



HOMELESSNESS TASK FORCE

MINUTES

THURSDAY, JULY 20, 2023

6:00 – 8:00 P.M.

CITY COUNCIL ROOM-(CITY COUNCIL ROOM)

CALL TO ORDER:

PRESENT:

Rev. Kate Forer (Co-Chair), Tom Roohan (Co-Chair), Hannah Hurley , Dean Devito, , Kate Halliday, Aneisha Samuels, Sherie Grinter, Lindsey Connors, Stephen Towne

ABSENT: Jules DeAngelo, Andrea Love Smith, Maggie Fronl

ANNOUNCEMENT OF RECORDING OF PROCEEDING:

The proceedings of this meeting are being recorded for the benefit of the secretary. Because the minutes are not a verbatim record of the proceedings, the minutes are not a word-for-word transcript of the recording.

Chair Rev. Kate Forer discussed changes to today's meetings to include changes from the agenda to the current meeting. Chair Forer discusses with the taskforce how to review the minutes to be uploaded to the website.

Chair Rev. Kate Forer the floor to Public Comment. No public Comment was received.

Public Comment:

No public Comment was received.

NEW BUSINESS:

Aneisha Samuels speaks on locations considered for the low barrier shelter. Five locations were considered feasible by the taskforce. A matrix was completed by each taskforce member excluding Lindsey Connors. These locations include, Lake Avenue, 153 South Broadway, 260 Maple Avenue, East and North Avenue, and 3290 Rt. 9/Top Hill Motel. 3290 Rt. 9 falls within the GCR (Gateway Rural Commercial District) district. The GCR districts includes a shelter as an allowable use. The Lake Avenue location is in the RR (Rural Residential) district. The RR district does not permit homeless shelters by right. The East and North Avenue location falls in the UR2 (Urban Residential) district. This location is not feasible per zoning. This locations is feasible in terms of location in proximity to services, and infrastructure. 260 Maple Avenue falls within the UR2 (Urban Residential) district also. This locations was considered feasible as a locations passivity by the taskforce. 153 South Broadway falls within a district that allows homeless shelters.

Aneisha Samuels shares that based on the matrix results 153 South Broadway was the preferred location. This location is not for sale. The remaining 4 locations are ranked as follows:

- 1) North and East Avenue
- 2) 260 Maple Avenue/Gateway Motel
- 3) 3290 Rt. 9/ Top Hill Motel

4) NYS Rt. 29/Lake Avenue

Aneisha shares a summary of each location. The summary is intended for the taskforce to make a final decision on a location recommendation. 3290 Rt. 9 Top Hill Motel is 1.6 acres and listed for \$1.9 Million dollars. This location would require Design Review Board approval through the City Planning Department. This location is not in close proximity to social services and bus stops. The North and East Avenue location is 1 acre and is listed for \$1 Million dollars. This location would also need Design Review Board approval. North and East Avenue would need a use variance or to be owned by the City in order to allow homeless shelter to this site. 260 Maple Avenue is 1.5 acres. Currently there has not been any contact with the owner to establish if they would sell. This location is in close proximity to social services and bus stops. Lake Avenue is 3.7 acres. This location is for sale for \$800 thousand dollars. This locations would require a use variance or City ownership, and Design Review Board. The three options to consider if a locations current zoning does not allow homeless shelters as a use are as follows, a use variance, City Ownership, or the location to be approved by City Council to become a PUD (Planned Unit Development).

Dean Devito shares on the Lake Avenue location. There is room to do stripping on the roadways to include a pedestrian walkway. The location has been filled and this can cause concerns for geotechnical support of a building. There are ways that a building could be constructed on this site with proper construction.

Hannah Hurley expresses concerns about the distance in proximity to services. The Lake Avenue Location is not in close proximity to downtown where services are located.

Rev. Kate Forer shares she feels that having a site like Lake Avenue with 3.7 acres could allow for more development for the homeless community. This location is also the least expensive, and is currently for sale.

Dean Devito shares that he biggest issue may be the bus stop. Dean believes they may be able to get a bus stop from CDTA that would align with that location.

Hannah Hurley suggests looking into allowing for bike lanes in that location to allow for more accessibility.

