

## **Issues Raised at Community Meeting and Meeting with Area Agencies regarding OM House**

### **WHO WILL LIVE THERE**

What is the population moving in?

Will we serve drug addicts? criminals? people dishonorably discharged from military?  
undocumented people?

### **SERVICES PROVIDED/WHO ELSE WILL USE THE BUILDING**

Counseling programs?

What services will be offered to people?

What activities will be in the building?

### **MANAGEMENT OF THE BUILDING**

Supervision?

Staff?

What other facilities are run like this?

Will there be a manager

No business plan

How will things be operationalized?

How many people per day will be using the building?

Can there be a formal mechanism for them to address concerns with us?

### **EFFECT ON NEIGHBORHOOD (Non- safety related)**

How do we keep people who don't live there out of the neighborhood?

Effect on property values

What happens to overflow people

Loitering and hanging out

Afraid people will hang out there

Who enforces violations of number of people who can be there

Will it be a nuisance

How do we shut it down if it is a problem

### **SAFETY**

How will we keep people out that we don't want?

Will people be panhandling?

Safety with dance school, montesoirre school, family center, parks

Hazardous waste dump in the park?

People drinking and using drugs

People wandering off and going in other buildings

Will this be like E Washington

## **QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROJECT**

Mission house or SRO housing?

What type of housing, transitional? How long will people stay there?

Is this a shelter?

Parking

Plans to expand

Can they move the bus stop to in front of the building - will people be hanging out at the bus stop

Headquarters for occupy/political organization?

## **FUNDING**

Value of the building vs assessed value

Who pays back if we can't pay

Affordable Housing Trust Fund fund not housing portion of the building?

No business plan

**\* PROPOSED \***

## **Community Outreach Meetings for OM House**

### **MEETING ONE**

#### **Getting Started**

1. Meeting with name tags that ID people as neighbors or supporters or community folks - Have Occupy people have special name tags so they can identify us
2. Sign in with opportunities to get more info
3. Invite people to come a half hour early and see the plans - have copies of plans at each table
4. Flip charts or flip chart paper for all the tables
5. Markers
6. Refreshments? Coffee? Snacks?

#### **Publicity**

1. Facebook event to invite people
- 2.. Flyer the neighborhood
3. Press release
4. Email people on Satya's list
5. Invite DAIS, Center for Families, Dance School, Neighborhood Reps etc.

#### **Agenda**

1. A short presentation 5 - 10 minutes
2. Ask if there are additional concerns that will not be addressed at the tables
3. Adjust as necessary.
4. Have people go to tables
5. Report back
6. Next steps

#### **Tables**

- who will live there
- services provided/who else will use the building
- management of the building
- safety
- other effects on neighborhood
- project specifics
- funding

1. Ask people to go to different tables, have two sheets of paper, one for questions, one for concerns
2. Have two people at each table (one camper, one community person) to answer questions and be nice to everyone
3. Have people rotate and give them a chance to get to each table
4. Record all info, let them write it down, have multiple markers at each table.

### **Wrap Up**

1. Ask if there are any miscellaneous concerns that didn't have a place to write them down
2. Have tables report back the top issues and concerns
3. Announce next meetings and what the topics will be - ask the crowd what they want addressed first

### **MEETING TWO**

#### **Getting Started**

1. Meeting with name tags that ID people as neighbors or supporters or community folks - Have Occupy people have special name tags so they can identify us
2. Sign in with opportunities to get more info
3. Invite people to come a half hour early and see the plans - have copies of plans at each table
4. Flip charts or flip chart paper for all the tables
5. Markers
6. Refreshments? Coffee? Snacks?

#### **Publicity**

1. Facebook event to invite people
- 2.. Flyer the neighborhood
3. Press release
4. Email people on Satya's list
5. Email people from last meeting
6. Invite DAIS, Center for Families, Dance School, Neighborhood Reps etc.

#### **Agenda**

1. A short presentation 5 - 10 minutes
2. Ask if there are additional concerns that will not be addressed at this meeting
3. Go over issues as presented at the tables
4. Present policies and procedures we plan to adopt in each area
5. Ask for feedback, write it all down on the sheets
6. Get through as many topics as we can
7. Next steps

### **MEETING THREE**

#### **Getting Started**

1. Meeting with name tags that ID people as neighbors or supporters or community folks - Have Occupy people have special name tags so they can identify us
2. Sign in with opportunities to get more info
3. Invite people to come a half hour early and see the plans and policies
4. Have proposed plans and policies on the website
5. Refreshments? Coffee? Snacks?

