Landlord Engagement: Unlocking the Private Market

Homes Within Reach Conference
December 5, 2017
Changes in the Rental Market

- Tenant Based Rental Assistance
- Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing
- Luxury/Market Rate
- Subsidized Units
Rental Housing in Post Crash World

- Vacancy rates at lowest levels since 1985
- Rents rising at an annual rate of 3.5%
- Diminishing resources for constructing affordable housing
- Loss of existing affordable housing
Rental Housing in Post Crash World

- **Hot markets** = owners have incentive to upgrade units for higher rents/sale
- **Weak markets** = owners lack revenue; little incentive to maintain units
- **Tight markets** = self reporting code enforcement systems less effective
Changes in Programs to Support Low Income Renters

- Move from facility based to tenant based programs
  - LIPH Demolitions resulted in increase of Section 8 vouchers
  - Transitional Housing conversions to Rapid Re-Housing
  - Mixed income communities with less affordable units

- Impacts
  - Lots of “Vouchers” on the street
  - Government agencies do not want to own property
  - High turn back rates of vouchers, especially in the city
  - Need for partnerships between public and private (landlords, developers, CDC’s)
  - Incentives to make these partnerships work
Mental Health Association of Northwestern PA
Dave Wooleidge
Clifton McNair III

Landlord Engagement
BACKGROUND

- FIRST HOUSING PROGRAM
- EVOLUTION FROM PEER HOUSING SUPPORT TO PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING
- MENTAL HEALTH ASSOC. HOUSING HISTORY
HOW TO GET LANDLORDS

- CHECKING WITH LOCAL APARTMENT ASSOCIATION
- WORD OF MOUTH LEADS
- CHECKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES
HOW TO ENGAGE LANDLORDS

A.

- EXPLAINING WHAT WE ARE DOING, OUR GOALS AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- OUR TARGET POPULATION

- THE LANDLORDS IMPORTANCE IN OVERCOMING BARRIERS FOR RETURNED CITIZENS
HOW TO ENGAGE LANDLORDS, CONTINUED

B.

- PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN OUR AGENCY AND THE LANDLORD
- HOW WE WILL SUPPORT THE LANDLORD
- HOW WE WILL MINIMIZE LANDLORDS LIABILITY
- HOW PARTNERSHIP BECOMES A WIN, WIN SITUATION
- HOW WE ELIMINATED BACKGROUND CHECKS AND APPLICATION FEE’S
WHAT OUR OUTCOMES HAVE BEEN

- HELPS BUILD CREDIT THROUGH PAYMENT OF UTILITIES
- HELPS PEOPLE GET PERMANENT SUBSIZED AND NON SUBSIZED HOUSING
- HELP PEOPLE GET JOB’S
- HELP PEOPLE GET SSI AND SSDI
- HELP PEOPLE REGAIN THEIR SELF RESPECT
- HELP PEOPLE CONNECT WITH OTHER MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
- HELP PEOPLE FROM RICIDIVISM
MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF NORTHWESTERN, PA

DAVE WOOLEDGE, TEAM LEADER OF CERTIFIED PEER SUPPORT AND HOUSING CASE MANAGEMENT

CLIFTON MCNAIR III, HOUSING CASE MANAGER, MAKE IT A HOME ALWAYS, PART 1
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ALLEGHENY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

LANDLORD INITIATIVES IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY

December 5, 2017
Allegheny County & DHS

- Population: 1,231,527
- Serving over 200,000 people (every 5th resident)
- Largest county department
- Manage a $800+ m budget
- Employ over 1,000 staff
- Fund nearly 400 providers for 1,600 distinct services
ALLEGHENY COUNTY CoC

- 91 Programs, some with multiple funding sources
- 27 Providers
- 2017 PIT
  - 1145 Total
  - 53 Unsheltered
- Over $34M from all funding sources
WHAT WE ARE DOING IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY

• In 2015
  – Development of the Housing Connector
  – Moved many facility based homeless programs to Rapid Re-housing
  – Saw lots of “product on the street” competing for landlords
  – Housing Alliance Landlord Initiative
  – Landlord Forum sponsored by Housing Alliance
• In 2016
  – Launched the Housing Connector
  – Continuation of RRH project development and beginning Community of Practice
  – Landlord Forum II
• In 2017
  – Housing Alliance Report and University of Duquesne study
  – Development of DHS sponsored Housing Navigator Project
  – Landlord Risk Mitigation Fund
NEW HOUSING NAVIGATOR
NEW HOUSING NAVIGATOR

• Bring service providers together with landlords
• Develop an e-mail list of each group
• Navigator sits in the middle and makes matches
  – No list of apartments, but list of contacts
• Navigator sets standards for each group
  – Fosters/brokers communication and mediates disputes
  – Sets clear standards for landlords and service providers
  – No slumlords and no providers that “dump” tenants without support
• Three way agreement bx provider, navigator, and landlord that spells out responsibilities
• Opt in program. Use if provider does not have internal capacity
• Community of Practice
MISSION

to empower people to build more secure and self-sufficient lives through the provision of decent, affordable housing, essential supportive services, asset building programs, and education and employment opportunities
VISION

a city where the most at risk populations could be assured of an affordable place to live with access to health care, supportive services, transit, employment, and fresh foods; where neighborhoods welcome and plan for the inclusion of those with special needs; where parents of children with special needs could be assured that care would continue once they could no longer provide it themselves. Overall, we imagine an energy efficient city; an accessible city; a city with economically sustainable housing; a city that preserves existing affordable housing, in addition to building it.
HISTORY

Since our founding by Richard King Mellon and David Lawrence in 1957, ACTION-Housing has been a pioneer in developing housing and providing services for the most vulnerable populations in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. ACTION-Housing has successfully developed, or helped others develop, emergency shelters, bridge and transitional housing, and permanent, affordable housing for homeless families and individuals in locations throughout Pittsburgh and Allegheny County.
TODAY

ACTION–Housing engages at-risk populations by offering a variety of housing options to build self-sufficiency and has a wide array of services available to help low- and moderate-income individuals and families. Our offerings of social services, all designed to develop the skills, behaviors, and assets necessary to create and follow life plans that lead to self-reliance, include energy-efficiency services, mortgage counseling and foreclosure prevention, pre- and post-purchase housing counseling, matched savings accounts, services for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, accessibility programs, and social service coordination for residents. Our real estate portfolio includes 1,736 units of affordable, accessible, and supportive housing.
Initiative of United Way of SWPA

Addresses unmet needs of young adults with disabilities and their families

Working toward a clear “roadmap” for transition from youth-serving systems to adult system of services

Housing is a focus area
Connecting:
people to housing
and
housing to people
Housing Connector

Partnership with Allegheny County Dept. of Human Services (ACDHS)

In Year 2 of a 3–year pilot

Currently funded by two local, private funders

Continuing to work on sustainability plan
What “people”?  
People with disabilities

What “disabilities”?  
All disabilities – those easily seen and those that are not

What “housing”?  
Rental: affordable/subsidized and market rate  
Purchase: affordable/subsidized and market rate
Why do we need the Housing Connector?

Language
Rules
Navigation
“Connect” how?

Concierge-type service

Repository of information

Innovating new housing models
Landlord Engagement

Cold Calls
Dispute Mediation
Education
Focus Groups
Peer Groups
Trainings
Landlord Engagement

Partnerships

Partnerships

and Partnerships