

# WHITEAKER COMMUNITY COUNCIL

A CITY OF EUGENE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

PO Box 11692, EUGENE OR 97440

September 8th, 2021

## In Attendance

Board: Ian Winbrock-Chair, Gail Caru-Vetter-Vice-Chair, Dilenia Cardona-Treasurer, Angie Byers-Secretary

At-Large: Thea Lee, Jennifer Hoover, Theresa Burchell, Claire Roth

Members: Pat Bryan-SURJ, Jain Elliott, Stephen Fuller Rowell, Meg Schaefer

Guests: Doriandra Smith, WCC Program Coordinator; Tim Morris, SETA; Amanda Dellinger, Square One Villages

**7:00 pm** / Introductions, Meeting facilitation process, and Agenda review

*Pat Bryan:* We are working on putting pressure on the city to follow through with the recommendations for the policing committee.. Several neighborhood groups are working together to draft a statement to support this statement. Dilenia Cardona: Have you reached out to get community engagement officers to sign on? *Ian Winbrock(in chat):*

*Margaret Mazzotta*

*Community Engagement Specialist*

*Beats 5 and 6*

*541-682-5761*

*Margaret.A.Mazzotta@ci.eugene.or.us*

<https://www.eugene-or.gov/944/Community-Engagement-Team>

*Dilenia Cardona:* Thank you to the entire board for your support through my family's crises. I want you to know that I appreciate it, and think you're the best neighbors I've ever had.

*Thea Lee:* I've been talking with Chief Skinner and our business, as well as Parks and Open Spaces and Public Works. I am continually getting calls on the fatigue the Whiteaker is feeling regarding the not so community-minded unhoused individuals in our neighborhood. They've cleaned up the cars that were being used as trash or drug dens at W/J. I have had a theft every day for the last two weeks, so I am going to report on each one to make sure that there is a record. I saw signs of hope today in the City Counselors meeting. We are getting patrols in the parks. If you feel uncomfortable, you have to report it.

*Thea Lee:* Scobert Gardens: The city will be providing chess boards and chess pieces to the chess club interested in using it. Also, I'm attempting to get the book bus there as well.

*Ian:* I'm posting a link to the work session that happened earlier this week regarding Safe Spots: Ian Winbrock (in chat): [https://youtu.be/M\\_e1X7UVlxc?t=2794](https://youtu.be/M_e1X7UVlxc?t=2794). *Thea Lee:* They are also looking at policies for the ones that do not want to cooperate, with drugs and theft. *Dilenia:* Those groups are moving out of the Whiteaker, to the outskirts. *Thea:* I'm going to schedule a drive with Chief Skinner to show him the spots. I'm also working with the railroad to clean up the Ninkasi wall, as there are fires and drug dealing going on there. *Jennifer Hoover:* I've been having issues with campers in front of the house. I have a scary one. Are they looking at the campers in front of residences? *Thea:* You have to go to parking enforcement and report them. It's anonymous. *Jennifer:* I didn't feel safe getting their information. *Thea:* When you don't feel safe, call EPD. It looks like our numbers of incidences are down from last year, as we are not calling these things in. *Claire Roth:* I recently had an incident where someone came to my door at 9pm. I wish there could be a public training on how to deal with someone in your space. I had a moment of shock. *Angie Byers:* Were you looking at descelation? *Theresa Burchell (in chat):* Whitebird offers descilatation training, warrior sisters offers self defense training- and I think they do touch on topics surrounding how to address our body language and process of thought in potentially dangerous situations. I'm very sorry that happened, Claire.  
*Ian Winbrock (in chat):* WhiteBird: <https://whitebirdclinic.org/crisis-deescalation-training/>

*Jain Elliott:* I'm so excited about the Wellness Clinic. I was aware of the vaccines, but less aware of the Covid testing. Could you increase the advertisement information around testing? *Ian:* We've connected with White Bird to do our vaccines, and with HIV Alliance for Covid testing. At the moment, due to the Delta variant surge, we cannot offer the other services at the moment (STI testing, menstrual supplies, food trucks, music). *Dilenia Cardona:* Do we feel ok using the gift cards as a bribe, and really promoting them? *Ian:* How do we as a group feel about using gift cards as vaccine incentives? (positive gestures from 2-3 individuals). We will be offering \$100 Safeway Gift Cards that we received at no cost to the WCC, as well as Whiteaker community businesses. *Stephen Fuller-Rowell:* If I copy and paste information from a clinic into a post, is everything accurate? *Ian:* Thank you for that question. Yes, we had to pivot quickly in our August and September clinic due to the surge in numbers, so we weren't able to offer all of the services we wanted to. October and beyond should look more like the previous Wellness Clinics.

