

Short-term Committee Housing Conference Call Notes
April 25, 2012
10:00 am – 12:00 pm (PCT)

Facilitators/Presenters: Bill Shoaf, E.J. Martinez, and Sally Richman

Notes: Marjorie Titus

21 Attendees (staff from):

Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC)
FEMA
Apartment Association
AMCAL Multi-Housing, Inc.
Orange County Emergency Management Bureau
San Diego County OES
Los Angeles County Community Development Commission
Allstate
Cal EMA
Housing Authority of Los Angeles
City of Santa Monica Housing and Economic Development
Area Housing Authority of the County of Ventura
OperationOC/Orange County Rescue Mission
Shelter Partnership
EOC Coordinator for the Public Safety Department – LA County
Beacon Management Group

- Methods for Identifying available rental properties
 - Stakeholders who should be involved and their roles/activities
 - Resource providers (those with rental properties)
 - FEMA– we have researchers who gather rental resources info, reach out to landlords, property owners to validate this info– at onset of an event, we will start scrubbing housing availability info that we have – also try to find something within reasonable distance of disaster survivors - problem keeping list updated and valid
 - Partner with HUD – also maintain a rental resource locator system, combined into one database and provided to the technicians who are on the phone with survivors who are in need of resources
 - Designed to be utilized under the concepts of NDRF and we would stand-up the Housing RSF – coordinating – HUD and FEMA primary support agencies
 - Fed point of view: what are potential barriers that could arise for locals to better assist FEMA and HUD to make those resources available? What can we do to enhance the Fed efforts at the local level?

- FEMA – Collaboration and communication between Feds and local, state, and tribal – have to exchange data – locals have the info.
 - Challenge – trying to capture that in efficient amount of time so data is manageable and verifiable when we get it to the folks helping those who need it.
 - Challenge – those impacted by a disaster don't want to go very far from where they are dwelling for a number of reasons.
 - Challenge trying to get people to move even 25 miles from where they are now
 - Also, Federal government can be source of info for locals in that they could help us get info out on available resources
- Mechanics of process – standardized approach? How do they (locals) figure out who to call?
- FEMA – the rental resource database is always live, we continuously update, especially if there is an event coming – we are calling our list of potential resources, to find out availability and prices, etc.
 - FEMA – we will get with Individual Assistance (IA) folks at the national processing service centers to obtain more information
 - The website can be easily accessed by property owners and others can see available properties
- Does FEMA work with intermediaries, like local apartment associations, that have huge memberships? Established relationships? So they can canvas their members to help identify units? And is the info on website about liabilities, etc.?
 - FEMA – Yes, to all. We reach out to organizations such as one you named, ways for potential property owners and landlords to register with system.
- Area Housing Authority of Ventura – have met with Emergency Management Coordinators; they made a blanket statement that when it comes to rental housing, they will send people to housing authorities. HAs do not have vacancies or anything, but we were their backup plan – they were shocked to learn this. This will not work. Also, city of Thousand Oaks is doing a local survey of rentals (apartments) within city limits- having hard time. There is not a complete inventory anywhere where they can log in to. Not sure of any resources available at local level. Rental associations do not have a complete list, city does not have list, and many apartment owners do not, not an easy list to locate. Local Landlord/Apt. Owners Association do not include

all apartment owners; many choose not to be part of it. Any information collected is not shared.

