

SASY Report on Union Corners meeting called by Outreach, Inc.

Date of meeting: March 28, 2013

submitting report - jsteines

Attending: Housing specialists for Independent Living Rita Giovannoni, Project Home staff Kate G, New Harvest Foundation staff (independent local lgbt granting agency), Outreach Senior Living Coordinator Caroline Werner, Outreach Director Steve Starkey, Gary Karch, John Steines, Parisi staff member, Kyle Richmond, Madison Senior Center and Gorman rep Joe Schwenker.

Purpose (goal) of meeting: Meeting called by Steve Starkey and Caroline Werner of Outreach Inc. Determine if there is sufficient interest and need to pursue LGBT Senior Housing as component of housing mix. This project has the potential for becoming a national model for LGBT senior housing while serving residents from throughout Wisconsin.

The Outreach LGBT Community Center, Gorman Construction Company (the developer of the Union Corners site) and Independent Living, Inc. have had initial discussions about this potential project and are convening this meeting to consider the possibilities for creating a facility that would offer a continuum of care and be LGBT-friendly.

National Research has shown that LGBT seniors are likely to have more health challenges than their heterosexual counterparts and have fewer resources to address these challenges for a variety of social reasons beyond their control. Income disparities (documented by the Wisconsin Women's Network) affect their retirement housing options. LGBT seniors are now recognized by the federal government as a vulnerable population (no money is associated with designation).

It is our hope that we can have an open dialogue on topics such as what such a concept should look like, how it would operate, the desirability of such a facility and who the target residents should be.

Action items: None

Specific issue(s) to report to council: Housing is up to five (5) years out as Gorman will be focused on Clinic construction issues as Phase I, once negotiations with city of Madison are completed. Gorman is open to co-housing model. Housing mix and location is not fixed at this time. Public \$'s do not exist for affordable housing at this time so affordability may be gained by use of micro units, co-housing, etc., dependant on market surveys, needs and lobbying of neighborhoods.

Independent Living interested in a unit with 40-60 units minimum. Intent letters signed by Willy Street Coop. Hawthorne Library remains interested (current lease expires – unsure of detail (several years or less, I think). SASY probably not interested in LGBT only housing but prefer integrated setting with friendly design and staff makeup. Not interested in all housing at Union Corners being senior only, for instance, but some seniors will benefit from dedicated building space separated from other age groups while others will prefer to be fully integrated within building mixes. Idea is that the surrounding community can help to influence the meeting of social needs for queer/lgbt population to reflect a welcoming environment. Current sensitivity level of staff in existing centers to queer/lgbt issues is considered low despite beginning targeted training. Most queer/lgbt seniors find themselves isolated in such settings. Most surveyed seniors identify as lgbt, but queer is used to include broader age and make up mix (evolving term).

Most units now designed with aging in place model in mind so that residents in regular housing can continue to live in same location but with support services added as needed. Location of Outreach Inc and Goodman Center viewed as community assets to build upon plus dedicated bus lines planned for East Washington will support needed connectivity with downtown or other shopping centers. Employee base is located nearby. Counseling clinic to be added to UW clinic plan so other independent/nonprofit counseling groups may be able to partner.

Recommendation(s) to council: SASY work with Marsha, Gorman and city to plan follow up meetings with neighborhood through Union Corners Committee or P & D Committee. Work with Hawthorne Library building plan for senior housing above Library as one option. Can SASY plan a preliminary info gathering meeting to speak with some of the interested parties in housing at UC to identify interested parties specific needs (plan to plan)? Suggestions might include: Independent Living for aging in place discussion (above eventual Library), maybe some shelter needs above Willy coop along with their corporate offices (bunk house, dorm style rooms - say Youth Services of Southern Wisconsin proposal dropped for WPNA relocated to UC - they are already located at Schenk Corners but need more space, work training support program, hostel), co-housing - locate south street side of back triangle, family/condo/rental back side (triangle point & edge)? Possibility of small queer youth and trans support housing in mix. It would be good to understand the needs of each service area and desires of community before moving to second stage which might be planning a public discussion/charettes. Push for increased density.

Discussion items at board meeting: None.

Next meeting: None planned