

Meeting Notes

Agriculture Workforce Housing Facilitation Team

November 20, 2014

TEAM MISSION: Federal, state, local, and non-governmental leadership working together to improve housing and economic opportunities for the agriculture workforce

FACILITATOR: Theresa Wingard, Operations and Policy Analyst, OHCS
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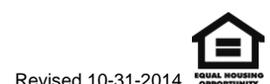
ATTENDEES:

Claudia Cantu, CASA	Laurie Hoefer, LSO	Marc Overbeck, OHPR
Maria Elena Castro, OHA	Jana Jarvis, CFG Lobbyist	David Ruelas, Bienestar
Natasha Detweiler, OHCS	Shay Kahl, Simplicity Homes	Tomas Schwabe, OSHA
Don Herman, OHCS	Shoshanah Oppenheim, OHCS	Karen Shawcross, Bienestar

INTRODUCTIONS: New attendees: Jana Jarvis, lobbyist for Columbia Fruit Growers, Shoshanah Oppenheim, OHCS Federal Planning and Policy Manager, and David Ruelas, Bienestar Housing Director

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- Needs and Research: Natasha, Laurie, Marc, and Maria reported they are revitalizing mapping strategy on Ag workforce housing throughout the state. Currently overlaying base layer from the Alice Larson study (migrant/farmworker) with labor housing/camps registered through the Department of Agriculture, and farmworker tax credit funded projects. The idea is to have an ongoing process of compiling information to tell the story of farmworker needs which will help inform policy and funding decisions.
 - Following are possible next steps on compiling data:
 - Break data out by farm based and community based
 - Add other populations (animal, agricultural, reforestation, food processor, workers who work more than nine months)
 - Add public health outcomes data
 - Integrating employment data
 - Review other potential data sources
 - Program specific information
 - Consider estimates beyond current data sets
 - Consider Department of Ag crop mapping
- Alignment and Streamlining: Claudia advised this committee would postpone reporting until the January meeting.



2015 TEAM FOCUS:

The team listed the following issues, concerns, and topics to consider addressing in 2015:

- Multifamily/Community based Ag Workforce Housing Developers
 - Continue to coordinate with OHCS and RD to streamline the environmental and market study (Claudia/Karen S.)
 - Include a farmworker set aside in the NOFA (Claudia/Karen S.)
 - Support/monitor a technical fix on AWHTC legislation in 2015 session. OSHA did a work around but can't do this each year. (Karen S.)
Link to statute: https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws/ors/ors315.html
 - Invite Meyer Memorial Trust affordable housing initiative officers to meeting (Karen S.)
- Farm Based Ag Workforce Housing
 - Determine what other housing solutions exist of migrant housing (Claudia)
 - Explore innovative housing concepts for on farm (modular/tiny houses/pin foundations) (Karen S.)
 - Work on policies/funding to encourage development for farmworker housing where there is need. (Jana)
- Improving the condition of existing Ag Workforce Housing
 - Identify funding sources for rehabbing funding stock (Natasha)
 - Improve housing conditions for migrant workers (Laurie)
 - Strategize preservation of aging community based housing (Karen S.)
 - Increase funds for Ag labor housing, construction, and renovation (grants, loan, tax credits) (Tom)
 - Increase the number of Oregon OSHA consultation requests made by Ag labor housing operators (Tom)
 - Research if new OSHA regulations will allow grandfathering or require updating (Shay)
- Community/Farm based housing
 - Identify resources/funding for resident services and programming (David)
 - Continue data work and publish results to influence legislation and policy decisions (Karen S.)
 - Improve asset building and financial education for Ag workforce (David)
 - Improve or expand housing options for on/off farm housing (Laurie)
- Other
 - Share health clinic information about the connection between health and housing (Laurie)
 - Re-engage housing providers and sponsors. Include this group in a session presenting challenges on the issue areas from farmers and other sponsors (Karen S.)
 - Address transportation needs and challenges (David)
 - Assess Ag housing stock conditions (David)
 - Look at challenges of incenting future generations of the migrant workforce (Don)

DISCUSSION:

- Identify challenges to improving and expanding the housing stock
- Agriculture Workforce Tax Credit:
 - Where does tax credit work and where doesn't it work, why doesn't it work
 - OHCS tax credit dollars are available first come and opens January 2nd
 - Farm operator must be operating at a profit to take advantage of tax credit
 - Claim tax credit over 10 years
 - Is tax credit incentive enough for a farm operator
 - Is there enough awareness of the tax credit
 - Is it effective enough, does it need to be more credit
 - Is there an understanding of how it works
 - The team could market the farmworker tax credit
 - Parkdale and Hood River use most of the tax credit
 - Approximately \$416,000 2014 tax credits remain
- Identify challenges for housing and what we currently have as tools
- Review Washington study on age and condition of housing (David)
- Shay will attend Ag meeting in Tri City Washington December first and report back
- Explore alternative funding/cooperative approach
- Re-engage Oregon Association of Nurseries (OAN)
- WA Co-op to develop migrant housing/presentation (Claudia)
- Work together to create funding source
- Land use guest speaker/team member (LCDC) Land conservation development corp
- Land use issues are a significant piece of a policy that needs to be defined to address on farm development
- Consider a public private partnership/revolving loan fund (WA model/Claudia)
- May use data on H2A workers for mapping (housing facilities available) Employment Department/Worksource Oregon contact Dora Herrera, dora.a.herrera@oregon.gov

INFORMATION SHARING:

- The 2015 Meeting Calendar is online and will be included with the November notes
- Stephanie Page has taken a new position and will no longer be attending. She will advise of a replacement
- OSHA doing labor camp inspections and H2A pre-occupancy inspections standards for sheepherders, working with Workforce Oregon to come up with rules that will work for sheepherders and be enforceable
- Bienestar opened the next phase of Juniper Gardens in Forest Grove, 21 permanent, 1 migrant, total 46 farmworker units
- Farmworker Housing Development Corp (FHDC) recently received three million to develop 20 farmworker housing units in Silverton

ACTION ITEMS:

- Theresa, request update from Kathleen Kincade on registered camps (BOLI/OSHA)
- Theresa, locate Land use team member/presenter (LCDC) Land Conservation Development Corporation
- Don, provide Agriculture Workforce Tax Credit Program reports
- David, report on WA study on age and condition of housing
- Shay, report back on Ag meeting in Tri City Washington, Dan Fazio may call in to talk about Washington development and the H2A program
- Claudia, report on WA Co-op to develop migrant housing/presentation
- Claudia, report on public private partnership/revolving loan fund (WA model)

NEXT MEETING:

Thursday, January 22, 2015, 10:00-12:00

Oregon Housing and Community Services, Room 124B