



CITY OF DANBURY

155 DEER HILL AVENUE
DANBURY, CONNECTICUT 06810

COMMON COUNCIL

REPORT

March 7, 2006

Mayor Mark D. Boughton
Members of the Common Council

Re: **Task Force on Homelessness**

The Common Council Committee appointed to review the report from the Task Force on Homelessness met on February 15, 2006 at 7:00 P.M. In attendance were committee members Saracino, McMahon and Rotello. Also in attendance were Director of Welfare Deborah MacKenzie, Chairman of the Task Force Dianne Yamin, and Council Members Chianese, Taborsak and Teicholz.

Ms. Saracino asked Judge Yamin for an overview. She stated that the process began in January 2005 as part of a federal initiative and a state effort. The goal was to find a humanitarian, cost-effective way to manage homelessness through permanent supportive housing. New units are created and existing units are refurbished. Support services are provided to those who live in these units. Special needs such as drug addictions and mental illness are addressed. The plan is a ten-year plan. Funding is available from the State. Partnership for Strong Communities will advocate for funding for the services portion. There are four significant areas – the need for a centralized point of entry for consumers; the need to cultivate linkages between all stakeholders; the need for counseling and financial assistance to low and moderate income populations; and the need to prevent homelessness precluding eviction or foreclosure. The City will designate a department to oversee the plan.

Mr. Rotello asked for an explanation of the security deposit program. Ms. MacKenzie stated that three years ago the United Way took a look at the emergency aid network. There is now the Key Rings Program, which is a one-stop shop for security deposits. The applicant calls TBICO, is screened and a determination is made as to eligibility for a loan or grant. A requirement is that the applicant must participate in budget management and must share financial life with the agency. Ms. Taborsak asked if the Key Rings Program is open only to families from Danbury. Ms. McKenzie said there are designated funds for Danbury families. Grants are obtained from

banks and a number of other sources. CDBG funds are designated only for Danbury families. Ms. Taborsak asked what percentage of funds is designated for Danbury? Ms. MacKenzie believed it to be between 25 and 30 percent.

Mr. Chianese stated that he is concerned about duplication of services. Ms. MacKenzie said that Community Action Agency has \$50,000 in back rent money, as does the City. Back rent dollars are not easily accessed. Decisions are not timely enough. Agencies try to spend federal dollars first, then State funds and try to keep the more flexible dollars. Agencies that are currently involved need to understand where they are falling down and need to do a better job. The Key Rings Program will come together to develop the system to lessen the duplication. The implementation piece gives the responsibility to the Danbury Housing Partnership. The City will have a better handle on how the steps are proceeding. The Task Force felt that one entity should oversee the plan. The Danbury Housing Partnership would have the authority to monitor what is going on in housing development.

Mrs. McMahon made a motion to receive the report of the task force and adopt the resolution. Seconded by Mr. Rotello. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

MARY SARACINO, Chairman

LOUISE McMAHON

PAUL ROTELLO



RESOLUTION

CITY OF DANBURY, STATE OF CONNECTICUT

_____ A. D., 200_

RESOLVED by the Common Council of the City of Danbury:

WHEREAS, the condition of homelessness impacts all sectors of the community and as a result, an effective solution to the problem requires a coordination of effort; and

WHEREAS, in order to address this pervasive problem the Mayor of the City of Danbury created the Taskforce to End Homelessness in Ten Years; and

WHEREAS, the Taskforce has carefully considered all available options and has developed the Plan to End Homelessness in Ten Years.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DANBURY THAT:

1. The City of Danbury does hereby accept and approve the Plan to End Homelessness in Ten Years and does hereby endorse its aim of eliminating chronic and long-term homelessness by the year 2015;
2. The City of Danbury shall take measures necessary to implement the Plan, subject to the availability of resources in any given budget year.