

FAMILY SELECTION TEAM
March 21, 2016 Meeting
Minutes

Present: Pam Murphy, Deb Snyder, Flo Knopf, Betsy Mighton, Jane Cannito, Peg Glynn, Ron Talboys, Nina Wright, Joan Spilman, Barry Weiss

1. Ron Talboys

Ron summarized Habitat involvement with the Harmac Redevelopment efforts which were highlighted in recent Buffalo News first page story. Harmac reached out to Habitat Buffalo in 2013 to discuss its vision for the area and to request Habitat involvement. Initially Habitat will build 5 new houses in the area on land owned and cleared by Harmac. Expect to also Rehab some properties in the area and build more new as time goes on.

Ron is working on the new closing procedure with M&T bank. Changes brought about by the new banking regulations make the process more complicated than before, and M&T was willing to take on the processing responsibilities. There are four mortgages signed and six more to go. Ron was happy to note that all the families ready for a closing are still in good financial shape.

Barry Weiss, Habitat construction manager, attended the meeting to emphasize the need to find five families who would be willing to move into the new houses which are being built on Wende Street. Wende is part of the Harmac redevelopment area which is in the Bailey-Genesee general area. He said that he will be asking the Family Support Committee to reach out to families individually to consider the possibility. Habitat is expecting to break ground on these houses in April 2016, and expect at least one house to be complete by the end of 2016. All five houses will have four bedrooms and 1.5 bathrooms.

Barry Weiss also listed some concerns he wants committee members to communicate to the families:

- If families are planning to come to work sites with more than five (5) people, they should call the Habitat office one week in advance
- All those who work should wear appropriate shoes and appropriate clothes for a construction worksite
- Committee should explain to families that the interiors of houses are not all the same; they will vary according to the materials, fixtures, appliances, and the like that are available at the time of installation.
- Habitat is building and rehabbing almost entirely on the East side currently as a result of the limited availability of building sites and house donations, and because of cost. A family's wait for a house in any other location than the East side could be as long as 10 years. Therefore, the policy on house selections is now that a family is allowed to inspect and reject two houses; after the second rejection their names go to the bottom of the waiting list. According to Barry, Habitat is still trying to refine this process so that houses get accepted more expeditiously.

2. Committee update

Nina distributed copies of the new forms that have been developed over the past year to ensure that everyone has the latest. The forms are already included in the interview packets. She discussed the new procedure associated with the Authorization for Release of Information form—for this form, committee members fill out the appropriate blanks with the applicants, tears off the bottom half at the dotted line, and sends that section back to Nina. Nina will then send the applicant's signed form to the employer and landlord for verification. A family cannot be accepted until these verifications are received.

Nina also distributed the new Family Agreement and asked everyone to read it and bring questions/comments to the April meeting.

a) There were 45 requests for applications in February (in 2015 there were 33).

b) Nametag lanyards for Committee members were provided by Sharon Danna and Angela Watson. They should be worn when visiting families.

c) Privacy forms need to be signed if you haven't already done so.

d) Initial Interview packet – when you are setting up the interview, please ask the applicant if they have all the necessary documents assembled (see cover letter for list)

f) Patricia's ideas about involving the children of applicant families were not discussed because Patricia was not present.

- g) Habitat Housing form: (Acceptance Interview packet). Families will state number of bedrooms needed and preference for type of house, not neighborhood. Also minimum incomes for various size houses will be included. At present, available houses are and will continue to be primarily on the East Side with only an occasional house on the West Side.
- h) Iskandarhusin family – Patrick is new consultant; not present to update
- i) The Website to recommend to applicants with significant student loan issues: Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is the official site; search for Repay Student Debt
- j) Angela Watson is the new AmeriCorps member in the Habitat office who has taken Meghan Martin's place. Please contact her with any questions about sweat equity hours. Her e-mail is awatson@habitatbuffalo.org.
- k) Family Policies Committee continues to meet –Family Selection Policies will be brought to the Board soon
- l) Families who leave the program can donate their family hours, which will then be counted as friend hours, with a maximum of 50 hours to a family. The hours will be given out on a matching basis. Family leaving the program needs to write a letter requesting that the family hours be donated.
- m) Bailey Green Harmac development - The meeting was held on March 19 to invite all accepted families to consider living in the Harmac area (Bailey-Genesee area). Thirty families attended, but only one showed clear interest.
- n) Buffalo Home Show – no update

