

Council to End Homelessness in Durham • September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015, 10:00-11:30am

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

**Attendance:** Catherine Pleil (Durham IHN) Lloyd Schmeidler (City of Durham), Jordan Kinser (DERC), Jeff Quinn (Durham Connects), Brenda Tillman (Durham Housing Authority), Shaina Gaines (VoA-Carolinas), Joy Hager (VoA-Carolinas), Ryan Fehrman (Genesis Home), Mel Norton (Durham Living Wage Project), Fred Stoppelkamp (UMD/HSAC), Spencer Bradford (DCIA), Davius Hunt (Healing with CAARE, Inc.), Matthew Case (LCHC-HCH), Maria Davis Dorsey (DDI), Drew Johnson (LCHC-HCH), Janet Xiao (CEF)

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

**Mel Norton**, Project Coordinator

Durham Living Wage Project, People's Alliance

- Mel is currently working as the Project Coordinator part-time, and they are looking to scale up her work.
- Overview about income inequality in Durham: in Durham the wealthiest 5% = income is 27x greater than 95% households. Half of the renters in the county are unable to afford a fair market rent (FMR) for a 2 bedroom house. The federal minimum wage is \$7.25/hour, and hasn't been raised in 9 years. Costs of living have gone up while wages have stagnated. \$7.25/hour at 40 hours/week comes out to \$15,000 per year, which is not enough to live without drawing on public/private assistance.
- Origins of the Durham Living Wage project:
  - In 1998, Durham became the first municipality in the state to pass a municipal living wage ordinance. In 2004, the county followed suit.
  - We keep pace with the city/county's living wage just for consistency purposes. Every year, adjusted when the city/county adjust it.
  - City/county are able to require that all of their employees make a living wage. They used to have the ability to require that all contractors pay a living wage, but that situation changed, and that's where the Durham Living Wage project began. An income inequality team formed out of the Durham People's Alliance, an organization that started 40 years ago working on progressive issues in Durham. Expanded to include a lot of other members in the community.
  - They came across a program in Asheville, through an organization called Just Economics. They've had a voluntary living wage program there and have certified many employers. This year, they had \$1mill in wage gains. Our program is largely modelled off of the Asheville program, which is the largest program in the country. There are two dozen programs nationwide, most of which come out of some sort of economic justice organization.
  - We define "living wage" as the minimum amount a worker must earn to cover costs without public/private assistance
    - **The current "living wage" in Durham is \$12.53.** The difference between \$7.25 and \$12.53 per year is \$10,000.
    - There is one offset: if you provide at least 50% of your health insurance costs to employees, you get \$1.50 offset per hour, so it would be **\$11.03**

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- There are also some exceptions for apprentices, temporary/project-based employees, interns
- Upon joining, there is a 90 day probationary period to begin meeting these commitments
- Why pay a living wage?
  - Building block of a successful economy—money that goes to workers gets put back into the economy
  - Income inequality is the highest since 1928
  - Living wages allow for productive and contributing citizens
  - Alleviates poverty, increases access to health care, education, child care
  - Helps with employee health satisfaction and moral. Lower absenteeism, lower turnover rates (direct cost), lower administrative and training costs, improves worker morale. Contribute to a more just and sustainable local economy!
  - Local economy benefits, with reduced poverty rates and income inequality
  - Reduce wage disadvantages among women and people of color, who are disproportionately
  - Shift business culture to support just and sustainable local economy
  - Reduce demand on public and private assistance
- About the Program:
  - Goal = to celebrate employers who commit to paying a living wage
    - Want to connect consumers to those employers, playing on the idea of conscious consumerism
    - We also want to provide employers with an incentive: if you raise your living wages, we'll get the word out about your company
  - The program is completely voluntary and very positive. Employers endorse the value of a just and sustainable local economy.
    - There is an annual recertification
    - We are not shading people into becoming living wage employers; we want to appeal to their bottom line, their work culture, and the best of them. We want to keep it on a high level of engagement.
  - Strategies:
    - “Boycotting” instead of boycotting. We’ve done 5 so far. This works best for street-level businesses. We have a coffee date at Cocoa Cinnamon or go to the Parlor to have ice cream. Helps show employers that we’re willing to make that connection between consumers, and it sounds like
  - Currently working on a holiday giving guide. We are also looking at an employer giving guide, for non-profits
  - Launched in early March of this year, currently have 64 living wage employers. 11 of those have raised wages to meet our living wage standard. That accounts for over 900 employees. We are doing pretty well!
  - Goal is to get 100 employers by the end of the year.

