

# **Barrier Busters Network Action Group**

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**August 23, 2006, LLRC**

**1:30pm—3:00pm**

**BBN Attendees:** Mary Beth Lampe, CSTS  
Beth Manuel, Child Care Network  
Moonson Enische, County Treasurer  
Heather Mooney, County Treasurer  
Kate Fox, HelpSource  
Shirley Tarvis, CSTS  
Shannon Richards, 211 Call Center  
Annette Wilde, DHS  
Yvonne Murowski, Judson Center  
Elina Zilberberg, Jewish Family Services  
Mike Ball, CSS  
Paula Bartha WCC  
Terry Allom, HBS  
Peri Stone Palmquist  
Cheri Nalepa, NSS  
Shirley Tarvis, CSTS  
Mel Batkins, DHS  
Helena Prince, FID  
Harriett Bakalar, Housing Bureau for Seniors  
Efrion Smith, Power Incorporated  
Christina Oliver, SOS Community Services  
Angela Edmonds, TWCA  
Nidya Price Reed, Shelter Association  
Efrion Smith, Power Inc  
Patricia Love, HARC  
Laurence Simmons, HARC  
Sue Gialanella, Public Health

**Staff Present:** Mike Scholl, Staff Coordinator HSCC  
Andrea Plevak, HSCC

**Guests:** Joe Ohren, EMU – Washtenaw County Consultant  
Gordon Burger, Washtenaw County  
Peg Talburt, Knight Foundation  
DJ Boehm, Pfizer Community Affairs

## **I. Welcome/Introductions**

- Mary Beth Lampe, and Beth Manuel opened the meeting
- The minutes were approved as written.

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### **II. Public Comment**

- None

### **III. Washtenaw County Space Allocation**

- Joe Ohren a consultant from Eastern Michigan University conducted a focus group meeting with regard to space allocation issues in Washtenaw County including the jail.
- It is a question of what the county and the community will need over the next 20 years.
- What we are talking about really is three main facilities.
  - 555 Towner
  - Public Safety/Jail
  - Court facilities
- The presentation is going to be compiled and provided to the County Board of Commissioners to help it decide how to move forward with the space issues including the jail.
- Joe posed the following questions to the group
- Should we expand the jail? If so, how large?
- If we expand the current facility, should the existing building be brought up to the standards used in the expansion?
- What alternative sanctions or diversion methods should be funded to support reduction of the jail population?
- Question of recidivism of the prison population. We should be investing more in supporting released inmates.
- There was a question regarding those prisoners that are they for pre-trial versus those prisoners that have been adjudicated.
- Indicated the need for expansion of the jail based on existing conditions.
- A comment was made regarding the Diversion programs as well and the out reach teams.
- What should the 14A1 District Court look like? Should the Juvenile Division of the Family Court be centrally located with other areas of Family Court? If not, where should it be located?
- How might the existing Trial Court building downtown be improved?
- Should the 555 Towner facilities be converted to Health campus and delivery center?
- Would your clients or constituents benefit from satellite service delivery?
- If converted to a health campus, where should the ETCS administrative offices be located?
- How should we fund these proposed space initiatives?
- What would be the impact of not funding these space initiatives?

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- *Please see the full transcript attached below*

### **IV. Human Services Community Collaborative Restructuring**

- Peg Talburtt of the Knight Foundation and DJ Boehm of the Pfizer Community Affairs presented on behalf of the Community Collaborative Guiding Coalition.
- The Community Collaborative has been discussing a structure that is more inclusive and responsive to community needs and that can provide strong community leadership.
- The basis for the revised structure is the Stewards.
- The Stewards are the broad leadership group that advises on the direction of the community.
- The Community Collaborative is hosting a broad community plenary session in November to kick off the new structure.
- To become a Steward you or your agency needs to sign a leadership services agreement.
- Members will be required to pay dues commensurate with their operating budget.
- The dues will be used to support the staff and the
- The second tier of leadership is the Executive Committee.
- The Executive Committee is the group that is required to implement the broad initiatives based on the data from the Community Needs Assessment.
- The Community Needs Assessment will be released in September; it will be the basis for decisions that are made by the Stewards.
- The other tier is the Coordinating Group which is the group responsible for the existing safety net and the state of ongoing services.
- Did not want to abrogate our responsibility to the existing services.
- The structure is expected to change in January.
- We are asking folks to become stewards in the interim and working toward the community plenary session.
- Barrier Busters will continue as an action group under the new structure but will need to think about its role and begin to more clearly define itself.

