing anymore, but we do have funds to help with healthy homes and lead poisoning prevention
 - Rental guide is available on our website under "resources"
- Advocacy for affordable housing next to the bus station:
 - Affordable housing is the hottest issue in this city council & mayoral election, and is the hottest it's ever been.
 - What we can do: bring stories to city council, and put some urgency on this issue. I think eventually there will be affordable housing on that land that wraps around the bus station – unfortunately not in time for the LIHTC application due in January.

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- Advocacy can focus on people who have immediate needs & convince housing providers, esp private landlords, because a lot of subsidized housing is full – convincing them to accept HUD VASH and HCVs. Some ways to do this advocacy in way that's non-partisan:
 - This Saturday, doing non-partisan voter registration in East Durham, with “You Can Vote!” The first Q we will ask folks is, “What’s going on with housing?” and will be asking people if they can share their stories with City Council.
 - Would love for you to participate to next event: going to the **1st City Council work session (Dec 10th)**, after the 2 new members are installed. Work session begins 1pm, usually hear citizens’ comments around 1:30pm.
- Q: Do you have thoughts on how to shift conversation to 30% below AMI?
 - That’s why stories are so important; at the last City Council session, they were talking only about serving workforce people who have housing options. But the conversation has already shifted—they’re talking about full range, from market rate down to people who have disabilities.
 - When you do housing w/ tax credits, need to have a certain % available to people with disabilities
- Q from Joyce Stancil-Williams: CASA works in Durham and Raleigh, and we do have a workforce housing unit. We also have targeted units in that property. Having something like that in the community could be helpful.
 - CASA hosted a landlord breakfast; Terry Allebaugh used to do this. Could we ask the mayor to host this?
 - Many individuals may not take care of unit properly; landlords are looking for particular things. As a support system, how might we ensure that individuals will take care of the property & their rent guaranteed?
- Express community needs; Lorisa is advocating that we go directly to the City Council with people who can express those needs personally. Important to have both information from consultant & people who need housing.
- Need to educate community re: what AMI means, how they come up with it. There needs to be something that breaks that down. Need to better define/break down what “affordable housing” is for our clients, working class, etc.
 - Lorisa: I try to break it down, and talk about folks who are “60%” – starting teachers, police officers, firefighters (\$30-40k). Folks making minimum wage, down to \$14k. Can’t find anything at minimum wage.
 - Matt: There’s an app, search for “HUD FMR” in the app store—you can put on your phone that has income limits, allows you to answer Qs at granular level. The app also provides FMR amounts.
- Monday, Oct 26th, 6:30pm @ Duke Memorial (504 W Chapel Hill St): Durham CAN will have all city council candidates there, asking them whether they support affordable housing next to the bus station

Dr. Salimah El-Amin (Cook Center on Social Equity)

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- The Cook Center is a stand-alone center at Duke, wanting to somewhat break out of Duke University. We are a collaboration of scholars involved in social justice research, seeking to continue Samuel DuBois Cook's work of scholar-activism.
 - Right now, want to get what we're doing out in the community, and looking for partners. We usually hold two big annual conferences; 2 months ago, we had a "Grasping at the Roots" conference and brought in activists from all over the U.S.
 - We have resources available, we do different types of training, including partnership with Durham Public Schools, UNC students. Now we're trying to work with more local-based community organizations, HBCU students, and educate them on inequality and how we can do more research and change policies. Hope to move more towards trainings; very concerned about employment, housing, etc.
 - We get funding from NSF, Ford Foundation, Provost's office at Duke
- Website: <http://socialequity.duke.edu>
 - Sign up for listservs
- We are hosting a City Council Candidates session tonight, 7pm at the Nelson Music Room (East Campus). We are one of the hosts of that.
- Next month: conference on race, class and psychology

Announcements:

- Today at 7pm: vigil for 3 DV cases at Pennies 4 Change
- Domestic Violence Awareness Month: DCRC will have an event at Chilli's on 15-501, October 20 from 11am-11pm, 10% proceeds will go to DCRC
- DERC currently taking in recruits for new cohort
- Open house this Saturday, distribution center is open to public. \$2 administration fee for each good
- DERC Annual Gala: Nov 18, 6-8pm @ Durham Armory. Tickets are \$50, tables also available. Get in touch with Development Director.
- Next Tuesday is DCIA luncheon assembly. Ryan and Catherine & Patrice will be giving updates. Also, Michael Becketts from DSS will talk about upcoming changes for DSS. 11:45am-1:00pm at Watts Street Baptist Church, brunch is \$7.
- Religious Coalition of Nonviolent Durham: monthly meeting on Oct 22, speaker on suicide prevention. Takes place at Shepherd's House UMC, 12-1pm.
- Tomorrow is World Food Day, which DCIA & Durham CROP Walk are sponsoring as a day of fasting. Asking people to fast 1+ meals during the day, and contributing the cost of that meal to the Durham CROP Walk. You can make contributions on the Durham CROP Walk website or send a check to DCIA.
- Tomorrow, collaborating with Bread for the World, 4:30-6:30pm. Lloyd will be offering a facilitation of letter-writing to legislators supporting federal programs targeting childhood hunger (especially EITC and Literacy Childhood Act) @ Duke Memorial UMC. Look for the green welcome canopy.
- Next CEHD meeting is on November 19, 2015

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Fred adjourned the meeting at 11:09am.