*Ian:* I had the opportunity to go to the Everyone Village open house last Friday through Pastor Gabe and Square One. They are receiving this land from Rexius, and only pay \$1 a year for a number of years. The parking lot will be used for RV, as well as permanent structures similar to other Square One sites.

**7:05 pm / Public Comment**

Eugene's Housing Crisis - Whiteaker Impacts, Q & A

**7:25 - 8:15 pm** / Amanda Dellinger, Community Relations Director, Square One Villages

\*Shared slideshow.

Stephen F-R (in chat): Emerald Village offered their community room for folks at the south end of N Polk to assemble after a disaster. My partner and I led a Know Your Neighbor workshop there before the plague hit

*Dilena:* Have you worked with neighborhood groups to purchase properties? *Amanda Dellinger:* We work with communities in a consult model to help individuals do this. We also have affiliate associations that can help. *Dilena:* It might be advantageous to purchase property with neighborhood associations. *Ian:* Some history of the WCC and cooperative housing, and how we created the East Blair Housing Coop: <https://eastblairhousingcooperative.com/history/>. *Thea:* I'm very excited about the opening at Emerald Village. Was this a new house, or has someone moved on. Also, they offered the space for the WCC to hold their general meetings. *Gail Caru-Vetter* (in chat): I was told that the apartment complex next to Red Barn is on the market. This may be an opportunity for us to retain some low cost housing in the neighborhood. *Amanda:* We are currently developing 2 3.5 acre properties, as well as working with Pastor Gabe's donated property. *Amanda Dellinger* (in chat): [Amanda@squareonevillages.org](mailto:Amanda@squareonevillages.org). *Ian:* It's great how the village model radiated out from the Whiteaker. The Village model around the country: <https://www.squareonevillages.org/more-villages>. *Stephen F-R:* Is there an example of a non-profit in Lane County that got to the end of the 25 year tax break, and then converted to a market rate at the end of that period? *Amanda:* Yes, this is happening now, but I don't have more detailed information on that now. Please send me a message, and I'll follow up. *Dilena:* Are there programs where Eugene gives away property? *Amanda:* They do not give it away, but they may lease it for \$1 a year, similar to Opportunity Village. *Ian:* Other than volunteering on site, or buying paella, are there other ways we can support you as a board? Are there opportunities for sweat equity? Especially communities being dedicated as Safe Sleep Sites? *Amanda:* Yes. We want structures for people, versus tents and RV's. We want to have community members help build these structures. We are talking with several organizations to empower their youth to help build these. We don't have a clear timeline on that yet, as it depends on the availability and amount of funding. *Gail Caru-Vetter:* When you speak of the Rose Village, where is that located? *Amanda:* It's at 2243 Roosevelt, which is in the Trainsong Area.

**8:15 - 8:55 pm** / Tim Morris, Executive Director, Springfield Eugene Tenants Association (SETA)

We are a local 5013C non-profit dedicated to renter and tenants rights. We started due to an issue a friend had with their landlord. We found ourselves scrolling through landlord/tenant law, not understanding it. We realized it would be great to have a resource to answer questions, so we started it! This time last year, we were entirely volunteer run. We have the only free tenant hotline in the area. We are able to provide them with answers. We are not legal services, but we are renters that have faced and researched the same issues. We collect data off of that hotline: demographics, reason for calling, etc... We then turn these into monthly reports that we give to neighborhoods and the government. We know that families, seniors, and individuals of color are the most impacted. We know that no-cause evictions are being used inappropriately. 70% of