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- How to get involved: My current goal is to reach as many employers, organizations, and networks as possible. We'd love to get people signed up to become a living wage ambassador. Also, if your non-profit does pay a living wage, you might want to see how you can get that certification.
- Q: People could be paying a living wage, but if people aren't working 40 hours/week they're still not making a living wage? (Underemployment)
  - Not sure how we could influence that; a lot of businesses have part-time employees. Just want to assure that, even if you're working part-time, the value of your labor is not minimum-wage.
  - Catherine: for our folks, they need enough income to sustain housing. They need to have a combination of the right hours and the right wage.
  - Spencer: the number of hours gets back to worker organizing. Culturally in NC we don't like to talk about worker organizing, but that's what it comes down to.
  - While recognizing there are also many other concerns, Durham Living Wage decided to laser focus on wages
- Q: How are adjustments made for restaurants where wages are a combination of straight payment and tips?
  - For restaurants, the way that it works is your hourly wage with tips has to be at least \$12.53 per hour. That's worked pretty well in Asheville. They do worker interviews, because there's the issue of "quality control" (ensuring that people are doing what they say they're doing). A lot is based on trust. But in Asheville, with the tip factor, they do worker interviews.
  - You're required to do a poster visible to all employees that states that you're a living wage employer.
- Q: Do you have the mechanisms to help employers get to a place where they can get there?
  - Currently working on a wage calculator. An accountant has factored in wages – including turnover, taxes; especially helpful for restaurants.
  - We identify what the barriers are, and figuring out good ways to work with employers around those barriers. eg. For restaurants, one of the things that's tough is the issue of wage compression.
  - It's ultimately a culture change. To this end, we are creating peer-to-peer networks. I've gotten 5 different restaurants who are able to talk apples to apples with Durham restaurants – able to communicate that it creates a positive work environment, and everyone lives well.
- Q: Durham County & City have made commitments?
  - They haven't filled out a form yet, Mel will follow up
- Q: You mentioned that some employers just say "I can't do it." Has there been any follow-up conversation to say, "Can you see yourself raising wages over time?"
  - Had 3-4 conversations along those lines
  - I know that in Asheville they have done that deliberate work of helping employers create a plan. Haven't had the capacity to quite do that.
- Q: Is any part of the Durham Living Wage project connecting workers with employers?

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- We haven't yet. My personal goal is that I think that would be very powerful.
- Lloyd: I do think it'd be good for a program like DERC to be mindful of a project like the Living Wage Project.
- It's potentially some value-add for employers – eg. a pet-sitting business was hiring, and we blasted it out via social media. The business got 10 applications that day.
- Q: Have you thought of recognizing or featuring employers who agree to overlook conviction histories?
  - Post-conviction hiring is one of those things that some of our employers already do.
  - On our application, we have a section that says, "Part of becoming a living wage employer is to not shut down or limit worker organizing." That was strong feedback from people doing important work (Raise Up, AFL-CIO) who said it felt strongly that that needed to be on the application.
    - Could be part of the application – we commit to not discriminating on the basis of prior convictions.
    - Spencer: can supply with some criteria that Ban the Box used in Durham, that outlines what that looks like, particularly for employers.
  - That's also something we could feature on the website
- Q: Have you thought of approaching Duke?
  - I have a list of "the biggest dream catch" in this project. I am meeting with someone next week who's working with organizing adjunct professors. I have brought this up at a couple of City Council campaign quorums. I feel like it's going to take a coalition. It's on our radar, and we're trying to figure out how to bring the parts together – would need students, faculty, worker organizing, potentially pressure from city/county/elected officials.
  - They've gotten closer – raised their wages in 2007, but housekeeping and the service sector jobs aren't there. That's one of the big dreams. They're the largest employer and a values-based employer.
  - Jeff Quinn: Consider me someone who can be involved in getting Duke!
- Mel Norton's contact information: 919-485-9329, [livingwage@durhampa.org](mailto:livingwage@durhampa.org), @liveabull

### **Jeff Quinn**, Director of Community Services

#### Durham Connects

- Jeff has been in the Durham community for 14 years working with the Center for Child and Family Policy, only just started as Director of Community Services at Durham Connects.
- Durham Connects is a universal nursing program; all moms who have given birth in Durham are eligible. We've been doing this for 7 years now. Nurse comes out 3-4 weeks out after the birth, checks on baby and mom, and does a health assessment.
  - The nurse tries to connect them to community resources. 12-factor community support scale. If the mom scores a 2, 3, or 4, the nurse will try to connect them to community resource.
    - If 2: training
    - If 3: automatic come back out to see you, referral to agency

