



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

Yvonne Mere, J.D.
City Attorney's Office

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

Joshua Vining
Mission SRO Collaborative

Scott Walton
Human Services Agency

SRO HOTEL HEALTH & SAFETY TASK FORCE COMMITTEE MINUTES –August 16, 2012

1650 Mission Street, Room 431

Chair: Rosemary Bosque

Members Present: Bruce Burge(SRO Operator); Angela Chu (Chinatown SRO Collaborative); Joyce Lam (Families in SRO's Collaborative); Victor Nelson(Tenant Representative); Dr. Johnson Ojo, Environmental Health(DPH); Sam Patel (SRO Operator); Charles Siron (Tenant Representative); Pratibha Tekkey(Central City SRO Collaborative); Joshua Vining(Mission SRO Collaborative);

Absent: Excused: Seth Katzman (Conard House); Scott Walton (HSA-Housing & Homeless Programs).

Unexcused: Wolfgang Stuwe (DPH)

Guests: Eldon Brown; Johanna Coble; Charles Pitts, Amy Synder.

Minutes: Bernedette Perez (DBI-HIS)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Rosemary Bosque at 9:12 AM.

2. Roll call/Determination of Quorum

There was a quorum.

3. Approval of the June 21, 2012 Meeting Minutes

The review and approval of Meeting Minutes for June 21, 2012 with changes.

Sam Patel commented on Page 4, last sentence should read, "should not be encased".

Motion to approve the Meeting Minutes for June 21, 2012.

Approval of the July 19, 2012 Meeting Minutes

The approval of July 19, 2012 Meeting Minutes was held over until next SRO Task Force meeting September 20, 2012.

Public Comment on Agenda Item No.3.

There was no public comment on Agenda Item No 3.

4. Administrative Announcements-Discussion

Rosemary Bosque stated that Agenda Item #7 SRO Collaborative Reports will be held over until the next SRO Task Force Meeting September 20, 2012.

Public Comment for Agenda Item No. 4

There was no public comment on Agenda Item No. 4

5. Discussion Regarding (Independent) Bed Bug Work Group Proposed legislation related to Bed Bug Infestation-*Discussion & Possible Action*

Rosemary Bosque stated that Agenda Item #5 will be continued to the next SRO Task Force meeting on September 20, 2012.

Josh Vining stated that Mattias Mormino will be at the next SRO Task Force meeting in September to inform the members regarding the proposed Legislation.

Rosemary Bosque commented that collectively the Task Force will provide information to the Clerk of the Board in final form, and that will include the challenges, recommendations from the Task Force so that the Board will have a point of reference to address this legislation.

Public Comment on Agenda Item #5

Charles Pitts recommended on Section 21, Page 3 of the proposed legislation be amended to include monthly meetings that would consist of bed bug abatement discussions, and clearer standards in eradicating bedbugs.

6. Stake Holder Discussion of Issues & Challenges related to Building Security and Violence Prevention in SRO's -*Discussion & Possible Action*

Rosemary Bosque asked that the Task Force members for discussion, suggestions, and recommendations beginning with members of the following groups owners/operators, managers, non-profits, tenants and collaboratives.

Sam Patel, representing SRO owners and operators began the discussion with characterizing violence in the hotels as stemming from two factors the first tenants are living closely with in confined spaced, coupled and behavioral or mental issues. In his experiences he stated that he found the visitor policies to be a hindrance because of undesirable people can be lead into the hotels. He further commented that he and others have they have tried to minimize this problem by installing cameras, and making calls to the police department.

Rosemary Bosque asked whether the owner/operators were using an access card system to enable their tenants to access the hotels.

Bruce Burge stated that they have them installed in his residential hotels. He further stated that this helps in making copies. They are constantly changing the access codes to gain access to hotels

Sam Patel stated that fire escapes are another unauthorized access which can lead to violence in the SRO's.

Bruce Burge said that his operation only contacts SFPD in extreme cases. He further stated that if an owner/manager continually contacts the SFPD the property could be labeled as a nuisance.

Bruce Burge stated that there is an ongoing problem with tenants who are selling drugs, in the SRO's, customers come and go in the building constantly, and it is impossible to evict these tenants because of rent control. He further commented that once you do evict these tenants it takes a long time to have them actually leave the premises, usually 60-90 days.

