

Barrier Busters Network Action Group

**November 28, 2007, LLRC
1:30pm—3:00pm**

BBN Attendees: Andrea Plevak, MSU Extension; Co-Chair
Alisa Anderson, 211
Lisa Anderson, UM Health System
Harriet Bakalar, Housing Bureau for Seniors
Mel Batkins, DHS
Joan Dougherty, Community Action Network
Shannon Duffany, Child Care Network
Angela Edmonds, Women's Center of Southeastern Michigan
Shannon Farmer, 211
Vickie Frederick-Toure, SafeHouse Center
Kathy Grant, Washtenaw County Treasurer
Measie James, Washtenaw Health Plan
Michelle Leaphart, SOS Community Services
Kamala Massey, POWER, Inc.
Heather Mooney, Washtenaw County Treasurer
Christina Oliver, SOS Community Services
Allison Polluck, Neighborhood Senior Services
Helena Prince, Friends in Deed
Sandy Reeber, ETCS
Shannon Richards, Washtenaw County Public Health
George Ridenour, Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living
Peri Stone-Palmquist, Education Project for Homeless Youth
Anna Tolis, St. Joseph Mercy Senior Health Services
Julie Young, Turner Geriatric Clinic Social Work

Staff Present: Emily Arents, CCWC (recorder)

Guests: Jennifer Hall, Affordable Housing Needs Assessment

I. Welcome/Introductions

Members and guests introduced themselves.

II. Announcements and Public Comment

- Beginning Monday, December 3, the Washtenaw Health Plan will be conducting walk-in hours from 9am – noon Monday through Thursday, by appointment 1pm – 4:30pm.
- Friends in Deed is still offering financial assistance for single employed women in need of car repair. There is a limit to funds available, but as the fund is under-utilized, all applications are considered. There are no rigid guidelines for income requirements.
- The Office of Community Development (at the city and county levels) holding hearings this month to get community feedback. These will be:
 - December 17 - City council meeting (posted on public agenda) 7pm
 - December 18 – County-wide meeting 5pm at LLRC

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- AACIL will be moving its offices December 7, to reopen on the 11th. The new location is at 3941 Research Park Drive. The agency phone number will remain the same.
- ETCS will also be relocating, on December 13 and 14 from the Towner location and into offices on Harriet Street, near WCC. The agency phone number will remain the same. The office will reopen on Monday, December 17.
- Kathy Grant is the new Mortgage Foreclosure Prevention Specialist at MSU Extension. She can be reached by phone at the main line for MSU Extension: 997-1678

No public comment.

III. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

The draft agenda was unanimously approved without changes.

The draft minutes from the October 24 meeting were unanimously approved without changes.

IV. New Business

A. Jennifer Hall, Affordable Housing Needs Assessment

Ms. Hall provided an informative presentation about the Housing Needs Assessment conducted during the past two years (and recently completed) by the Office of Community Development.

The notes from the presentation are posted on the Barrier Busters website, at http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/community_collaborative/BB/2007/November/agenda.html

Ms. Hall demonstrated the features of the Community Development Housing Portal website, available: <http://housing.ewashtenaw.org>

Questions

- Question: Are you available to give these presentations elsewhere? To request a presentation for another agency, or to ask any questions, please contact Jennifer Hall, phone: 622-9006, email: hallj@ewashtenaw.org
- Comment: It makes a lot of sense to create housing for multiple levels of income, so that ghetto development is stalled (or avoided), and so that there is more stability in communities
- Question: What is meant by "Urban County Area"?
According to HUD, those jurisdictions included in the urban county area receive funds without regular application.
- Question: What kind of collaboration do you anticipate with transportation, for instance? Transportation, particularly in Ypsilanti, has become—and will continue to become—an

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issue, especially after the income tax decision in Ypsilanti.

• Question: Have there been talks with the major landlords in the area? Some will accept Section 8, but not necessarily in all complexes. And, when properties change ownership, residents are often displaced because of Section 8 policy changes.

Ms. Hall recently gave a presentation to the Ann Arbor Area Apartment Association, and reported that the organization was very receptive. In fact, one of their two legislative objectives is to adjust Section 8, so that it is easier to administer.

• Question: The face of rental housing is changing in Washtenaw County, especially with the pool of landlords becoming more limited to a few large companies. What is the nature of the relationship between these large developers and the City?

There was discussion about this issue. It was agreed that more dialogue about these issues is necessary.

B. WAAA Presentation – Report

Co-Chair Mary Beth Lampe recently gave a presentation on the Unmet Needs Fund. As she was not present, her report on the presentation was tabled for a later meeting. Network Group members who attended the presentation remarked that the presentation went very well, and was well-received.

C. Renewal of Membership Agreements

Emily Arents reminded Network Group members that the Participation and Services Agreement for all Barrier Busters agencies will expire on December 31, 2007. All agencies are asked to complete the updated form, which is available:

http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/community_collaborative/BB/membership.html

V. Old Business

A. Emily Arents, Report on File Review

Ms. Arents provided a report on the review completed during the late summer. She detailed her findings and recommendations, outlined in the memo distributed to the Network Group.

B. Approval of Draft Barrier Busters Release of Information

To accommodate those agencies who communicate with clients primarily by phone, it was suggested that the Release of Information be adjusted. The revised release can be used for phone (verbal) release or written release.

Angela Edmonds asked that the entry for Women's Center of Southeastern Michigan be corrected, as it was incorrectly listed on the original draft.

The revised Release of Information was unanimously approved.

C. Approval of Draft Checklist for Barrier Busters requests

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This item was tabled, as fund guidelines, and funders' input in the checklist may emerge in the coming months.

VI. Proposal for Annual Report for Barrier Busters

Co-Chair Andrea Plevak proposed that Barrier Busters begin an annual report, including fiscal and funding information, demographic information about assistance recipients, and qualitative information about success stories. Members were asked to contact Emily Arents (arentse@ewashtenaw.org) with any such qualitative information they would be willing to contribute for the report.

VII. BB Emergency Unmet Needs Fund Update

No fund update was available. It will be sent out to the listserv.

IX. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2:51 p.m.

***The Next Meeting is scheduled for
Wednesday, January 23, 2007 –
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm***