

**Humboldt Gardens CAC Meeting**  
**Thursday March 23, 2006**  
**Meeting Summary**

**CAC members and alternates attending:**

Lee Moore, HAP Commissioner and Co-Chair; Lela Clay, resident and Co-Chair; Deona Waters, resident; Adriana Larraga-Garcia, residents; Nancy Clark & Paul Anthony, Humboldt Neighborhood Assoc.; Shannon Ward, neighbor; Sgt. Jeff Morris, NE Precinct; Lynn Thompson, Big-Brothers Big Sisters; Lennie Edwards, Jefferson High School; Carolyn Brown, Albina Rotary; Christina Dirks, Legal Aid; Daniel Ledezma, Portland BHCD; Rick Denhart, Our United Villages/Rebuilding Center; Donna Marshall, Salvation Army; Dorothy Fuller, Oregon Dept. of Human Services.

**Guests:** Leila Gavros, former Columbia Villa resident (panelist); Ken Dodge, PCC (panelist); Kathy Brooks, resident; Terry McLain, former Columbia Villa resident (panelist); Micky Ryan (former NC CAC member and Legal Aid attorney); Callie Henry, resident; Maggie Brister-Mashia, Brister & Associates (panelist).

**HAP staff and project consultants:**

Mike Andrews; Alecia Blakely; Michael Buonocore; Sharetta Butcher; Myriam Demezas; Arelene Gregoroy; Pamela Kambur; John Keating; Veronica King; Shelley Marchesi; Chrissy McCausland; Terry Peters; Margaret Van Vliet; Carolyn Wilson (Walsh Construction); Cathey Briggs (meeting facilitator).

38 attendees – light dinner provided by Nicola's Pizza and Italian Restaurant (4826 N. Lombard)

**Welcome and Introductions:** No public comment at the start of the meeting

**Project Director's Update**

First design workshop was held on March 4<sup>th</sup> at OAME located on N. Vancouver. This was the kickoff to meet the design team. There were 3 small groups to allow for everyone to talk and interact with various members of design team. Next design workshop, April 1<sup>st</sup> (flyer)

Next month's CAC meeting topic will be Affordable Homeownership. On April 4<sup>th</sup> there will be a neighborhood discussion on homeownership scheduled at OAME (flyer).

The Iris Court/Humboldt Gardens CMGC contractors have been selected. Walsh Construction, in an innovative partnership with CJ Jackson, has been selected. They have worked together at New Columbia and bring a solid team forward for this project. As a follow-up to suggestions at the last CAC meeting regarding potential student involvement and using the site as a "learning lab", the CMGC team is proud to announce a partnership with Jefferson High School to provide youth internship opportunities.

This month's topic is Relocation, Community & Supportive Services (CSS), Reoccupancy. Cathey Briggs will be facilitating. She helped last summer with the grant proposal and also assisted on various other projects with Iris Court.

A Services Workgroup will be March 29<sup>th</sup> at Salvation Army Moore Street Community Center. This will be a workgroup on what services can be offered to residents and all CAC members are invited to attend.

**Relocation Presentation:** John Keating – Assistant Director of Community-Building – with Chrissy McCausland, Relocation Coordinator, presented. The 1<sup>st</sup> big task is relocation of the

Iris Cluster. The Relocation Team has started working with residents. The relocation and CSS teams are currently on-site. The questions most asked of the relocation team are:

- When do I have to go?
- Where am I going?
- Who pays for it?

**When do I have to go?** Relocation officially starts June 2006 so that families are not uprooted while the kids are still in school. Some of the seniors and some single people would like to move now, so the team has started offering an early-move process. The entire relocation process will be complete by the end of October. The Relocation Team for New Columbia relocated 382 households in 6 months and there are less than 1/3 the number of households at Iris Court.

The relocation team has regular hours of operation at Iris Court. Residents and CAC members are all welcome to stop by and visit. Just under 50% of families wanted to move early, so relocation is moving along already.

**Where am I going?** There are a lot of choices

- Other public housing sites – residents can transfer from one public housing complex to another .
- New Columbia – these are brand new, never-lived-in apartments for occupancy; 20-25 families from Iris Court are already thinking of moving to New Columbia.
- Section 8 vouchers – HUD has provided special vouchers and the Rent Assistance department has set aside 98 for Iris Ct. Cluster residents only.

**Who pays for the move?** HAP pays for the move. This payment will include all expenses to find, apply, and move into a new home. The ways payment can be made are:

- A lump sum payment where the household gets one big check and then moves themselves.
- Utilize one of the moving companies under contract to HAP for this project. They will move everything for the resident. For Seniors and Disabled residents, movers will even pack everything for them.