those we serve are considered low or very low-income. Renting during quarantine has highlighted the inequities, which Senate 278 and 282 (eviction safe harbor: 60 day eviction pause if you've applied for rent assistance), as well as local ordinances, address. You are seeing more renter protections in place. We know that service industry jobs were lost in droves during the pandemic, and these individuals are more likely renters. We have launched a Court Support program, which allows step-by-step information to assist renters in court. We also tell them about laws that have passed, and how to talk to their landlord about it. Meeting people at their homes is what's needed, and we've knocked on about 80 doors, and we've had 5 or 6 contact us back to let us know they've been able to keep their housing. We also have an educational program to allow a renter the information to maintain their residency, and to know their rights and responsibilities. *Dilenia*: Do you collect data based on addresses? *Tim*: We do collect zip codes (which is voluntary), but we don't post specific areas where people are located. We identify simply if they are Eugene or Springfield. We are cautious with the data we have, but we know that 80% of the Whiteaker are renters. *Dilenia*: Can you use this data to let neighborhood committees know what's going on in their own neighborhoods? *Tim*: I'll bring that suggestion back to my board, but we want to make it comfortable for the person getting that help. We don't want to put more risk to the tenant than needed. *Gail Caru-Vetter (in chat)*: If you could share percentages by zip code, that would be helpful for us to identify trends in our neighborhood. *Dilenia*: You could let them know of clusters. *Ian Winbrock (in chat)*: Disaggregated data, that doesn't show addresses, but rather neighborhood or zip code as Gail suggested, might be a good idea. *Claire Roth (in chat)*: Identifying at least that could help our efforts as a neighborhood org. Zip code is too big in my opinion. *Stephen F-R (in chat)*: census tract would be better for WCC. *Claire Roth (in chat)*: Census blocks? *Angie Byers*: What's fair rent to charge, and do you take action on that amount? *Tim*: One of the misconceptions is that we are anti-landlord. We are pro-tenant, not anti-landlord. We keep track of what rental prices are, and it's rough. We have a rental rate of 2%, which is usually 5-8% in cities. What that means is that there isn't enough housing available. There's no other conclusion to get to that number. We are working with Eugene and Springfield about expanding our housing opportunities. I've worked with city counselors and staff, and worked on the committees for some of the senate bills to let them know we don't have enough housing. What they do with that is up to them. Currently, our ADU system is cumbersome, and does not meet the needs of a place that has over 2000 unhoused. We can be very intentional when we talk about solutions, which means low income, not affordable housing. Low income has a federal property limit. We are advocating and advising as best as we can. *Tim Morris (in chat)*: <https://www.springfieldeugenetenantassociation.com/> *Jennifer Hoover*: How many employees do you have? *Tim*: 3 employees, and are looking to hire our 4th. We have a board of 9. *Jennifer*: Is there a certain spot, apartments, where turnover is more likely. *Tim*: Due to the protections available at the moment, it's not a pattern of units or people that are evicting, but it's for people that are not as informed about the expectations for landlords. The majority of those living in Eugene are renters, not homeowners. *Dilenia*: Do you work with landlords to help them mediate some situations, or inform them. *Tim*: We don't do mediation, but we do work with those that contact us while remaining pro-tenant. There are resources for landlords available to them. *Thea Lee*: I am a landlord. What do you consider affordable housing? *Tim*: Affordable housing is a term I try to avoid, as I focus on low income. 35% of the renters are paying the majority of their