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- If 4: immediate call to 911
  - Nurse can return 2-3 times after that initial visit. After 3-4 times, that's when Durham Connects makes a warm handoff to an agency.
- We really work on community alignment, because we are referring to services, (1) we want to make sure that everyone in Durham is aligned & we're making the best referrals possible. (2) We want to make sure we're getting the best outcomes we can when we make referrals. We do take a holistic approach, and will listen to parents. In particular, we want to make sure we're getting our children and parents to the right resources. We work closely with the Diaper Bank, Partnership for Healthy Durham, etc.
- Project 1: We hope to build a database for non-profits:
  - You would see a family, talk to them about this database, sign them up and basically be like EMR but for non-profits. You go into the system and fill out what you did with the family.
  - Your intake sheet would be formatted to what your needs are.
  - The great thing about it is that you can also make referrals to any other agency that's in the system. If you're working with a family and they need assistance with workforce development, you can make an online referral to that group. They have 48 hours to take that referral.
  - Allows you to track outcomes: eg. if you need to catch up with family 6 months after, can hopefully go back into this system and find out where family is getting services and access updated contact information, allowing you to reconnect with them.
- Project 2: in conjunction, revamping the Network of Care website (which is an online resource database, anybody in Durham can put information on it):
  - Currently, several partners, headed by PHD, are looking at revamping that system. The problem is that someone needs to update it on a consistent basis, and asking partners to update it doesn't work. There needs to be dedicated staff time.
  - Want to add a Yelp system to that, where clients and practitioners can go and rate that agency. We feel like the combination of Network of Care & this online system playing off of each other will really help align the community.
- Lots of non-profits have great, innovative ideas. Practitioners shouldn't be developing logic models or evaluation plans, because that's not what they're trained to do. We're hoping that, with these two systems as well as better communications, we can locate assistance to build capacity/infrastructure internally. Eg. If there is a non-profit that isn't measuring outcomes but would like to, we hope to help them do that.
- Durham Connects is "universal" because we found that 94% of our moms needed some sort of assistance. We also want Durham Connects to be a community program. We see ourselves as a first agency in the escalator of services in Durham. We want to put people in the best place possible to access services in Durham.
- Ryan: Jeff and I have talked about the database online a couple of times while sharing about the family collaborative. We see a need to have a shared database where automatic contact with other. My hope had been that HMIS could fill this role. Part of the issues is that each client can give different levels of consent.

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- Jeff is trying to figure out if there might be something that we could use.
- When you've got multiple organizations serving the same client, it becomes very tricky.
- Referrals can be difficult to follow-up with - half the time, case manager doesn't know whether the client showed up to a referred meeting.
- Where we got the idea from: in West Palm Beach, they built a similar model. They were willing to share MOUs, the process etc. but I couldn't see the database because of confidentiality issues. They recognize that this database won't fit your community – every community is different.
- There's a group here in Durham that has a system that's built for something exactly like this. We'll be meeting with them to see what we can do together.
- Q: Is there a way to avoid double-charting?
  - My first question to the folks who have developed a system is how easy is exporting data to this system? Need it to be the press of a button. There are folks who already have internal systems, and don't want to double-enter.
  - That's the 1<sup>st</sup> thing I'm asking them
- Q: How will the outcomes piece work?
  - Each org would be able to put, on the page, their outcome measures. If you have intake form + 6 month/12 month form to fill out, it can be on this system. You might hopefully be able to get the outcome measures you need at those intervals. But some of these families use multiple services for multiple years—really excited to see how this non-profit system serves families.
  - Duke has data center with public schools, getting data. Get this non-profit system talking to that one, and we would have some awesome data.
- Q: Will this necessitate standardized intake?
  - In West Palm, portions are standardized
  - It's a database that's for making connections that has silos; it's the silos from the standpoint of "your org has your intake form." There's some bridging there, but you're right, I'm not necessarily going to want to see all your outcome measures.
  - Reassurance from this group in Durham = changing your page isn't hard to do
  - The thing that I'm trying to do is to get the city to pay for this
  - Group here in Durham has developed a consent form that got through the Duke lawyers!
  - Also, appropriate information input
  - Everyone in the system has to do a background check
- Q: You mentioned getting the city to help fund this. Is Durham Connects a public agency?
  - Durham Connects is a non-profit
- Q: What's the difference between Durham Connects & Welcome Baby?
  - We're close partners. Welcome Baby has multiple things: home visits, giving closet, books. Their staff aren't certified nurses. We've got the health piece down; they have other resources.

