

Stakeholder Meeting Minutes

October 6th, 2015

Introduction: Julie Banks gave a background on where the group is in the process and where they are going and did introductions.

Meeting Overview: Melissa Wittstruck went over ground rules for the meeting.

Questions & Discussion: Heather Trautman walked the stakeholder group through the Question Matrix that was handed out to the group. There were additional questions raised as well as discussions.

Q- Stated that housing quality and health conditions cannot be exclusively related to rental housing. Issue with health dept report

Q- do we have data correlating income level to rental data?

A- Refers to City of Spokane Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice 2014 Update report that was handed out to the group.

Q- what is equivalent to public housing here in Spokane?

A- a unit that is receiving federal subsidy through HUD

Audience member Q- Was this study focused more on housing health issues or lifestyle choice? (question related to Health dept response relating to health data)

A- so are these related to building health vs. personal choice

Q- perhaps a tenant doesn't see the impact of their lifestyle on a property. Perhaps property was decent at move in but truly became substandard over time.

A- look at studies provided and look for secondary impacts as it relates to housing health over time

Q- no doubt that there are environmental triggers but something to remember is that we have a very high low income population in Spokane and a high percentage of smokers for example within those populations. Interested in looking at asthma rates

D- subsidized housing is not substandard because they're inspected and held to a higher standard. Poverty linked to health is simply that poverty correlates to lower health standards in general (health, education, etc is lower)

D- waiting lists to get into public housing are obviously better or there wouldn't be waiting lists to get in. Can we get data for the total number of public and subsidized housing units available? There is a high demand.

D- it's the low income units on the open market that are at risk.

D- potentially we should have the health dept come back and address these questions

Q- behavioral issues- tenant behaviors that impact the quality of the housing. What is the link? Can we find a solution to the behavioral based issues?

A- if you're aware of some of the behavior issues contributing to the problem bring that to the table and we can find some speakers that can address these issues

D- responsible renters class at the YWCA. also is aware of other programs. Responsible renters education is required for Section * vouchers. There are no requirements for market rate renters.

Q- Police data: was this relating to rentals exclusively? Yes, so it was impacted by density?

A- rental units; this was a comparison of calls for service based on what he saw

Q- can this be broken down to a budgetary analysis?

A- yes that presentation did include a cost analysis

Q- do regional officers collect this data as well?

A- all data collected is fed into a single input and then fed into a statewide database. They do not collect data specific to the needs of this group

Q- Are there other reporting agencies outside of Building and Code? Where can a regular resident report poor housing?

A- Yes. For instance if someone has a housing voucher then they could report to Housing Authority. There are other methodologies

D- Housing authority properties are regularly inspected. Resident can write you a letter giving you ten days to remedy the issue and escrow your rent or vacate your lease....

D- maybe during our next phase we can do a mapping exercise

D- are tenants aware that they can do this?

D- Tenants are risking their housing by reporting this.

D- the department offers relocations assistance. This issue will be addressed during phase 2.

Audience Member Q- What is the most common code violation?

A- Solid waste is the most common complaint type

Audience Member Q- Of the 97% vacant buildings, were those classified as rentals?

A- They were classified as nothing but vacant. About 50% are “zombie properties” where ownership simply walks away. If they’re sold they will quickly rehabilitate.

Q- If someone is unhappy with the house they’re living in why not move out?

A- It costs money to move.

Q- private inspections do not go into assessor data, correct?

A-Yes. Correct.

D- There is a missing link between human health and structure health.

D- We need to look at the economics of doing the things that were looking at. Education of the economics.