**Panelists Mickey Ryan; Terry McLain; Leila Gavros; Ken Dodge; Maggie Brister –**

**New Columbia Relocation Experience:** One individual said he had always hated moving. When he found out he had to, HAP made it so easy to do that he couldn't believe it. His family used the HAP moving company and it was very easy. While looking for a place he was allowed gas money to help him search. When moving back, the only option was the lump sum option and he said it went very well. His family had plenty of money to move, and HAP even took the deposit out of the lump sum so they only had to pay rent when they returned.

Another resident was very nervous about moving & resistant. She started looking in areas and interviewing schools for her son. Wanted to be sure to get the education she wanted for her son; how many kids in the area; how many cats and dogs; etc. She took very proactive steps in moving.

**What might be improved upon (Panelists):** One resident said it went so successfully that he doesn't think it could be improved upon. Staff still stays in touch with him. The second resident echoes that answer. It was a struggle by some residents to be able to decide whether to go to Section 8 or stay with Public Housing. Most didn't know much about Section 8 and they may need to get more information. One of the residents went from Public Housing to Section 8 back to Public Housing – he had to pay a water bill for the first time in a long time. His CSS worker

was able to help with this. One of our CSS partners said it is necessary minimize anxieties of the families moving. Staff needs to put a bit more time into easing anxiety for clients.

<b>Relocation</b>	
<b>Relocation Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
- What about utility deposits coming and going?	- HAP pays all deposits and transfer fees unless they are caused by back balances. Then HAP works with the utility company to resolve the back balance by payment plan. The \$16.50 transfer fee is also paid by HAP.
- What happens to someone who chooses Section 8	- S8 recipients get help to find housing. Case management to solve problem.
- What happens to current security deposit?	- If the resident chooses Public Housing, it transfers to another Public Housing property. If they are going to Section 8, the Public Housing deposit will be returned and can be used for deposits to private landlords.
- How do residents see new housing?	- Staff drives, provides bus tickets, childcare.
- What happens to residents who need a lot of assistance?	- HAP contracted with special moving service (e.g. Todd's Moving) Also CSS and relo staff
- What about the school transportation impact on kids?	- School stability specialist helps describe choices. Helped families navigate.

**CSS Presentation:** Michael Buonocore began the overview. When relocation ends, CSS continues on until after the families are moved back for a period of time to the new property. This team assists with crises that arise, and move the adults along on a self-sufficiency continuum; including continuing education, moving into living wage employment, potential homeownership, etc. There are many community partners that help with this goal.

There is currently one full-time CSS Family Program Specialist onsite to work with families. The CSS Team Lead is spending about 50% of her time at Iris Court. They help determine what the families need to work toward self-sufficiency. The School Stability Specialist will work with families with kids again for Iris Court. CSS will be adding one more Family Program Specialist in the next few months.

The draft of the CSS Workplan is available tonight to the committee. Everyone is also invited to next week's Services Work Group meeting on 3/29 for even more detail. There are two ways for this CAC committee to get involved; take a draft and read it. Then give feedback to Michael Buonocore. Also come to meeting next Wednesday and bring your comments and questions so they can be addressed.

Arlene Gregory continued with the CSS portion of the meeting as follows. The CSS team does an assessment on each adult in the family; they get to participate in setting their own goals; staff meets them where they are at that moment and don't set the bar higher than can be attained.

**New Columbia CSS Experience (Panelists):** One partner said that there is great success/strength in individuals involved; great hiring of staff and impassioned staff for families. Staff had good knowledge of their families; strong lines of communication.

This is a well-thought out process; there are specialists in different areas for when specific issues arise. There is an assigned staff person for every family, but the families still had access to entire team. Clients relocating had added resources to help move their lives further along.

A resident agrees they "meet you where you are at". The patience of her CSS worker was great; a perfect match-up of herself and Arlene. The other resident panelist said that if his CSS worker hadn't seen him for a while, she would contact him to be sure everything was going fine.

The legal aid panelist heard mostly from residents. She was worried people wouldn't want to share information with CSS staff because they were also the landlord, but trust building was great between staff and families. Watch for building a trust level. Can the matching be as perfect with smaller staff at IC?

Our education partner said that partners needed to communicate better with the CSS staff about opportunities that are available to all the clients. Is there a way to disseminate information from partners to CSS staff easier and quicker? A structure needs to be in place to allow for better communication.

<b>CSS</b>	
<b>CSS Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What was ratio of CSS to families?</li>   <li>- Are scattered site residents on same timeline &amp; benefits?</li>   <li>- Is the HAP tracking software accessible?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Depending on specialty-25 families</li> <li>- 50-60 families per case manager at New Columbia</li> <li>- HG Draft plan 1:55 w/additional support</li> <li>- Benefits will be the same- timeline will follow Iris Court relocation</li> <li>- Homeownership plan will include relocation</li> <li>- Staff will track scattered site residents- (Although activity may not be reflected in the CSS plan)</li> <li>- Website gives a preview; actual database is confidential and available to case managers</li> </ul>

**OCCUPANCY & REOCCUPANCY:** John Keating spoke to 4<sup>th</sup> question from resident: Do I get to come back? A big concern is that some Hope VI projects move out and never get to come back. This has happened across the country. This will not happen at Humboldt Gardens. Reoccupancy is the people that left the property, and are coming back to the new property.

