

## Manchester Initiative for Supportive Housing

Minutes of September 20, 2007

Attendees: Sarah Edwards, Latonia Williams, Frank Yu, Bonnie Potocki, Joan Dower, Jay Stoppelman, Peg DeForge, Suzanne Jolissaint, Edith Gerber, Boris Gerber, Ken Harley, Jody Wynn Rodiger, David Blackwell, Dianné McPherson, Kathleen Grover, Anne Carr, John Gibbs, Tony Bonetti, Brad Mondschein, Sandra Rimetz, Richard Thompson, Jack Cotter, Francisca Carrero, Joan O'Loughlin, Rev. Karen Fedorchak.

Our meeting was held at Center Congregational Church and John Gibbs began with the Personal Commission which is read at the end of their services.

Upon motion duly made and second, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the MISH meeting of July 11, 2007.

Upon motion duly made and second, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the MCHC meeting of August 7, 2007.

Anne Carr, Chair of the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, brought Tony Bonetti from the Coalition to give us an idea of what the face of homelessness in Manchester is about.

Tony distributed a one-page sheet "Homelessness in Manchester: A Community Snapshot." He said that on Jan. 30, 2007 Connecticut completed its first state-wide "Point of Time Count." A snapshot of homelessness in Manchester from that count indicates the following:

- 38 households, with 10% sleeping outside that night
- Reasons: mental illness, substance abuse, unemployment
- Over 70% of households had at least one child
- Majority of people had high school or some college

Tony said that the next Point of Time Count in Connecticut will happen on January 28, 2008 from 6-9 pm. He said that volunteers are critical. There is training for the volunteers prior to that night.

Tony also talked about the Greater Hartford Region 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. Manchester is part of the Hartford plan. He distributed an Executive Summary noting the plan's four basic principles: (1) Focus on the chronically homelessness - causes, needs, solutions; (2) create awareness of existing services available; (3) concentrate resources on programs that offer measurable results; and (4) end chronic homelessness. The summary also noted critical and attainable action steps, including developing, designing and building 2,133 supportive housing units. A number of these units should be placed outside of Hartford proper.

Tony mentioned that the plan is due to be developed again in 2008. He said that we would be missing an opportunity if we don't make the effort to try to get supportive housing on the agenda and have it included as part of the plan.

David Blackwell reported on the MCHC August 7 meeting. He has written to the IRS noting our filings are up to date and giving them our 1984 recognition of tax exemption status. He is waiting for IRS to get back indicating they recognize that we are still a legal entity. We should hear back within 45 days.

Once we have heard back from IRS, we can change the formal name of our corporation from MCHC to MISH. Our tax exempt number would stay the same.

David noted the Election of Officers:

- Chair - David Blackwell
- Vice Chair - David Smith
- Treasurer - Boris Gerber
- Secretary - Dianne McPherson

Our By-laws are missing an entire page (no page 10), which includes the duties of the Treasurer. There are other reasons we may want to change our by-laws. David has asked a couple of law students, Latonia Williams and Frank Yu, to look at the by-laws and come up with a legal recommendation for a better set of by-laws.

Kathleen Grover, Chair of Services Committee, gave a brief report. The Service Committee has met twice. They are still discussing who we want to serve. They have identified eight specific populations and talked about scattered site vs. single site housing. They've decided to put it in the hands of the Site Committee and see what kind of site they choose and then determine who would be best served for the site selected. They are still researching each individual population. There is also the question of where the funding will come from, which will also help determine the population we serve.

Jody mentioned the Creative Living Commission. They use a farmstead model; one such model is in New Hampshire. It serves adults with autism or Down syndrome. Creative Living Comm. will be working in partnership with MARC and received their first grant in June for \$25,000. Jody went to a HUD workshop to learn to write HUD grants.

Edith Gerber said they have been interviewing consultants. Once a consultant is chosen they will help us through the process - how to choose the site, what population to serve, help with funding. She said that it may be that the site we find will dictate the group we serve. The consultant we choose will help us focus.

Two consultants have been interviewed: Jennifer Moscone with Mercy Housing and Betsy Crum with The Women's Institute. Betsy has worked on Jennifer's Way and Common Thread Co-op in Manchester and Soromundi Commons in Hartford.

David suggested that we take a few minutes to break out into small groups to discuss single site apartment style vs. scattered site housing. He noted some of the pros and cons of both:

**Single Site Housing:**

<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
Clients are easily accessed	Ghettoizing community
On site services	Stigmatized
Network	No flexibility
Economical	Safety Issues
Easier for providers to access	Visible, limited selection
	Expensive to acquire, but not to run

**Scattered Site Housing:**

<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
Feels like normal housing	Difficult and expensive to maintain
Blends	Isolated/abandoned
Less expensive to acquire	No on-site services
More available	Lost
Allows clients greater dependence and privacy	Rehab and construction of multi site more expensive overall
Suitable for clients w/families	

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, October 18, at 7pm at Temple Beth Shalom.

Sandra Rimetz, a professor at MCC, and some of her students may be able to help us with a website for MISH.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: To adjourn.

Submitted,

Dianne McPherson  
Secretary