



**Broome County Safe Housing Task Force – Core Group
Monday, April 8, 2-3pm
Meeting Minutes**

Attendees: Mayor Rich David (Binghamton), Mayor Greg Deemie (Johnson City), Supervisor Rick Materese (Union), County Executive Jason Garnar, Legislator Mary Kaminsky, Christina Cramer (BC Executive’s Office), Mark Schuster (Co-Chair – BC Health Department), Rebecca Rathmell (Co-Chair – Southern Tier Homeless Coalition)

1. Protocol and Policy Recommendations (see document)
 - a. Beginning with **Protections** in order to ensure policy recommendations do not adversely impact the population we hope to serve.
 - i. This starts with the SOI legislation, which New York State passed last month. Seeing the effective application of this will require local support – TF recommends local Charter amendments to support the expanded State protections. Written in the BC Fair Housing Law to be proposed is a mechanism to continue Task Force discussions as an Advisory Board; this indicates Fair Housing as a community priority and ensures it will continue to be a priority. Outreach and education about expanded protections. A full-time staff would be beneficial as we continue searching for funding for that. Note: Advisory Board will not be responsible for enforcement.
 - ii. Expansion of CNY Fair Housing to Broome County – the enforcement piece. Estimated \$12,000 for 350 on-site hours of intake/investigative support and 2 pair of testers. MK asked about deliverables for that time/money.
 - iii. Eviction prevention protocol shifts have already started happening thanks to DSS and municipal Code engagement in the Task Force. The stop rent notice to landlords and tenants now include legal information, including contact for legal services. Continual discussions are happening with judicial representatives. Exploring leases as a preventive measure has been discussed, but TF hasn’t yet reached a consensus to support recommending it.
 - iv. Inclusionary Zoning is based on The Agency’s Housing Study; pushes further to prioritizing – whether via mandate or incentivize – below market rate rental development. Demand at other levels has been met.



Task Force next steps on fully developing this plan is discussion with The Agency and County Planning on what this looks like and how we incentivize this. JG asked about specific numbers of units needed – RR discussed student homelessness numbers to estimate that number (900 students, 600-700 units). Why are student housing development/conversion projects still moving forward when there is data that demand is met? How do we catch those? RD discusses how the City has stopped giving PILOTs to student housing, but The Agency can do so. GD ask about Century Sunrise in JC, which technically reaches low/moderate income. Closest to the goal in the County right now.

- b. Moving to ***Strategic Development***
 - i. Municipal involvement in County Tax Foreclosure Auction must be flexible. Providing lists to local municipalities for code review, etc. will be lists A and B, based on secured vs in process properties. This allows all interested parties to look at strategic possibilities. Who are the non-profits that can access state funds that munis can partner with on these projects? Fighting the “not my back yard” rhetoric at a local level.
 - ii. Non-Profit Partnerships
 - iii. Landlord Engagement and Responsible Referrals – with all the rental assistance from all the municipal levels, not a single program employs a designated housing specialist. Having a single person to assist in maneuvering the system, the housing market, their rights as a tenant, etc. That person would also engage with the landlord population, especially those who are responsible. DSS could put in applications from some of these State funds for a specialist. JG asks for job description and successes in other municipalities.
 - iv. Establishing a *Relocation Assistance Program*
 - v. BCDSS Landlord List has been revised to include a disclaimer that landlord are not endorsed by DSS. Code enforcement contact information is included.
- c. Final goal is to ***improve quality*** of current housing stock.
 - i. Data sharing and rental registration have all been discussed. Single recommendation agreed upon was the municipal exchange of code information through software Muncity 5 – COB already has, TOU and JC would require annual subscription.
 - ii. Strengthening information sharing between all departments has happened as the Task Force has been meeting. There’s always room



for improvement, but the coming together biweekly has been beneficial to continuing those conversations.

iii. Continued discussion re: administrative violations approach and County-wide rental registration

d. Targeted Support

2. Next Steps

- a. Workgroup will meet again to complete BC Fair Housing Law; Final draft to be proposed to BC Leg by June.
 - i. Executive Committee support crucial. Legislator engagement to begin ASAP.
- b. RR to provide CNY Fair Housing deliverable estimate, unit deficit data, and job description for Housing Specialist.
- c. EC members to consider whether there is room in their municipalities for recommendations proposed.