

Resource Access Center Development

Community Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes

April 28, 2008

CAC members attending:

John Baymiller, resident

Royce Bowlin, Cascadia

Bud Clark, co-chair (TPI Board)

Harriet Cormack, co-chair (HAP Board)

Liz Crane, Tri-Met

Kevin Earhart (TPI resident)

Peter Englander, Portland Devel. Comm.

Patricia Gardner (Pearl District Neigh A)

Marc Jolin, JOIN

Gretchen Kafoury, HAP Board

Alexander Mace, Chair, OTCT Neigh. Assoc.

Andy Miller, Portland BHCD

Michael Buonocore, Sisters of Road (alt.)

Ron Paul, public market advocate

Joan Pendergast, Chair, Pearl Dist. Neigh. A.

William Warren, Portland ONI

Todd Wyatt, Portland Police

Steven Ying, Chinese Consol. Benev. Assoc.

Additional community members attending:

Kevin Diaz, OTCT Neigh. Association

Project partners attending:

Steve Rudman, HAP

Mike Andrews, HAP

Julie Livingston, HAP

Pamela Kambur, HAP

Robert Dell, HAP

Dave Otte, Holst Architecture

Jon Dykhuizen, landscape architecture

Carol Mayer-Reed, landscape architecture

Doreen Binder, TPI

Fern Elledge, TPI

Barbara Shaw, PDC

Sarah Harpole, PDC

Sally Erickson, BHCD

Judith Mowry, ONI

Christina Albo, Resolutions Northwest

Bud Clark and Harriet Cormack called the meeting to order at 6:00PM. Attendees introduced themselves.

Partner Overview (Steve Rudman)

The purpose of the RAC Development is to provide housing for homeless and low-income tenants. The RAC comes from the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness, and will meet needs that are present now. Diverse attendees make the project better, by providing input from a variety of viewpoints. HAP is committed to engaging stakeholders throughout process. Four essential partners so far: Bureau of Housing and Community Development (leading implementation of the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness), Portland Development Commission (providing equity), Transition Projects, Inc. (providing services and operating the RAC), and the Housing Authority of Portland. Siting was difficult process, but partners can now move forward toward opening in 2010.

Summary of Program Components (Mike Andrews)

The idea for a RAC has been in development for years. HAP's involvement began with a memo from Erik Sten explaining the importance of Ten-Year Plan, and asking partner organizations to take on their roles. Support from community organizations helped site the RAC Development at Block U. The Community

Advisory Committee will help put together specific thoughts on design and ultimate operations. The RAC Development will be one building with multiple uses, indoor queuing, replacement of an outdated shelter, retail space, and permanent housing units. Site slope requires some on-site parking. Details on each space will emerge as the process moves forward.

BHCD and the Ten-Year Plan (Sally Erickson)

The RAC Development falls under the Ten-Year Plan's goals of improving outreach to homeless and increasing availability of affordable housing. The Plan has set and met goals each year since it was adopted, with details included in the meeting materials. The trend of low vacancy rates (2%) for Portland rental properties means landlords will be more selective and more people will end up living on the streets. The RAC will be a centralized location for services, and can help all homeless citizens. Currently, Portland does not have enough shelter beds for the city's homeless population, but does have a good reputation for what we do for our homeless population.

There is no evidence that Portland has or will become a magnet for homeless persons (at least not nationally). There may be more potential for Portland to be a magnet for homeless Oregonians, given that adjacent states provide some general assistance.

The potential closing of Hooper and other county-funded programs may impact RAC's population.

Portland's lack of rent control also distinguishes it from other cities.

TPI (Fern Elledge)

TPI's programs for the RAC include a service center and shelter. The shelter will use same admittance standards and have the same number of beds as TPI's current shelter on Glisan Street (2 blocks away). The new shelter will, however, have more shower space and more space overall—for more dignified surroundings and increased support capacity (people can stay longer while learning about services, without being rushed). Services provided include ID/document assistance, bus tickets, food box vouchers, hygiene kits, case managers (to set goals to get into housing), shelter wait list administration. With the RAC, TPI plans to provide lockers for storage of personal belongings; on site laundry; better public bathroom access; mail, phone, and internet services; bike parking; pet kennels; outside smoking area; better administrative offices; and space for community partners (VA, Cascadia, and others).