- Maybe they will decide to share when there is a mention of planning for this
- Challenges – they hold those member lists and resources very private
- Apartment Association – There are apartment associations all over California. Apartment associations do have a list and community apartment owners, they do not share it, but that doesn't mean that in a disaster they won't share this information. We gathered lists in recent disaster and forwarded to Red Cross. We can do this and will be happy to do it.
- Local association will do it in an emergency, but for planning purposes, they were unwilling – any tips in overcoming these?
- We can work on it.
- Advantage of the planning process - discussing these ahead of time
 - Associations can provide information from folks who participated
- Any other similar organizations out there?
 - Yes, they're all apartment associations in some form
 - California Apartment Association has divisions all over SoCal and some in LA area. All participated in fires in providing housing lists.
- We would be able to contact all of the associations in SoCal to provide those lists?
 - Board of Realtors may have apartments available, but they do not have contact with owners – won't be able to provide much – more comes through apt association.
- Apartments, does this include condos?
 - Apartment association membership includes any ownership – apartments, single family, condos, etc.
- Useful resource to include in the Guidance – could be pretty easy about who locals can locate who to speak to –
- Is there a central office or POC we can put into guidance to find out who the division contact would be for a jurisdiction?
 - Yes, the California Apartment Association
- California Association of Realtors can provide info on vacant homes for sale and those sitting vacant
 - Contact info – there is a website for the association
- County – it operates a list of available units - website is at socialserve.com - used by social service agencies in the region
- CalEMA – During Northridge, there were a lot of attempts to do housing databases, it was found that those were outdated within 24 hours – in the planning in the effort, we need to keep in mind the housing market will be completely different if an event

happens. Has to be built into the planning scenario that these are “options and possibilities” but subject to change due to changing market.

- FEMA – Need to assess the condition, even with a good inventory, but have to assess if they are still available, and have to be able to reach out in a hurry to see if building is still intact, along with the wrap-around services – being aware that info will change and will be very dynamic.
- This info to go into the Planning Guide
- List may not be able to be available, but with grant money may build a disaster resilient module – will be demonstrating throughout the region – software for damage assessment on housing – there will be a need to determine the extent of damage and how safe a structure may be – more news will be provided on this when it’s ready.
- Focus of guidance to be on setting up a process the ability to maintain a list above and beyond just creating a list – there is always the assumption that local, state, or Federal government will take over and have all the resources, not the case – private sector needed greatly – important part for guidance and local plans
- Nonprofit for disabilities – haven’t heard anything towards the disabled community
 - FEMA – from Federal side, that is always a consideration, “whole community” considerations; can assure you it’s a major part
 - Do you see any potential gaps that we are not thinking of?
 - Main concern – I find that in a disaster, the homeless shelters are not equipped persons with disabilities (wheelchairs, etc) – are there some triage areas – those with disabilities have a contact point- assistance and transportation?
 - City of LA - there is not a clear standard in housing market for what accessible means –working with agencies to make it clearer – exactly what doorway widths should be, etc. a lot of good info out there
- It would be good if there was some type of accessibility requirements – in private homes, when you send your email to me, can you find and send anything along that defines that?
 - ADA and California Building Codes
 - Most apt managers, homeowners, etc. follow that guideline – but the lack of access is usually in bathrooms, even though the doorway is ADA-compliant
 - Please send us any recommendations or any info you can pass along to us to improve, mandate, regulate, or

motivate property owners to be able to help to get facilities usable

- New developments they are keeping all this in mind – older properties, not cost-efficient – most cases, I deal with low-income, a lot of the older buildings who are not compliant/accessibility and cannot work
- FEMA – UFAS (above the ADA and ABA) – so many different requirements – referring him to UFAS. Challenge – goal is to meet the individual needs and family – to identify from survivors what they need. Don't need to build them a watch if they just want to know what time it is! Don't slow down process to make something UFAS-compliant, but just find out what they need. Need to match requirements of survivors of capabilities of facilities. Ask the right questions.
- Non-profit - we have durable medical equipment on hand, ramps, wheelchairs
 - 29 IOCs in California – they are resource providers as well as advocacy - we have Assisted Technology networks
 - Durable medical equipment - Breathing machine, wheelchairs, ramps, walking equipment, power wheelchairs, etc.
 - We have a stock of the resources, equipment currently
- Those who can provide rental assistance
 - Public
 - Private
 - Nonprofit – we do not provide rental assistance – work through Chamber of Commerce/United Way – only our equipment, but not funding for rental assistance
 - Socialserve.com
 - Security deposits
 - First months rent
 - Maybe raise as regulatory barrier – FEMA and HUD to make waivers, exceptions to assist like the charitable orgs
 - FEMA – FEMA would lean on the faith-based, nonprofits to step up, but yes, this is a gap, the Feds may step up in a catastrophic event, they will do what they have to do accommodate the victims, but that would require regulatory change
 - Many jurisdictions here may have used HPRP funds from HUD to help with arrearages and help homeless get into housing, a lot of local lessons learned that may apply to what we are doing here – a better infrastructure to provide this kind of assistance, such as utilities – put into Guide as well

