

FORT MONMOUTH ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION PLANNING AUTHORITY

Minutes filed by Kathryn Verrochi as Assistant Secretary on Behalf of the Authority Members of actions taken at the Second Special Public Meeting of The Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Planning Authority, held at the Tinton Falls Municipal Building, 556 Tinton Avenue, Tinton Falls, New Jersey 07724 at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 24, 2008.

Present:

Chairperson and Public Member Dr. Robert Lucky
Vice Chairperson and Commerce Commission Designated Member Virginia Bauer
Monmouth County Freeholder Director Lillian Burry
Eatontown Mayor Gerald Tarantolo
Oceanport Mayor Michael Mahon
Tinton Falls Mayor Peter Maclearie
Public Member Laurie Cannon
Public Member Rosemarie Estephan

Absent: Garrison Commander COL Stephen Christian had previously advised the Authority. Deputy to the Garrison Commander George Fitzmaier sat in for Garrison Commander COL Stephen Christian.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Lucky who led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance. The Special Public Meeting was convened at 7:35 p.m. in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Authority Members Comments:

Chair Lucky invited comments from the Authority Members. Public Member Estephan read the following report on the Homeless and Affordable Housing from the Social Services Advisory Committee (SSAC). (Exhibit A)

Chair Lucky presented the Agenda for approval. Freeholder Director Burly moved for the approval of the agenda, Vice Chair Bauer seconded the motion and the agenda was unanimously approved.

Public Comments on Agenda Items:

1. Phil Welch, Jr., Lincroft, read and provided the Board the following comments. (Exhibit B)
Public Member Cannon arrived at this time.
2. Tom Mahedy, Manasquan, read and provided the Board the following email. (Exhibit C)

Item 0806-06: Resolution Concerning the Homeless Assistance Submission to HUD

This action is to authorize the Authority staff and its professionals to commence the required negotiations with all homeless service providers who have submitted NOIs in compliance with the Base Closure Community Redevelopment and Homeless Assistance Act, as amended (10 U.S.C. 2687 et seq.) and the regulations adopted pursuant thereto (24 C.F.R. 586 et seq.). DD Harrison explained that the resolution authorizes FMERPA staff and its professionals to start negotiations with the 14 Homeless Assistance NOT submitters. At this time no NOI submitters are being accepted or rejected as that will occur as a result of ongoing negotiations. Mayor Tarantolo asked for clarification of what is being proposed as it has a direct effect on the three (3) host communities and asked for detailed information regarding what each host community currently has and what is being proposed. DD Harrison noted he has a listing of all county sponsored or participating shelters in the host communities. The forthcoming Draft HAS will be presented to the Board for approval and to the public for comments in July. Mayor Mahon echoed what Mayor Tarantolo said stating the municipalities need additional information. He asked questions of the SSAC recommendations relating to the methodology or formula used to assign Fair Share to each of the host

communities; whether the County-documented need was based on county population or based on area; how this need was balanced across the 50 plus municipalities on a per capita basis or by municipality; what municipal services will be most impacted; what consideration was given to meeting some of the NOIs with offsite support; the calculated number of school age children; the criminal backgrounds of potential residents; whether the SSAC has any jurisdiction on affordable housing elements within the communities; the impact on the local property rates related to services and if the SSAC will provide the homeless need by community. Chair Lucky stated going forward additional involvement would be undertaken with the host communities and the SSAC. Mayor Tarantolo moved the resolution, Vice Chair Bauer seconded it and it was unanimously adopted.

Public Comments not on Agenda:

1. Linda Zucaro, Tinton Falls, asked if FMERPA knew the total COAH obligation for the Fort Monmouth property. Mayor Tarantolo answered they did not. He noted that clarification is needed with the COAH numbers as it relates to Fort Monmouth as a region.
 2. Tom Mahedy, Manasquan, advocated for Fort Monmouth property to be given to host municipalities and non-profits, for saving Pine Brook housing, for helping those less fortunate and for higher SSAC housing numbers.
 3. Bree Boulware, Cherry Hill, asked for clarification of the housing bank, if LBAs will be detailed in negotiations and if affordable housing will be above and beyond 375.
- DD Harrison stated the housing bank is a conceptual idea, will be part of the discussions when negotiations begin and that he is open to suggestions.

