



San Francisco SRO Task Force

1660 Mission Street, 6th Floor
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Members:

Rosemary Bosque, J.D.,
Chair
Department of Building
Inspection

Bruce Burge
SRO Operator

Angela Chu
Chinatown SRO
Collaborative

Seth Katzman
Director, Supportive Housing
& Community Services,
Conard House

Joyce Lam
Families in SROs
Collaborative

Victor Nelson
Tenant Representative

Johnson Ojo
DPH Environmental Health
Services

Sam Patel
SRO Operator

Charles Siron
Tenant Representative

Wolfgang Stuwe
DPH Housing & Urban
Health

Pratibha Tekkey
Central City SRO
Collaborative

Alex Tse, J.D.
City Attorney's Office

Joshua Vining
Mission SRO Collaborative

Scott Walton
Human Services Agency

SRO HOTEL HEALTH & SAFETY TASK FORCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES –June 21, 2012

1650 Mission Street, Room 431

Chair: Scott Walton

Members Present: Bruce Burge(SRO Operator); Angela Chu (Chinatown SRO Collaborative); Seth Katzman (Conard House); Joyce Lam (Families in SRO's Collaborative); Sam Patel (SRO Operator); Wolfgang Stuwe(DPH); Pratibha Tekkey(Central City SRO Collaborative); Alex Tse (City Attorney's Office); Joshua Vining(Mission SRO Collaborative); Scott Walton(HSA-Housing & Homeless Programs).

Absent: Excused: Rosemary Bosque (DBI); Victor Nelson(Tenant Representative); Dr. Johnson Ojo, Environmental Health(DPH); Charles Siron (Tenant Representative).

Guests: Doug Morss(Hotel Owner); Joseph Ossai, Environmental Health(DPH); Allan Pera, Environmental Health(DPH); Charles Pitts (SRO Tenant); Mark Salazar, Program Manager (Mental Health Association of San Francisco); Sandy Stark, Peer Responder (Mental Health Association of San Francisco); Wendy Yu, Peer Responder (Mental Health Association of San Francisco).

Minutes: Bernedette Perez (DBI-HIS)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Scott Walton at 9:10 AM.

2. Roll call/Determination of Quorum

There was a quorum.

3. Approval of May 17, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Review and approval continued to the next SRO Task Force Meeting of July 19, 2012.

Public Comment on Agenda Item No.3.

There was no public comment on Agenda Item No 3.

4. Administrative Announcements-Discussion

No Administrative Announcements

Public Comment for Agenda Item No. 4

There was no public comment on Agenda Item No. 4

**5. Presentation by Mark Salazar –Program Manager
San Francisco Mental Health Association regarding Mental Health Issues and Hoarding & Cluttering in SRO's- *Discussion and Action***

Mark Salazar gave overview of the services that are provided by the San Francisco Mental Health Association (SFMHA).

Mr. Salazar indicated that SFMHA is a private non-profit organization, that focuses on advocacy, education, policy, research, training; promoting awareness about mental health issues. The organization sponsors regular support groups for mental health consumers; coordinates depression screening; and workshops for consumers, family members and professionals. Mr., Salazar further explained that SFMHA represents the needs of people with mental illness at local policy meetings, and organizes consumers to advocate for mental health reform.

Mark Salazar also mentioned that SFMHA has five (5) current programs that include:

- PREP- Prevention and Recovery from Early Psychosis
- SOLVE- Sharing our Lives: Voice and Experiences
- PRT-Peer Response Team
- Dignity and Recovery Center
- ICHC-Institute on Compulsive Hoarding and Cluttering

Mark Salazar stated that SFMHA sponsors an internationally recognized annual conference on compulsive hoarding and cluttering. The most recent conference (which occurred on April 26 & 27 2012) drew professionals from all over the world included Canada, Australia, and the United States. The conference contained 16 breakout sessions, 3 keynote speakers, and a poster/research session. The conference also received national and local media attention by the Huffington Post, ABC Good Morning America, SF Gate and CBS 5.

Mr. Salazar informed the Task force membership that SFMHA offers consulting to other non-profits and local governments on how to set up programs to reduce eviction and homelessness due to compulsive hoarding, and that MHASF has a Peer Response Team Program that provides services as well. Mr. Salazar further stated that SFMHA received training with Michael Tompkins, author of **"Digging Out: Helping Your Loved One Manage Clutter, Hoarding, and Compulsive Acquiring"** on how to effectively approach family members, nurses, and services providers.

Sandy Stark (SFMHA Peer Responder) was introduced to the Task Force membership. She explained the Peer Team's extensive training and services. She further commented that clearing out a tenants' room is a work in progress. This does not happen overnight because the process is so overwhelming to the tenant. She stressed the importance of responders not being judgmental, and properly addressing the client's disabilities such as impaired hearing, , etc.

Sandy Stark introduced Wendy Yu, (SFMHA Peer Responder) who described some distinguishing characteristics to consider when addressing a hoarder situation: (1) realize that hoarders generally collect something they are attached to, (2) hoarding can be due to trauma, (3) items can be collected over several years, (3) hoarders have a tendency to personalize things, invest in them, (4) feelings of future needs impels some to hoard, (5) sorting, labeling, boxing these items can be overwhelming especially in small living spaces such as an SRO guest room, and (6) helping to organize a space with shelves, hooks, etc., can assist a tenant in keeping track of their belongings.

Mark Salazar informed the Task Force membership that the Peer Response Team is on-call to assist with any problems associated with compulsive hoarding and cluttering, in that they are anchors to assist clients, and family members to maintain focus in addressing hoarding issues.

Scott Walton asked if there were any questions from the Task Force members.