Aneisha Samuels speaks on the approval process needed from the City for the Lake Avenue location. This location would require a use variance from the City Zoning Board of Appeals. If the use variance was granted, the project would also require site plan approval from the Planning Board. The County Planning Board would also need to approve this project. The Design Review Board would also need to review and approve the plans for this location. If the City of Saratoga Springs owned the Parcel, you would not need approval from the Land Use Boards. City Council may request advisory opinions from the Planning, Zoning, and Design Review Boards.

Lindsey Connors shares that the CDTA Flex Option may be appropriate to request for this site.

Hannah Hurley feels that a location deemed far from services may be less likely utilized. Bus fare is expensive, and may create a barrier for individuals utilizing the shelter.

Aneisha Samuels opens up public comment to the public for any questions.

No public comment was received.

Aneisha Samuels asks the board to share whether they prefer to provide a single, or multiple location recommendation to the council.

Lindsey Connors prefers the approach of providing a top three location recommendations.

Hannah Hurley shares she prefers to recommend on location.

Kate Halliday would like to recommend one option.

Chair Rev. Kate Forer would like to recommend one option.

Rev. Tom Roohan would like to recommend one option.

Stephen Towne also agrees to recommending one option.

Dean Devito recommends multiple options to include one recommendation, and two alternatives.

Dean Devito makes a motion that Lake Avenue is the preferred site. The first alternate would be the North Ave site, and the second alternate would be the South Broadway Site.

Tom Roohan seconds the motion.

Lindsey Connors abstains from voting.

Motion carries 5-1 with one abstention.

Hannah Hurley speaks on the proposed RFP for the agency. A scoring sheet will be passed along to the City Council. This scoring sheet will include how the agency is being scored. The matrix includes staffing, programming, reporting, budgeting, etc.

Stephen Towne shares that the RFP including a budget may be difficult because the taskforce has not provided any of the details to include size of the structure, number of beds, etc. The RFP provides for the possibility for the respondents to respond to the same set of fact. This was help determine their fiscal capabilities.

Rev. Kate Forer would like to make a motion to recommend the draft RFP to City Council.

Hannah Hurley Seconds.

Motion carries 6-0

Stephen Towne shares possible future funding opportunities to include, State and federal grants, funding from the county, local government funding, and a capital campaign from the Mayor. Stephen met with City Staff, and the County Board of Supervisors. Stephen suggests building a strong relationship with the County is key to finding funding for the shelter. The County may be interested in combining the two shelter programs (Code Blue and the permanent shelter). The City engaged with a grant consultant for possible funding opportunities for the future shelter.

Dean Devito suggests contacting Darren Scott with HCR (Homes and Community Renewal). There may be some tax credits, or others programing available. Dean speaks on the RFP process for the design/build portion of the shelter. If you put it out for RFP you are really not getting a competitive bid. Another

method would be using a construction manager. You could then identify what their fee is, what their conditions are based on the job, the contingency required for maximum price, their insurance, and office overhead. Dean suggests this over the RFP process. Once a site is decided upon, a general project scope can be constructed. Once that is determined we can do a site plan lay out. Bid Specification is a third option. This includes working with an architect where plans would be shared, and a determined price would be the outcome.

Lindsey Connors adds knowing what entity that will be running this will be essential. For example if the agency is working with the County to incorporate Code Blue in the programming, that will impact the design. Will the agency take 30 beds, 40, 60? This would also impact the design. I would like to see the agency selected by the City to have some ownership over the design, as well as funding. Depending on where funding comes from certain restrictions may be out in place. I think without those two pieces it is impossible to move forward with a defined RFP. The funding source may also dictate the bid process.

Tom Roohan suggest the motion to Council of choosing the agency first. This would allow them to work through programming, possible financing, and then work with a construction manager as a tool to get the right product. Tom Roohan asks for a second.

Rev. Kate Forer seconds the motion.

Motion carries 6-0.

Mayor Ron Kim shares the recommendations will be taken and compiled into a report by staff. This report will be reviewed by the council. Mayor Kim thanks the committee for the work they have done.

Committee Member

Adjourn