Item 0806-07: Executive Session - Contractual Matters/Legal Advice

This action is to meet the statutory requirement at Section 7 of the Act to provide for the conduct of business, including consideration of personnel matters in Executive Session consistent with the Open Public Meetings Act. Mayor Mahon moved the resolution, Mayor Tarantolo seconded it and it was unanimously adopted.

The Authority Members then entered Executive Session at 8:35 p.m.

The Authority Members returned to Open Session upon conclusion of the Executive Session at 9:45 p.m.

Since there were no further comments or business, a motion to adjourn was made by Public Member Estephan, seconded by Freeholder Director Burry and unanimously adopted at 9:50 p.m.

TO: MEMBERS OF THE FORT MONMOUTH ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION PLANNING AUTHORITY

FROM: ROSE ESTEPHAN, SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

RE: SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT ON THE HOMELESS AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

SSAC Report on Homeless Situation in Monmouth County:

The homeless situation in Monmouth County is in a critical state even though the “official” statistics supplied by the Point in Time (PIT) Survey shows less than critical numbers. However, in evaluating these statistics with the information from the Monmouth County Consolidated Plan (MCCP), Monmouth County Continuum of Care (MCCC), information provided by various homeless providers and homeless advocacy groups, the indications are that not only is there a need in the county but specifically in the towns in which Fort Monmouth presently exists, Eatontown, Oceanport and Tinton Falls. The SSAC recognizes that this region can not meet all of the County’s homeless needs however; we can make a significant difference by meeting the homeless needs in these three communities.

The SSAC Report on the Homeless Situation in Monmouth County is not just an evaluation of statistics from the MCCP and MCCC but from homeless providers and various advocacy groups that deal day to day and in real numbers with not just the need of the homeless but the need for self-help housing. It is not possible to use the PIT Survey independently because they are numbers that objectify a need that happens at a particular point in time and is subject to variables such as weather and time of year. Many believe there is an unintentional undercounting of numbers. The homeless just don’t show up to be counted. An example would be veterans groups that see a significantly higher number of veterans coming to them for assistance but do not participate in the PIT survey.

There are three types of specific homeless needs that the SSAC proposes for inclusion into the FINAL Reuse Plan:

The first and second areas of greatest need are PERMANENT and PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING. We propose accommodations be made for single adults, seniors, those with mental illness, HIV/AIDS, veterans and families. Permanent Supportive Housing for Homeless Families appears to be the area of greatest need within Monmouth County. The SSAC proposes that 100 units to meet this need.

The third is in EMERGENCY SERVICES. This need is indicated in the County evaluations and even more urgently in the information gathered through the submission of the Notices of Interest (NOI) and statistics from the homeless advocates. The most critical areas of need are shelters for: single adults, domestic violence victims and especially families. Various providers indicate an alarming number of homeless from these groups are turned away everyday. The SSAC proposes a minimum of fifty (50) dwelling units or approximately 130 individuals to meet this need. All other subpopulations can be accommodated in this number.

At the current time Homeless NOI evaluations are being conducted in parallel with the financial feasibility analysis.

I would like to acknowledge and commend the county, Lynn Miller, Virginia Edwards and their staffs, for the manner in which they conduct the PIT Survey. Everyone that came to participate was treated with the utmost care, courtesy and respect. Also, I would like to acknowledge and commend the members of the Social Services Advisory Committee for their efforts and time to this committee and to the public members and advocacy teams in providing their valued insight, in providing supporting data, and their time.

SSAC Report for Self-Help Housing:

The charge of the SSAC was to investigate, evaluate and address the need of the homeless as it related to Fort Monmouth and specifically the towns of Eatontown, Oceanport and Tinton Falls. The SSAC became the venue for extensive discussions concerning self-help/affordable housing. To paraphrase a homeless and self-help/affordable housing provider; 'If there was more affordable housing the homeless would be less of an issue in our communities'. It is an equal critical concern to that of the homeless.

The SSAC suggests that in order to address the self-help housing issue and increase the number of homes that would be affordable in cost to low income families, the towns of Eatontown, Oceanport and Tinton Falls consider increasing the number of self-help housing put forth by the Habitat for Humanity Public Benefit Conveyance (PBC) that are included in the fair market value housing purposed by EDAW in the plan for Fort Monmouth.