Wolfgang Stuwe stated that he receives calls from persons who want help, and asked if they have any programs for those who have been evicted.

Mark Salazar said that they can provide information and assistance, if the tenant is facing eviction.

Mark Salazar recommended the book, **"Digging Out: Helping Your Loved One Manage Clutter, Hoarding, and Compulsive Acquiring"** as a resource. The book provides information on how to manage harm reduction etc.

Seth Katzman asked what the meaning of harm reduction.

Mark Salazar explained through citing an example of using devices like painter's tape to set boundaries, of what can and cannot go into specific areas to provide open areas around stoves, fire exits, etc.

Public Comment on Agenda Item #5

Charles Pitts commented that the solution is to address issues and process. He suggested there should be clear standards and recommendations on what needs to be done, and ensure that there is access to a window. He also said that it would be helpful to have support groups in SRO's. Charles Pitts also recommended a recycling program, and shelves available in SRO's.

6. Continuing Discussion on Challenges & Target Issues related to Bed Bug Infestation- Discussion & Action

Scott Walton commented on the revised additions, and mentioned the biggest changes are on Page 6 & 7 in that the recommendations were organized into three (3) sections:

- Bed Bug Education
- Code Enforcement Issues
- Services needed to Support Bed Bug Abatement and Eradication.

Seth Katzman asked if the Task Force had written the Bed Bug report.

Scott Walton commented that after the previous meetings he had sent suggestions to Rosemary Bosque regarding separating Code Enforcement from other agencies, and on Page 7 under Recommendations to support abatement.

Seth Katzman commented that under Services needed to Support Bed Bug Abatement and Eradication.

- Item. No. 1. The City should explore be changed to the City should provide funding.
- Item No. 2. It should read, "The City should provide dedicated resources".

And under Recommendations-Code Enforcement Issues

- Item No. 4 Strike out Issues
- Item No. 7 we are not specific on well development strategy
- Item No. 8 Who should review the Administrative Code?

Alex Tse commented that there is no one who reviews the Administrative code.

Seth Katzman suggested that DBI should review the Administrative Code.

Scott Walton commented on the relocation fees being a challenge for some.

Seth Katzman asked what City department oversees the Rent Board.

Sam Patel said that the Board of Supervisors oversees the Rent Board, and that they cannot do anything about the relocation fees.

Scott Walton said that he will check with DPH & DBI, and the Rent Board regarding the relocation fees, if a guest room is required to have treatment, does the relocation fee create a burden in abating the issue.

Seth Katzman asked if DPH should be the designated Department to enforce and abate.

Scott Walton commented that he will take these questions back to the agencies, so that the Task Force can better define the process in Items No's 2 & 8.

Sam Patel commented on Page 7, Item No. #6 pillows should read, pillows need to be encased.

Public Comment for Agenda Item #6

Charles Pitts commented that there should be an extra burden on DPH to provide standards and information in communicating with the tenants.

Alex Tse queried what did Item #5 Page 7 mean?

Scott Walton commented that DPH does have a time frame, and that it is a standard 10-20 days.

Alex Tse stated that the City should expedite the time frame in response and abatement, and the code enforcement should be amended to allow that change to happen which would coincide with Item #8 Page 7.

7. Reports from SRO Collaboratives-*Discussion & Action*

Families in SRO Collaborative:

Joyce Lam commented that the seniors in SRO's workgroup will be following up on a hearing that focused on presenting working with the community, and meeting with different departments that may be able to serve seniors and people with disabilities.

Angela Chu commented that the Collaborative is working with one case where there is commercial space and they are not usually noticed of this change of foreclosure. She further commented that the market is getting tighter, and there are people looking to move into SRO's, and that the rents are rising to \$600.00-\$700.00 per month, and that there should be programs to assist low income families.

Mission SRO Collaborative:

Josh Vining commented that he has seen rents rise in the Mission.

Scott Walton asked if there were any public comments on Agenda Item #7.

Public Comment on Agenda Item #7

Charles Pitts asked what the percentages in SRO's were.

Josh Vining responded that we do not have exact numbers, because it is a challenge to access these hotels, so in turn it makes it difficult to count exact numbers, and he mentioned that the Collaborative conducts monthly meetings where they take in complaints, and do community outreach.

8. Prioritization of Future Meetings Topics – *Discussion & Possible Action*

Scott Walton commented that we will continue to add to the Bed Bug report, and if anyone has comments or suggestion they should email Rosemary Bosque.

Scott Walton asked for suggestions on how to approach the topic Violence in SRO's.

Seth Katzman commented that this is a hard topic to approach which the Task Force should discuss, and make plans on who would speak on this issue.

Angela Chu stated that there are many issues in SRO's regarding violence. The Task Force should provide information on how to help tenants get along in a common place without getting into a violent situation. She suggested that it would help non-profit providers build a working relationship among the tenants.

Scott Walton suggested involving the Senior Action Network, and having desk clerks available to help reduce persons who do not live in the building.

Sam Patel suggested on adding to the Task Force agenda relocation issues within the building, and stated that when a landlord can move a tenant, to provide an agreement in writing, & to improve the quality of life in SRO's.

9. General Public Comment

Public Comment on Agenda Item #8

Wendy Yu suggested that persons with disabilities have available to them grab bars inside the toilet stalls, and showers, installation of higher commodes, and screen doors that swing outward so to be more accessible for persons with wheelchairs.

Charles Pitts commented that there should be safety throughout the building, and have de-escalation techniques provided to managers/landlord/owners, and to update policy and procedures on how to deal with rodents, and noise within the building which can sometimes trigger anger.

Alex Tse stated that he will be leaving the City Attorney's office for an opportunity to work at the U.S. District Attorney's office, and his leave will take place at the end of July.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35AM.