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- Lloyd: I had a belief that the health department was also doing home visits after the birth of children?  
Jeff: We used to be closely affiliated with the Health Department, but transitioned to become a non-profit
- Q: How many people are you serving?
  - A: Currently at 63% of Durham population
  - Do you know, of those, how many are homeless?  
A: I don't, I could probably get that information.
- Q: How can we do better outreach?
  - 3-12 weeks
  - On the website, you can go and sign parents up, as long as you get their consent
- Q: I know you're in the beginning stages of the database, but I also don't know what is involved and what your timeline is.
  - Hope agencies onboard, funded by multiple partners
- Jeff Quinn's contact information:
  - Office: 919-613-5756
  - Phone: 919-824-0743
  - Email: [jquinn@duke.edu](mailto:jquinn@duke.edu)

**Catherine Pleil** (Durham Interfaith Hospitality Network) & **Ryan Fehrman** (Genesis Home)

Durham CAN Affordable Housing Meeting with City Council

- Ryan: Affordability is different for a teacher, elementary school, firefighter etc. I know this is something Steve Schewel is hoping to build a gameplan; my understanding is that Community Development is going to be working with a consultant to figure out strategies.
  - CAN's action was around a particular piece of land near the station.
  - 60% AMI is not the population we serve, but we have an interest in supporting the City in being thoughtful around land use.
- Catherine: I have been involved in Durham CAN meetings for years; at this meeting, the tone was different. We were asked to take down signs down or get out, and Mayor Bell said he didn't want a Cabrini Green in downtown Durham.
- Mel: Having had some conversations with Karen Lado, a consultant at the Enterprise Community Foundation. One of the biggest assets she identified for affordable housing is publicly-owned land. Land owned by city, county, DHA, and non-profits. The City is wanting for a comprehensive affordable housing strategy; Steve Schewel has done an amazing piece on ending homeless to what needs to happen at DHA to affordable rentals/homeownership. This came out of CAN's organizing for awhile, and at summer organizing, Schewel and Bell committed to this particular piece of land.
- Self-Help did a preliminary proposal, and they had 60-80% units at 60% AMI.
- A real philosophical debate is some fearmongering around "who is 60% AMI?" (which is a family earning \$40,000 per year).
  - Mayor's desire is for mixed-income housing

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- The two advocacy trajectories: mixed-income with higher (80%) AMI; and Steve Schewel's direction of mixed-income communities with not every building being mixed-income
- Next steps:
  - Durham CAN candidates forum on October 27<sup>th</sup>
  - Important to contact individual city council members, and let them know the importance of fast-tracking the application for LIHTC
  - Mel: I think the fast-tracking is not going to happen
  - Need to clarify that it's not "heavily concentrating"
  - It would be workforce housing, not public housing
  - When the next opportunity for addressing this in a public meeting comes up, some of us will just need to call council members on that misrepresentation there. "Cabrin Green" idea scares people; these are teachers, city employees etc.
- Could or should CEHD write a letter to the editor?
  - Lloyd: Lisa Sorg is now at the N&O, is continuing to follow the issue
  - We have a general interest in affordable housing, but this doesn't have a direct benefit on anyone living in our shelters. My inclination is to not publicly write a letter, but privately speak with ...
  - Fred: We could invite the consultant to provide an update to this group
  - Ryan: my understanding is that part of the city's process, city requires public comment periods. So it makes sense to insert ourselves in the conversation to make people understand the needs of our population vs. 60% AMI.
  - Spencer: The little bit that the mayor has said about his proposal, the rental subsidy downtown, is for 80% AMI. So part of the case to make is that this proposal would have a bigger impact in the community, by reaching into people who are working for lower wages.
- Next steps:
  - We will reach out to the consultant from the Enterprise Community Foundation, Karen Lado, to give us an update.  
Lloyd: the department is working on a list of community stakeholders; pretty much everyone at the table is on the list.
  - 60% AMI is not our population

### **Announcements:**

- Lloyd Schmeidler (City of Durham Department of Community Development), Project Homeless Connect is two weeks away!
  - We've got the best list of people, organizations, agencies participating in PHC this year. An extensive list of employers, health care/medical, behavioral health, veterans services, legal services will be there, many of your organizations that provide housing, social services.
  - We will again be at the Durham Bulls Athletic Park Friday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>
  - Hopefully we will get good turnout amongst clients as well – please spread the word!

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- The website [durhamopeningdoors.org](http://durhamopeningdoors.org) has a place for volunteers to sign up.
- Joy Hager (VoA): Bull City Stand Down takes place tomorrow, outdoors at the armory
- Spencer Bradford: wanted to invite anyone else interested in participating in organizing/planning of the Annual Vigil to let him know. Also, need to get names of any individuals who have died within the last year.

**Fred adjourned the meeting at 11:30am.**