### **V. Fund Update**

- We have expended out DHS contract funds for this fiscal year.
- The next fiscal year begins Oct 1, so we will have a lower cash flow in the next few months.
- The city of Ann Arbor funds should be available later this month.

## **Barrier Busters Network Action Group**

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Adjourned 3:00 pm

***The Next Meeting is scheduled for  
Wednesday, September 27, 2006 - 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm @  
LLRC***

# Barrier Busters Network Action Group

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## Washtenaw County Space Planning--Key Questions

Barrier Busters, 8/23/06

### **Jail**

*Should we expand the jail? If so, how large?*

*If we expand the current facility, should the existing building be brought up to the standards used in the expansion?*

*What alternative sanctions or diversion methods should be funded to support reduction of the jail population?*

We need to focus on early education programs, fund alternative options such as community service as an alternative to incarceration. There should be more structured and perhaps more extensive work programs, even house arrest, as alternatives. There is a perception that some people will not do community service since they know they might be released early because of the over crowding problem at the jail; we need to be sure that those who can do community service, do it.

Farming people out to other jails is not an answer to the jail over crowding problem. It is more costly, cuts people off from local services and from their families.

How many people at the jail are there pre-trial? (perhaps thirty percent of those at the jail on average.) Are there ways to reduce that number, opening beds for those who have been adjudicated? Are there alternative ways to handle those that are returned to jail for probation or parole violations?

Can we distinguish between those who are incarcerated for violent offenses—who present a threat to themselves or to others—and handle them differently than others who might not need to be jailed?

We need to develop and fund (or perhaps revitalize) a street outreach program to support prevention efforts. We should develop an Options Center where people can be referred to local nonprofits for the help they need—mental health or substance abuse—rather than placing them in jail.

The state is developing a re-entry program to address the recidivism problem and we need to aggressively partner with them. We should be thinking about connecting any proposed jail expansion with efforts to support improved alternative diversion efforts.

Ultimately, we have to trust the recommendations of those who work in the jail and who provide services—the criminal justice officials have a better handle on the issues—and they need to provide recommendations on what needs to be done. And, they need to do a better job sharing information and making the case.

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## **Courts**

*What should the 14A1 District Court look like? Should the Juvenile Division of the Family Court be centrally located with other areas of Family Court? If not, where should it be located?*

*How might the existing Trial Court building downtown be improved?*

There are real safety and security problems at the court at the Service Center; crime victims and families are abused a second time when they have to come face to face with accused or adjudicated felons.

The 14,1A court is a disaster—it needs to be at the top of the list in terms of funding priorities.

Parking is a problem at the downtown facilities; when we go down there to provide services there is no place to park, especially after 11am, or the alternatives are costly and come out of our pockets, cutting into the services we can provide.

We should avoid splitting up court responsibilities unless there is a strong recommendation for keeping family and juvenile responsibilities separate from other courts.

## **Towner**

*Should the 555 Towner facility be converted to Health campus and delivery center?*

*Would your clients or constituents benefit from satellite service delivery?*

*If converted to a health campus, where should the ETCS administrative offices be located?*

The Towner facility is not currently client-friendly.

Providing a “one stop” service delivery center makes sense; we need to think holistically about client needs and provide access to services in an effective and efficient manner. This should include DHS and social services as well. At the same time, programs offered in cooperation with other organizations, e.g., faith-based and nonprofits, can also improve access and efficiency.

Some ETCS services are provided at the Towner facility—the “thaw” program, weatherization, and emergency cash assistance. It may make sense to link these services to the health services that are provided at Towner.

Does it make sense to consider co-locating some of the family support services at the jail site? Would this also be a way to improve service delivery?

## **Funding**

*How should we fund these proposed space initiatives?*

*What would be the impact of not funding these space initiatives?*

A “big cookie sale”

There are no easy answers to the funding problem. A new millage would provide additional revenue to support infrastructure and facility needs, although there may not be sufficient support for it. Borrowing money using current funding streams could potentially mean a reduction in support for human and social service programs, which may limit our ability to provide the services that can really make a difference in people’s lives.

Whatever recommendation emerges, we need to do a much better job of communicating the need; the “story” in the earlier campaigns wasn’t being told effectively.