Occupancy is a new resident that is from the community. Reoccupants have “1<sup>st</sup> dibs” to coming back. One major question from families is wanting to know if there is a screening to return or move to the property. The answer to this is “yes” so that everyone is screened in the same way when they apply or decide to move back to Humboldt Gardens. Families will know that we have taken a good look at returning families.

A new HUD requirement is a self-sufficiency plan for reoccupancy. Staff needs to get families on the path toward self-sufficiency by helping them to further their education, improve their employment or unemployment status, etc. The Iris Court grant application had our self-sufficiency plan. What is Self-Sufficiency? It means you don't need HAP's help to pay your rent anymore, or you might buy a home. This will be a requirement for occupants as well as re-occupants. If you lived at Iris Court before, you will have priority to return – but you will be screened along with all new residents.

There will be Public Housing as well as Affordable Housing at Humboldt Gardens, so one step toward self-sufficiency could be moving from Public Housing to Affordable Housing. It's not market rent, but it's also not Public Housing. This means that you don't have to move out of Humboldt Gardens in order to obtain self-sufficiency. You can move from PH to AH. It is not a quick trip to self-sufficiency; residents will work with knowledgeable staff for the next 5 years on this self-sufficiency continuum.

**Input from New Columbia Panelists on Screening:** Although it was not done at New Columbia, one resident thinks occupancy and/or reoccupancy screening is a very good idea. Also, a self-sufficiency plan would have been great for New Columbia. A mixed population property helps give people in a lower income level a look toward the next step up – it's a good model for those in Public Housing, from the Affordable Housing, and homeowners. It also gives kids the opportunity to see their parents and other neighbors striving to have a better life.

The other New Columbia resident agrees with the statements above. He also said there is a self-sufficiency plan at New Columbia, it just wasn't mandatory for the working able adults.

The legal aid panelist has a concern about families that have a minor who does something illegal or something that would cause the family not to pass the reoccupancy screening. Families need to know when they leave that that could be what would happen and this move could be permanently out of HAP housing.

The question was asked whether the self-sufficiency plan will only be required for working able adults? Will everyone else (disabled & elderly) be able to return without the self-sufficiency part of the process? YES, but they will still have to go thru the screening. Staff needs to be as specific as possible on the front end so that people know what to expect when it comes time to return.

The educational partner stated that a critical item at New Columbia is the Life Long Learning Center (LLLC). There is a need to have on-going support and availability of opportunities for people. Will something like that be avail at Iris Court? There will be a community area for services and partners to bring their areas of expertise to the neighborhood.

What happens with challenges that occur by cutbacks from HUD like the bedroom size issue at New Columbia? One resident panelist had that happen – the new Section 8 guidelines stated 2 people to a bedroom so his family had to go back to a 2 bedroom with 13-year old twins – 1 boy & 1 girl. Their family had no choice but to go back to Public Housing for the 3 bedrooms.

HAP staff agrees that residents need to know the occupancy/reoccupancy criteria prior to relocation. The process that is now underway to define the criteria will be communicated to residents as soon as it is reviewed and adopted by the HAP Board of Commissioners.

<b>Occupancy / Reoccupancy</b>	
<b>Occupancy / Reoccupancy Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Will people know criteria before they leave?</li> <li>- Self-sufficiency requirements. What percentage?</li> <li>- Screening criteria? Will people be left homeless?</li>   <li>- Is self-sufficiency in the CSS plan?</li> <li>- What happens to those w/S8 who are denied return to HG. Can they be offered PH?</li> <li>- Is it legal to screen reoccupancy to HG?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Self-sufficiency focus is on “working able”.</li> <li>- Only applies to working able. 100% of working able.</li> <li>- Screening only applies to those who want to come back to Humboldt Gardens. Screening consists of landlord references, credit checks, criminal history.</li> <li>- It is the essence of the plan</li> <li>- CSS workers will support residents with these issues</li> <li>- Staff will meet with Legal Aid prior to adoption of policy; Board will adopt occupancy policy</li> </ul>

**Wrap-Up and Summary of Next Steps:**

A meeting summary will be distributed with next packet and put onto the website. How did the CAC Committee feel about the panel format and one-topic per meeting format? One of the co-chairs feels it’s necessary to bring a written response to the issues from tonight that were “dicey” or need more clarification.

Next CAC meeting is on the topic of Homeownership (April 27). April 4<sup>th</sup> is a Homeownership forum and that forum will be before the next CAC Meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.