The SSAC proposes that the consideration be made toward moderate density housing which would fit with the plan put forth by EDAW rather than or in addition to single family homes being constructed. This would not impact the three towns negatively in terms of costs, no increase in taxes, no impact on schools, etc. It would simply subtract from the fair market housing number and in turn add that number to the number of self-help housing number for low income families. As an example, if the fair market value number is 100 take 25 and add it to homes that would be affordable in cost to the public. In that case, the plan would have 75 fair market value and 25 homes that are affordable in cost but are not considered COAH "affordable" housing. Habitat for Humanity would build the homes and hold the mortgages. The owners would pay fair market value taxes. SSAC suggests and encourages the towns to increase this type of self-housing housing that is affordable in costs to those in need to a minimum of 25 per town.

It should be the right of every person to be able to live with a decent roof over their head. The SSAC has heard countless accounts of individuals and families that are not able to live in a decent home or are turned away from emergency shelters due to lack of space. These accounts have also been recorded at the public FMERPA meetings. This not due to lack of work ethic or not being employed, it is due to a series of circumstances that cause them to deplete their savings, they temporarily lose their jobs or need a safe place to live with their children. The economic factors that currently exist in our country and specifically in our area certainly lend themselves to an environment that makes matters worse for those in need. We are in a position with the unfortunate closing of Fort Monmouth to truly make a difference in countless lives. We can and should try to make an impact on the woeful situation that exists in our area to alleviate the tremendous need for emergency, permanent / permanent supportive, and self-help housing - housing that is affordable in cost, but that is not considered as COAH defined "affordable" housing. It is the Social Services Advisory Committee desire to make that difference. It is a one time opportunity to make the closure of Fort Monmouth a renaissance rather than a finale.

There is much to be considered before a final plan can be realized in terms of the homeless and affordable housing. The SSAC hopes to continue working to meet the intended goals and objectives of the SSAC in a compassionate and equitable manner to reach a realistic outcome.

Comments for 6/24 Special Meeting of FMERPA

My name is Phil Welch, Jr. and I'm co-chair of the Monmouth Advocacy Team. I want to begin by thanking Rose Estephan and her Social Services Advisory Committee members for listening to the public members who attend her committee meetings. Rose, Laurie and Anna, as well as the FMERPA staff members, accepted suggestions to reach out to the NOI submitters, tour their facilities and develop a better understanding of the programs these agencies offer. Rose and the others did their best to create an atmosphere of cooperation and collaboration. It was frankly the only such ongoing forum for the exchange of ideas on solutions to housing-related issues.

At last week's SSAC meeting Rose shared some of the committee's preliminary recommendations regarding the need for homeless assistance housing including an indication of the types of homeless assistance NOIs which they believe should be "accepted."

I applaud Rose and her committee, as well as the FMERPA staff members, for recognizing the critical need for homeless assistance housing and supportive services.

I hope that the other FMERPA board members will recognize all of the work that this committee has put into this recommendation and support it, as appropriate.

I'd like to ask if now would be the appropriate time to offer an assessment of the recommendations or if I should wait until after the Resolution agenda item?

+++++

I'd like to offer a couple of observations that I made in the course of participating in both the FMERPA meetings and the SSAC meetings.

First, quantifying the need for services for individuals and families without permanent housing is a very challenging task. People who need these services are proud, embarrassed, frustrated and angry. Many of them are so discouraged or frightened that they really don't want to be surveyed.

In light of this, I think the County, under the leadership of Lynn Miller's organization, did about all they could to reach out to and speak with people during the Point-in-Time survey.

Plus, I will take it on faith that the authors of the committee's recommendations took steps to account for those who are homeless and may not have been counted.

I was very interested to hear that the preliminary numbers from January's P-I-T study showed an increase of about 66% in the number of families without homes (175 in 2007 to 290 in 2008). This is a trend of concern to us, because it may signal the leading edge of families affected by the mortgage crisis and unable to find any apartments that are within their price range.

I realize that the Fort cannot be expected to absorb all of the increase in homeless individuals and families within the county. However, I'm also aware of recent news stories saying that 1 in 4 homeless persons in this country are veterans. This is appalling! It also explains why there is federal legislation which gives priority to homeless assistance agencies when military bases are closed.

