Houseless Committee Meeting Notes

1/25/21 @ 5:30 pm

Agenda

* Introductions and announcements
* Finalizing committee name
* Administrative updates (Eaen Goss): Committee Google Drive/email list
* Discussion with Ash Hester: What happens at a sweep? How can neighbors prepare?
* Guest Speakers: Jessie Maran and Matt Lembo from the Sunnyside Safety and Livability Committee
* Setting next meeting time
* Final questions/wrap-up

Committee name:

**Houselessness Action Committee (HAC)**

Houseless Committee

Housing Committee

Sunnyside update:

Ash – gear drive last weekend (Saturday) at SE Uplift

* Donation dropoff, huge turnout
* Sunday: popup at Sunnyside park, got rid of ¾ donations (went to community)

Sunnyside Community Safety and Livability Committee

* Jes: board has been doing so much since June-July, came together after a large group of folks moved to Sunnyside Park from Laurelhurst Park
  + Wanted to figure out how to help unhoused neighbors get day to day stability, ensure safety
  + Wanted to engage housed neighbors who were opposed
  + Crew doing regular litter pick-up, do outreach
  + Personal hygiene resources – porta-potties and showers
  + Winter gear drive (Ash mentioned)
  + Partnerships with other orgs, like Beacon PDX
* Sweeps having a negative impact – where can people be? Focusing on sanctioned cites
  + Rep. Nosse sent out a letter to urge county and city officials to take emergency action
  + Matt: Current “ping-ponging” between Laurelhurst and Sunnyside is showing issues with the current policies – where can people go? No acceptable answer
  + Asking for sanctioned sites where people won’t be asked to leave short term
  + Neighborhoods need to come together and realize this is something we all need to solve
  + Rep Nosse: What we’re currently doing is not working. Not enough shelter will become available
    - Needs us to come together to create political pressure
    - Until we get more permanent resources this is the situation we’re in
  + Jes: Not easy, we recognize there is conflict
    - This system is unworkable and deadly for people
    - We want to understand people’s concerns, get help identifying sites, offer help to other neighborhoods
  + Ash: There are successful campsites operating in Portland right now, but they are at max capacity/have waitlists
    - Hazelnut Grove being closed down, so actually losing space
  + Tina: Should we reach out to other coalitions?
    - Eaen: Trying to attend N Portland meeting in the future, meeting with Mary
  + Kimberlea: Have you reached out to Office of Civic Life?
    - Jes: No, but have worked with other programs
    - Kimberlea: Trying to connect with new community safety program
  + What are we picturing in our minds when we say “sanctioned camp” – doesn’t necessarily need to be a formal structure?
    - Emergency level: Need a site where people can have their living space and not be subject to sweeps
    - Need to meet COVID criteria, waste disposal needs
    - Stuart: C3PO is an all-star example, thinking about needing a place for folks to direct services (so they can be reached by social services, etc.)
    - Tina: Private lot of land where services could exist and people could live
      * Could potentially be liability issues
      * Jes: the liability question is a barrier, interested in hearing from folks who have background/expertise in that area
      * Ash: Churches are a good ally for this work, also other non-profits. There is a lot of land that is not being used
      * Kimberlea: Faith groups have committed to using land to build housing, just need funding. Will reach out (<https://www.leaven.org/land-housing-organizing>)
    - Jes: Does anyone have a personal relationship with someone who is houseless?
      * Developing relationships is very rewarding. Checking assumptions and perspective. Reach out and say hello to people
      * This is policy but also caring for people who live in our neighborhoods
  + Setting next meeting – once a month
    - Organizational report and neighborhood report (two guest speakers) per meeting
      * What are organizations that could help support these sanctioned camps – getting others on board
    - Thanks to Sunnyside for presenting!
    - Next meeting: February 22nd (4th Monday) at 5:30