REMINDERS:

- a) Keep notes about when you contact your families and let them know when you will contact them again
- b) Janine has requested that consultants notify her when the family has reached 150 hours. She will send the consultant a copy of her letter to the family. Shebang family (Peg) reached 150 hours in March and will be assigned to Family Support
- c) Families should send report cards to Hours Coordinator c/o Habitat for Humanity/Buffalo, 1675 South Park Ave., Buffalo, NY 14220. Phone is 204-0740, ex. 106; e-mail is volunteer@habitatbuffalo.org. The monthly hours report will now include mandatory education classes and ReStore hours. Reminder: Once your family's ReStore hours gets close to the maximum of 50, please remind them that hours over 50 will not be counted. Also, only family members can work at the ReStore.

3 Initial interview assignments –

Littleton, Dwayne and Amanda – student debt and size of family are issues (10 children). Peg and Jane Jagger, Darryl and Jennifer – income solid, still need 2015 1040, Flo, Pam, and Deb Stoud, Malina – needs new consultant. Betsy volunteered

4 Initial interview report

Comacho, Aracelis – Glynn – bought a house

5. Acceptance interview reports

6. Sweat equity follow-ups (Hours report as of 3/5/16) –

Many families not listed here are not putting in hours. Please let Nina know what families are saying about why they are not working. Which families do you think should receive Warning Letters?

June –Holt, Makeda – Peg - reported in 4/14 that she was in middle of high risk pregnancy. Peg reported that she is making plans for babysitting and expects to work soon. Peg will call again.

September –Rice, Afaiya – no hours since June. She called Betsy and reported that she had worked 30 to 35 hours in March, attended meetings, and has sent in much of the required documentation.; Thomas, Tawauna – Peg – does she still want to be on hold? Peg sent text since her voice mail was full. Will continue to follow up.

November - Jacobs, Cassandra – Patricia – no hours since she was accepted in August –Warning Letter sent 2/5/16 – no hours as of March – Eliminate?

February – Abdi, Omar – Palmeri/Duggan – hours worked as of March –file?; Flax, Latrice – Betsy - 3 months and no hours –Warning Letter sent 2/29/16 (one was sent in September, she worked a few hours – came to families meeting on Saturday). Betsy will call; Lagu, Catherine – Flo - no hours since October –Came to Harmac meeting on Saturday. Flo has contacted her. She will be able to work when the weather warms.

March – three months and no hours: Anderson, Emilio came to meeting on Saturday. Peg is in contact. He works two jobs. He is trying to get hours from a previous application applied to this application, but that will not happen; Gebremichael, Tesfaye attended meeting on Saturday; Hissu, Awal attended meeting on Saturday ; Iskandarhusin, Luaaye—Patrick recommended warning letter; Jackson, Crystal; Jones, Natalie—Flo said that she has been attending to her father who is out of town and recently had a heart transplant; Joseph, Jackline—told Betsy she is still interested; Ngong, Abok attended Saturday meeting; Nkiambi, Augustin—Patrick recommends warning letter; Flax, Latrice attended Saturday meeting. Betsy will contact

7. Calendar – April 16th –Annual Italian Feast at Ilio Dipaolo's – tickets \$25 – cash bar, dinner at 6 pm and program at 7 pm – call Habitat office for tickets

The next meeting will be April 18, 2016 at the church at 7 PM. Please let Nina Know in advance if you will not be there.