Why not design for more beds? The city limits capacity to 100 beds via specific language in the zoning code. Also, more beds would require more administration/services, and there is no budget for more of that. The goal will be to move shelter occupants to more permanent housing, so the units above the shelter will help to meet that goal. In addition, TPI will continue to work with people on the wait list and, in applicable situations, to prevent them from becoming homeless in the first place.

Community partner space is operating room for organizations that provide case management beyond what TPI does.

Housing (Mike Andrews)

The RAC Development will have 150-200 rental units. Units will mix studios, 1 bedrooms, and maybe a few two-bedrooms. A market study is underway for how units will be received and the demographics of the population that will use them. Work to refine operating, budget, and design details is underway. PDC and other sources have contributed. Rent subsidies from HAP will ensure operation of housing portion of RAC has a balanced budget.

The Morrison, comparable building, has 140 units managed by HAP (45 for former homeless persons) at 100% occupancy. There has been no adverse affect on condos in the building thanks to design and building operation. Another model to consider is 8 NW 8th.

Design (Julie Livingston, Dave Otte)

Design workshops on May 17 and 31 will be the primary means of getting community input on the design of the building. Workshops will be hosted by Holst Architecture. Architectural program elements that were circulated when Block 25 was under consideration translate to Block U, a few additional program elements that have been added include the design of a donation drop-off area and public restrooms, addressing the proximity of Union Station through good urban design, and using durable building materials. Along with design, project goals will be met through property management and partner organizations. A National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) consultant will be hired, and the resulting process will include some public comment and the assessment of “no build” versus “build” options.

A site analysis completed by Holst Architects identifies these further considerations: redevelopment of the post office site; potential extension of the North Park Blocks; the development potential of Block R; pedestrian access to river; elevated roads at the NW corner of Block U; the visible, prominent corners of the building; the need for separate and discrete entrances for the shelter, the housing units, off-street parking, and the retail spaces. Expect curb cuts on Hoyt & Irving only. Noteworthy characteristics of Hoyt are it's conduciveness to pedestrian traffic and termination at the Greyhound station.

Green building strategies have yet to be discussed. LEED certification will be pursued.

TPI has been basing much of its input on the comments received from shelter occupants. Most comments focus on how the internal design of the shelter and Resource Access Center will support programs and operations.

Due to the location of the site, the development is subject to a Type III Design Review and will be presented to the Design Commission..

Financing (Mike Andrews)

Financing is being sought through the PDC, use of low income housing tax credits, & use of new market tax credits. HAP has experience with similar financing structures via the Morrison and the PPS Rosa Parks Elementary School. More details will come as partners are added and confirmed

Construction (Julie Livingston)

A construction manager/general contractor (Walsh Construction Company) was selected through a competitive public procurement process and is on-board to give pre-construction services input through the design phase. Walsh typically exceeds HAP's aspirational target business participation goal of 20% and values bringing diversity to worksite. Walsh was general contractor for the Clark Center, a shelter on the east-side that is owned by HAP and master-leased to TPI.

Community Participation (Pamela Kambur)

In addition to the design workshops, the CAC will meet again on June 16. The CAC's role is to provide input as knowledgeable, involved citizens. Members of the CAC are also encouraged to provide a two-way communication tool between the RAC Development to community organizations (especially neighborhood and business associations). Partners are happy to give presentations to interested groups. The Good-Neighbor Agreement process will involve additional input opportunities for people geographically close to the site. Information is being sent to those parties now, in case they would like to be involved at this phase in the project.

Open Discussion and Comments

Former TPI client thanked the organization and praises the support available now and the potential for the RAC Development. Police Bureau affirms that the RAC Development will be a big benefit to Portland; CAC members should communicate the benefits to members of the community who are reluctant to support the Development. All other members express appreciation for being involved, for the opportunity for organizations to partner to better serve and engage clients.

Meeting adjourned at 7:45PM.