SRO HOTEL HEALTH & SAFETY TASK FORCE COMMITTEE
August 16, 2012 Meeting Minutes
Page 3

Charles Siron commented that he has seen these same problems in his building. He stated that tenants who are afraid to come out of their rooms when the drug activity is occurring. He also mentioned that they have cameras viewing every angle, but people still gain access into the building.

Victor Nelson stated that at the Altamont Hotel, and people are living in close proximity, with mental health issues, and other issues, and sometimes they turn to drugs and violence when they have a feeling of hopelessness, and their request for help are not met.

Josh Vining commented that he has had experience with tenants, who have mental health issues, and those who work at night. When these converge into violence he has noticed that the SFPD does not typically file police reports. He stated that this makes it difficult for follow-up, and obtaining needed restraining orders.

Pratibha Tekkey said that there is a sense of community in non-profit hotels, and that the violence is lower because there are case managers involved with the tenants.

Rosemary Bosque commented that the Task Force will invite someone from the SFPD, to answer questions that the Task Force may have regarding violence in SRO's, and how SFPD handles these types of complaints.

Victor Nelson indicated that there is a problem with private and non-profits SRO's hotels when tenants are evicted, and they sneak into the SRO hotel.

Rosemary Bosque asked when these evicted individuals return to the hotels, where are they residing/sleeping. The members stated that they have observed these individuals sleeping in hallways, bathrooms, fire escape exits.

Joyce Lam stated that in the Chinatown the tenant demographic is different. The residential hotels are primarily occupied by extended families including seniors and children for long periods of time. She further commented that when the police are called regarding violent incidence in the hotels it takes two or more hours for them to respond.

Angela Chu stated that violence can occur in hotel common areas such as community kitchens where fights can occur over kitchen cleanup etc.

Rosemary Bosque asked DPH's Dr. Ojo if he had any comments on this matter.

Dr. Ojo stated that some owners/operators are not responsive to complaints from tenants especially if a fight erupts in the common areas such as kitchens.

Angela Chu mentioned that they have had an experience where fights have erupted because of slaughtering poultry in the kitchen.

SRO HOTEL HEALTH & SAFETY TASK FORCE COMMITTEE

August 16, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Page 4

Dr. Ojo said that if there was a large number of chickens' being slaughtered this could be a violation of the Health Code, and those hotels owner/operators and tenants can contact DPH for further investigation.

Charles Siron commented that this has been a problem has gone unresolved for years.

Charles Siron commented that when tenants do have problems within their rooms they are afraid to complain because of retaliation from the landlord.

Sam Patel commented that the Tenderloin Police station holds monthly meetings.

Josh Vining stated that when the members of the Mission Collaborative visit SRO's to do outreach they are aware of the potential violent incidence. He explained for this reasons collaborative members stay within sight of each other.

Public Comment for Agenda Item #6

Charles Pitts commented that he moved into the Essex Hotel, and the Police came when there were violent occurrences. He suggested that the Task Force bring SFPD and the mobile crisis unit to a Task Force meeting to explore their involvement in these issues.

Amy Synder suggested that violence in the SRO's can be minimized by providing activities such as yoga, basketball games, and other programs to service SRO tenants.

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

Rosemary Bosque stated that Agenda Item #7 will be held over to the next SRO Task Force meeting.

Public Comment on Agenda Item #7

There was no public comment on Agenda Item #7.

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

Rosemary Bosque commented that additional research will be needed regarding relocation fees, and she will contact the Rent Board for a guest speaker to educate the Task Force as it relates to the Rent Ordinance.

Public Comment on Agenda Item #8

Charles Pitts commented that he would like to see the future agenda item list put back onto the Agenda, he felt it was very helpful. He also stated that the Task Force should have a discussion of noise complaints within the SRO's and ask what type of violations could be written up regarding noise.

9. General Public Comment

Eldon Brown asked the Task Force what designated a hotel as obtaining a poor condition rating under the City MOU.

Rosemary Bosque explained that the MOU being referred to was no longer in effect. She further stated that the previous good fair, and poor ratings where subjective, and that today Housing Inspectors rate in terms of years until the next inspection, i.e., one to two years, three to four years, five years until the next routine inspection.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:30AM.