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AUG 23 2006
MAYOR

Dream Homes Community Center

To: Mayor Mark Boughton and the Common Council
From: Rev. Phyllis J. Leopold, on behalf of the Dream Homes Community Center collaborative
Re: August 2006 monthly report

I. Program Synopsis

Per the proposal endorsed by Mayor Boughton and the Common Council, the Dream Homes Community Center (DHCC) is a collaborative effort of 4 non-profits: Housing Authority of the City of Danbury, The Association of Religious Communities, WeCAHR and People First of CT. The collaborative has financial and in-kind partners, to date: The City of Danbury, Mc Cue Mortgage, Prestima Latino, an Anonymous Donor, Housing Authority, ARC & WeCAHR.

Dream Homes works with 3 populations:

1) Point of Entry for persons who are homeless
2) Rentals
3) First-time Home ownership

All three of the above components are a part of Dream Homes. The Point of Entry is not a separate program; rather, it is 1 of the 3 components of Dream Homes ~ per the proposal passed by Mayor Boughton and the Common Council.

The collaborative Leadership Team shares responsibilities for leadership, decision making, risk-taking, and fundraising. This report is submitted by Rev. Phyllis J. Leopold on behalf of the collaborative Leadership Team which also includes: M. Carolyn Sistrunk, Pat Tomka, and Jean Bowen.

In addition to the Leadership Team, the program is implemented by salaried professionals:

Program Director (full-time): Karl Myers at ARC (792-9450) or karl-arc@sbcglobal.net.

Homeless Coordinator (part-time): Rev. Elizabeth Braddon at ARC (792-9450) or elizabeth-arc@sbcglobal.net.

Housing Advocate for Persons with Disabilities (part-time): Jeanne Braude-Maji at WeCAHR (792-3540) or jmbraude@sbcglobal.net

II. Operations

- A new Dell computer was found to have a broken motherboard. The computer was returned and replaced with a new one. In turn, the Dream Homes computers were again networked and connected to the internet. Backup capacity was also installed. The work was performed by an outside IT consultant at 50% less the usual fee, and at times convenient to his August schedule.
- The collaborative designed a logo. This gives the program visual representation on stationery. That logo is at the top of this Monthly Report. The logo will be used on all stationery pertaining to the Dream Homes Community Center.

III. Outreach & Education

A) Ribbon Cutting

In August, the Lead Team had a Planning Meeting with Mayor Boughton. A Ribbon Cutting was planned. Outreach letters were sent to 80 participants, specifically:

- HMIS Users
- Housing providers
- Social service agencies
- City employees

This Ribbon Cutting event is scheduled for September 20, 2006 from 3:30 to 5:00pm at City Hall, Room 3C. We will introduce Dream Homes Community Center's mission, goals, and staff. We will also hear from invited agencies about their programs and eligibility requirements.

Outreach events will be subsequently scheduled once a quarter to introduce Dream Homes Community Center to other groups.

B) Regional Introductions

Mayor Boughton has sent letters of introduction to municipal leaders in all the surrounding towns. The Homeless Coordinator, Rev. Elizabeth Braddon, is following up on the letters to set up appointments to formally introduce Dream Homes and gain support for the program from the region.

C) Community Action Committee of Danbury (CACD)

CACD has invited Dream Homes to participate in their monthly new client orientation meetings.

IV. Point of Entry

A) Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

The Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness scheduled a HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) User Training for mid-August. But the training was subsequently cancelled and our staff could not go. The next HMIS User Training takes place September 25th & 26th.

The User Training takes place in New Britain. The Program Director and Homeless Coordinator will both participate in the User Training on September 25th & 26th in New Britain.

Following, Dream Homes will qualify for two HMIS licenses which will be provided by the Danbury Continuum of Care (CoC). Other HMIS users in the area will then be able to provide their data to Dream Homes; and quantitative measurements will be compiled by the Point of Entry, and reported on to the Mayor and Common Council in the Monthly Report.

Dream Homes contacted 21 agencies to ascertain their involvement in HMIS. The list of agencies to contact was supplied by the CT Coalition to End Homelessness. The outcomes:

- Five agencies in Danbury confirmed they are HMIS users:
  1) Greater Danbury Mental Health Authority
  2) City of Danbury, City Shelter
  3) AIDS Project
  4) Amos House
  5) Danbury Hospital
- Seven agencies indicated they are not using the HMIS system and do not plan to:
  1) Key Rings
  2) State of CT Dept of Social Services
  3) Salvation Army
  4) MCCA
  5) Hispanic Center
  6) Department of Children and Families
  7) Community Solutions, Inc.
- Three agencies indicated using alternative data collection sharing:
  1) Shelter of the Cross ~ reported they do not use the HMIS system but provide their information to the City Shelter.
  2) Community Action Committee of Danbury (CACD) ~ reported they do not use the HMIS system but use the DSS system.
  3) Interlude ~ manually track their clients

- Replies from six agencies are pending:
  1) Social Security Administration
  2) Center for Human Development
  3) Community Resource Center
  4) Family & Children's Aid
  5) Dorothy Day House of Hospitality
  6) Catholic Charities of Fairfield County

B) Point of Entry – Data

Total number of new clients served by the collaborative **this month:** _34_____

Race/Ethnicity

White_21__ Black_5__ Native American___ Asian___ Hispanic/Latino_8__
Other___

Family Information

Total Families:__7___ Female__14___ Male__6___ Minor Parents (under 18)__0___
Total Singles:___11__ Female__1___ Male__13___ Minor (under 18)__0___

Age

0-5__6___ 6-12__3___ 13-17__3___ 18-20_____ 21-25_____ 26-34__8___
35-49__6___ 50-64__7___ 65+___1__

Education Level

No High School__6___ Some High School__6___ High School Diploma/GED__1___
Some College/Degree__2___ Graduate School_____ Unknown__19___

Income Information

Employed__5___ SAGA_____ Child Support__6___
SSI__12___ SSD__2__ Unemploy. Comp__1___
Veteran__1___ None__4___ TFA_____ Other__3___

Housing Issues

Disaster Victim_____ Deinstitutionalized_____ Lockout_____
Legal Eviction__3___ Out of Jail/Prison_____ Left Voluntarily_____
Fmly/Friend Eviction__5___ Left Voluntarily__8___ Other__18___

Contributing Factors

Substance Abuse_____ Expenses Exceed Income__7___ Unemployed__8___
Physical Illness__1___ New to Area__4___ Divorced/Separated___4__
Family Abuse_____ Mental Illness__3___ Other__7___

IV. Rentals

The collaborative is analyzing the current distribution of affordable housing across the greater Danbury region (10 towns). The collaborative will provide an analysis with recommendations in the September Monthly Report.

V. First-time Home Ownership

Clients/Families in program

- Stetson Place has generated interest in homeownership for individuals with developmental disabilities, their families and support persons. As a result of its success a family of 3 related adults contacted Dream Homes for consultation on how they go about purchasing a home that meets their needs. Jean Bowen, People First has provided advice and direction to them and their individual support and professional teams. One member has a good job and the other two are in search of regular part-time work to supplement their benefits. On going contact with the family and their caseworkers has focused on assisting them in finding work to put them in a better position for home ownership.

- The second family is an immigrant family from Peru that is interested in purchasing their first home in the United States. They are concerned that they have a low credit rating and are seeking advice as to how they can go about purchasing a home. We are currently in the process of contacting McCue Mortgage to work with this family.

End