income to rent, which puts them in the very low income bracket. *Thea*: Do you work with Rental's Association of Oregon to educate landlords? I work with tenants to educate them. *Tim*: We attempted to work with RAO in the past, but they are not interested. *Thea*: How are you going to handle the constant turnover that our big property owners will cause when the one year with the Displacement Prevention Assistance kicks in? *Tim*: Tenants invest in a unit (1st and last, reasonable accommodations, moving trucks, making a home), and moving them out after a year is really hard on someone that has invested that much up front. When it comes to evicting a tenant, it should be a financial, business decision, and the burden of moving should not fall to the tenant, as it is for the financial gain of the landowner. If you have a year lease that you have not renewed, it goes automatically to month-month. *Clair Roth*: it is beneficial to break down silos in non-profits (tenants and landlords). There needs to be both sides of the pie in the conversation to allow for a full conversation. There's something called the "Bike Friendly Business Association", which recognizes them for doing something right. As a renter, if I saw a sticker like that, it would change the climate around what it means to be a good landlord. *Tim*: I hear you. It's important for more folks to meet in the middle. Our arm is extended. When it comes to landlord/tenant conversations, there have not been a whole lot of tenant advocates. I'm able to pinpoint a few of these advocates, as there are so few. It is pretty heavily skewed towards homeowners and landlords. We are a space for people to vent, and come for information. *Gail Caru-Vetter (in chat)*: The rule was supposed to help tenants, but instead it is creating an incentive for landlords to evict within 12 months. *Gail Caru-Vetter (in chat)*: It reminds me of the "limits" that were placed on the percentage rent can be raised every year. It was intended to protect renters, but instead it created a legal path for landlords to raise the rent \*every year\* where before, sometimes rents would stay stable for years at a time. I'm very concerned about these good-intentioned rules that are turning out to make the problems so much worse. *Ian Winbrock (in chat)*: Displacement Prevention Assistance  
*Tim Morris (in chat)*: [tmorris@springfieldeugenetenantassociation.com](mailto:tmorris@springfieldeugenetenantassociation.com). *Ian Winbrock (in chat)*: 2021 Poverty Guidelines:  
<https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines/prior-hhs-poverty-guidelines-federal-register-references/2021-poverty-guidelines>  
More than a third of Whiteaker renters are considered low income, this is both individuals and families. *Claire Roth (in chat)*: Also interested to know if there is a dialogue between SETA and landlords. *Meg Schaefer (in chat)*: What is market rent for a one bedroom apartment? how can this be reduced? It doesn't appear that anyone is willing to say what that amount is. I think there's a phenomenon happening where landlords are raising the rent towards a maximum that continues rising. If someone were to say "this is a reasonable amount for rent", then it might allow landlords to know. *Tim*: Once I get that number for you, I can share it via Ian. The market value is skewed because of the lack of housing. *Anand Holtham-Keathley*: (in chat prior to the meeting): Someone may want to ask about development costs for low income housing and if EWEB and other responsible parties would reduce those fees. Those fees have kept other neighborhoods from putting up tiny houses. Is whoever responsible for that willing to get those fees down to get the housing built? *Ian*: It could be utility, construction, or other non-government entities. *Tim*: There are subsidies such as working with timber companies, etc... Joe Burney has advocated for Project Labor Agreements, which should be settled before the build requiring wage, benefits, and local labor forces. The city of Eugene housing code is not fantastic. *Ian*

*Winbrock (in chat):* Awesome article about Project Labor Agreements in the Eugene Weekly: <https://www.eugeneweekly.com/2021/07/29/communities-with-benefits/>. *Tim:* Our zoning code makes it very difficult to build in the City of Eugene, including lumber prices, so I think we could identify where some hurdles are in our own housing codes. Mark Rust, with the City of Springfield, took the idea that were happening, and were implemented them immediately. In Eugene, our City Council voted against zoning laws in House Bill... that passed on the state level. There's been a lot more upset and unrest, which could have to do with approach. *Gail Caru-Vetter (in chat):*

Wasn't the code just adjusted to allow for ADU building? There are even building plans you can download. *Ian Winbrock (in chat):* The Pre-Approved Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Plans Program at the City of Eugene: <https://www.eugene-or.gov/4707/Pre-Approved-ADU-Plans> How the C-Street Coop is using HB2001 in Springfield: <https://www.squareonevillages.org/c-street>. Tim just reminded of us how city ordinances and non-profits can work together to make low income housing happen, with the C-Street Coop. If there are any opportunities to collaborate, please let us know.

**8:55 pm / Future Agenda Topics**

- Motion for discussion and vote for Covid-19 grants
- WCAT presentation
- Transportation Committee
- Charter Committee
- Grant Writer-will be added to the Covid-19 funding discussion

**9:00 pm / Adjournment**