- Rental assistance –
 - VOADs (in California – ENLO)
 - Housing process early on will make sure to refer to them as a big player
 - FEMA –From Federal standpoint –VOADs are part of the housing recovery support task force; in just trying to come up with housing solutions – can bring in any partners (Mennonites, anyone) – big picture housing strategy
 - Those who can provide help in getting people into housing
 - Any other organizations who can recommend an agency that can help with furnishings, dishware, etc. for rental property?
 - Some active members of our apartment association are companies who rent furniture to those in rental units – they were very active during recent fires in providing furniture for those in temp housing. I’m sure they would be active in providing furnishings and house wares.
- Those who can help centralize information on available rental properties
- Those who will have knowledge of people who need rental housing
- Examples/references of successful programs

- How do we match up this info with those who need the housing?
 - During fires, provided food kits, etc. but also provided housing information to those who came to us – we will do this for Orange County – maybe other counties do the same – through the LAC?
 - Orange County – the process starts at the LAC – maybe have a couple of them – would have to start the planning for this at these locations
 - FEMA – We capture when folks register with FEMA – ask them in interview – also in questions that are asked by contractors to survivors when they go to damaged dwelling to record damages incurred – in addition to interaction with locals.
- Do they feed directly with FEMA – is there a place where FEMA and locals meet?
 - Eventually, depends on services and whether IA will be provided or not. It starts at shelters when doing assessments, and then once established, get info to push up the chain to get more assistance to citizens, but providing services while providing information, up to the state.
 - CalEMA – it depends on the level of disaster – not all disasters have FEMA or IA assistance. LACs are set up for all disasters – resource in one LAC with a table that housing info was available, but also disaster where FEMA is looking for info through the Joint Field Offices. Info in the LAC may or may not be available, depends on the disaster. Resources are not always only in a LAC.
 - Combination of level of disaster and time period
 - Housing resource may be more of a function that may be coordinated with FEMA

- A local resource – SNAP – Special Needs Awareness Planning/Program? - Developed for those with disabilities to pre-identify themselves in case of disaster so they can be located by responders, etc. as a way to identify those who need help.
 - Nonprofit - Never heard of it, but have own listing of consumers who will contact me
 - Ventura County – we have it here; residents can sign up and they can describe their living situation and disability, a database our cities are putting together
 - Online: snap.lacounty.gov
 - Potential for planners to look at to match this info with those who may have a housing need

- What about groups of individuals that may need housing but one-on-one registration is not a good starting point?
 - Seniors in senior complexes – in a disaster – I'd be receiving calls from multiple complexes with possibly 50-60 tenants
 - Nonprofit - org that would want to be within the system for housing identification needs and placement. They would want to participate. Every IOC (29 of them) has housing person on staff, has reach back support/staff, and could cover a large area.
 - shelters – this is a location to find those who need housing once those shelters close
 - State licensed facilities – group homes, fostered youth, etc.
 - Local government may or may not know about them, but they are state licensed. We can put this info into the planning guide. We need this info – the online links to contact the state social service licensor in order to find what group homes/dependent population are within the jurisdiction?
 - For rental assistance - a disaster housing assistance program for some who are eligible - like a Section 8 program – funded with FEMA, HUD manages – works with local HAs
 - Challenges for community with more than one HA – there are five HAs in Ventura – there is no process in place via HUD or Mutual Agreement to allow HAs to exchange info or to service a client who applied at a different HA – eg., if apply within a jurisdiction for services only for that jurisdiction, they have to re-apply if going to a different jurisdiction (city)
 - Trying to put together the agreement, but has to be addressed prior to emergency - many areas have more than one HA
 - Want to bring up childcare/daycare centers - what type of planning is being done for these? When child is one place and parents are at another?
 - This is already addressed under reunification in the Mass Evac and Mass Care Guides

- We have those other guides that this grant has helped to create – we will include some reference to those in our DHPG so folks are made aware of those – also in our website, we will mention those so they are all linked