

Key takeaways from the 19 June meeting of the Safe homes and Neighborhoods Taskforce.

After creating a less functional workaround to the technical difficulties, the meeting proceeded. Ed suggested that workgroup 2 identify the process that a wrap around case manager would follow in encouraging a client to move from homelessness to shelter.

Mayor Drnek Identified the three workgroups of the Safe Homes and Neighborhoods Committee:

1. Neighborhood Engagement - Increase community involvement and education in support of public safety and implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)
2. Community Partnership - Explore, determine, and facilitate processes to expand wrap-around services and accountability for Oneonta's at-risk population.
3. Shelter and Support - Enhance accountability and reduce Oneonta's unsheltered population with additional facilities and services inside and outside of the City.

He then discussed efforts to advocate for community safety and support public safety through neighborhood involvement and environmental design and education and the need for wrap around services using the Utica Mission as a model.

Wendy Goetz, Executive Director of the Rescue of Mission Utica, outlined the following services and facilities that the Mission offers:

- Addiction Stabilization Center
- Emergency Shelter Enriched Living Center – mental illness program
- Parker House Aftercare - residential recovery
- West Street Apartments – quality, affordable housing
- Clothing Program
- Community Meal Program
- Butala Food Pantry
- Drop In Center
- Representative-Payee
- Thread of Life Thrift Store

Stefan Marikovics, Housing Commission Chair, discussed the Housing Commission's efforts to address housing issues, including creating affordable housing and addressing the need for market rate housing to create more affordable housing as residents move up from one level to another. The discussion then shifted to the challenges of bringing affordable housing to the city, with Mayor Drnek emphasizing the importance of feedback and the involvement of workgroups in determining building locations as well as the potential use of various buildings in the city. Toya Lane discussed the services provided by the homeless shelter on Depew Street, mentioning that the facility offers many services to the community at large including the playground.

Ed discussed the importance of the Neighborhood Stewards Program in bringing communities together and preventing issues in neighborhoods.

Ed mentioned successful programs and funding opportunities, highlighting the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) initiatives offer a holistic approach by addressing the root causes of homelessness, such as substance abuse, mental health issues, and lack of job skills. These programs provide housing, counseling, job training, and other supportive services to foster long-term recovery and self-sufficiency. He stressed the need to apply for funds and resources available for various programs. Valerie Adams expressed her interest in getting involved with group training and shared her experience in funding services through her previous work at United Way.

Elayne Mosher-Campbell mentioned a recent call to City Hall reporting how a stranger had taken a drink from a resident's garden hose and asking how we could get water to the unsheltered. Toya responded that OFO provides water at the Homeless Shelter to anyone who asks for it.

The meeting concluded at 6:33.