I'm still trying to understand how the bank of about 50-100 permanent supportive housing units would work, especially in the context of offering to negotiate legally-binding agreements with all of the homeless assistance NOI submitters.

While I might have hoped for higher numbers and an easier process to implement these recommendations, I think that they are a step in the right direction.

I have faith that with the continued involvement of the SSAC we will see an expansion in the numbers of individuals and families without homes that can be helped, both on an emergency basis as well as with permanent housing.

I am concerned that there is no provision for transitional housing programs in the recommendations of the committee. I realize that this is because of HUD's recent shift of funding and priority toward permanent supportive housing and away from transitional supportive housing.

However, after meeting yesterday with a number of organizations in the county which provide transitional supportive housing, I'm hopeful that the value of these programs will continue to be recognized and supported at the state, county and local levels, even if it is not supported federally.

Thank you.

Subject: [Fwd: FMERPA 6/24/08 Special Public Meeting at 7:30pm - NEW TIME]

From: Mahedy <shannoncasey@monmouth.com>

Date: Fri, 20 Jun 2008 09:19:40 -0400

To: Mahedy <shannoncasey@monmouth.com>

To: FMERPA Representatives, Board Representatives, Staff Members, Representatives from the Governors office and State Attorney Generals office, HUD, BRAC, Fort Monmouth Representatives and other concerned parties
Concerning the June 24, 2008 Special Public Meeting of FMERPA and the FMERPA resolution about the assistance to people without housing proposal to HUD

On Tuesday June 24, 2008 at Tinton Falls Municipal Building, 556 Tinton Ave. at 7:30pm there will be a special FMERPA PUBLIC MEETING. On the agenda is the FMERPA resolution concerning it's proposal to HUD concerning it's legal and mandated responsibility to respond to the tragedy of homelessness of many people, especially those in the area. With the closing of the Fort Monmouth the first priority is supposed to be responding to the need for housing for those without homes. There have been many questions concerning the response and lack of response of FMERPA and decision makers in responding to this legal mandate. There are questions of deliberate undercounting of the numbers of homeless persons. There are questions of the role of HUD as being that of housing and urban development or as housing and urban demolition. There are questions of HUD's role in demolition of public housing around the country from New Orleans to Newark and now to Fort Monmouth.

There are questions of HUD's collusion with the DOD and Army in stealing or misappropriating public housing and treasury assets and funds away from meeting these housing needs and towards war making and corporate war profiteering.

There are questions of FMERPA, their corporate contractors, and federal, state, county and local governments and their collusion in these decisions and away from their legally mandated responsibilities.

There are questions about the proposed demolition of hundreds of rehabilitated Fort Monmouth housing units and the decision to remove military families, fence off the area and turn off the gas in hopes of causing mold to grow.

There are questions of the treatment and of nonprofit organizations and others in their attempts to submit notices of intent to FMERPA and advocate for vulnerable, weak, hurt and/or abused people who are without homes.

There are questions about discrimination, the openness, transparency and equal treatment of all in this process. There are questions about equal access to information and decision makers.

There are questions about this June 24 so called special meeting. There are questions of the short notice and little publicity about it. There are questions whether FMERPA and others will contact all notice of intent submitters, organizations and advocates who have shown interest in and work with and advocate for people who are without homes about the special public meeting. There are questions about why FMERPA refuses to release the proposed resolution prior to the public meeting as is done in most government policy making thereby eliminating study and analysis and written responses for FMERPA representatives and others consider prior to any deliberation. There are questions of the actual purpose of the special meeting and the lack of explanation of it's purpose. There are questions of the executive session and it's content and lack of public observation. There are questions of FMERPA's interest of public input when there are discouraging FMERPA comments stating that it will be a very brief meeting before going into executive session.

There are questions about public access and the sincerity of FMERPA in including the public in these decisions. There are questions of legal ramifications for violating BRAC, HUD and FMERPA legal and ethical mandates.

We look forward to your response and dialogue concerning these issues before the June 24 meeting and at the June 24 meeting.

The Fort Monmouth Earth Renaissance Peace Alliance

www.fmerpa.us

shannoncasey@monmouth.com

Tom Mahedy

732-292-0662

June 20, 2008