#### **Publicity**

1. Facebook event to invite people
- 2.. Flyer the neighborhood
3. Press release
4. Email people on Satya's list
5. Email people on our lists
6. Invite DAIS, Center for Families, Dance School, Neighborhood Reps etc.

#### **Agenda**

1. A short presentation 5 - 10 minutes
2. Ask if there are additional concerns that will not be addressed
3. Adjust as necessary.
4. Present policies and procedures we plan to adopt in each area
5. Ask for feedback, write it all down on the sheets
6. Ask if the issues have all been addressed
7. Determine if we need additional meetings
8. Hand out lists of contact info and how to stay involved

**WHO WILL BE LIVING AT OM HOUSE?**  
**OM HOUSE POLICIES**  
**DRAFT \*\*\* DRAFT \*\*\* DRAFT**

**MEMBERSHIP PROCESS**

- A waiting list will be maintained, based primarily on seniority. Only members of Occupy Madison, Inc. who are in good standing are allowed to be on the waiting list.
- When an opening becomes available, the next person on the waiting list will be notified that they can begin the membership process by attending house meetings and be given a copy of these policies.
- The applicant must attend three consecutive house meetings.
- Following the three meetings, the applicant will be interviewed. (need to develop interview questions)
- Members will discuss the person and decide on whether or not they should be allowed into the house.
- A person needs to be voted in (YES vote, abstentions don't count) by 75% of ALL occupants (including those not at the meeting. If there are 20 total residents and 5 (25%) are out of town and one person abstains, the membership is NOT voted in unless some of those five people vote by proxy).
- Any member can block an applicant from becoming an occupant (but they must have a good reason!).
- If the vote is successful, they will sign a commitment to the house rules.
- There will be a two week trial period, after which another House Meeting will determine whether or not the person can stay.
- After those two weeks, the person is a full occupant and may sign a lease. (month to month)

**BACKGROUND CHECKS AND ENTRY DECISIONS**

**Fair Housing**

In addition to the above membership process, any member of OM house will be entitled to full rights under federal, state and local fair housing laws. We will not discriminate based on race, color, religion, gender, national origin, mental or physical disability, familial status (including pregnancy), age, sexual orientation (gay, straight, bisexual, queer), marital status, ancestry, lawful source of income, victims of domestic violence, abuse or other crimes, type of military discharge, physical appearance, gender identity (including transgendered persons), domestic partnership status, genetic identity, political beliefs, student status, receipt of rent assistance (Section 8) and citizenship status.

The group has also decided to extend the local fair housing protections that existed prior to passage of 2011 Wisconsin Act 108 which means they will extend some protections on arrest and conviction records (slightly modified), disclosure of social security numbers and minimum income standards.

**Standard Screening Practices**

Traditionally, landlords screen tenants and check in the following areas:

Amount of Income       Landlord References       Eviction & Civil Court Records  
 Credit       Conviction Record

We will check all of these items, however they will not be used a basis for denial. Instead, this information will be used to help applicants address issues discovered so that they can obtain regular market housing. Information will be used in the following ways:

**Income:** To assist in determining eligibility for benefits and services.

**Landlord References:** To assist in determining if there are behavior issues to be listed as goals for the applicant or determine if a payment plan to a landlord could assist in future more positive references

**Eviction and Court Record:** To determine if there is a reason to challenge the eviction record, make payment plans or reopen a case.

**Credit:** To determine if there are mistakes on the credit records, submit explanations for credit reports and otherwise determine if there are things that can be done to repair the credit.

**Conviction Record:** To have full disclosure for other residents living in the house and to be discussed during the membership process. Record checks will be purchased through the Madison Police Department. In order to be denied based on criminal record we will consider if the crime is related to housing, how long ago the crime occurred (may be denied even if off paper more than 2 years ago unlike former city ordinance), location the crime took place, the possibility of recurrence. Sex offenders may be excluded depending upon the specific offense due to the presence of childrens programs in the area.

#### **Additional Rules**

Pets will go through a similar membership process (yet to be developed). Service animals will be allowed and the presence of a service animal cannot be a reason for denial.

Must be at least 18 years of age unless parents are living in the building or they have permission of the parent or guardian.

#### **Denial**

Any denial shall be put in writing and given, mailed, or emailed to the applicant that has been denied within 5 days of the decision.

#### **Appeal**

Decisions to deny membership may be appealed to the Board of Directors within 14 days of written notice of denial. The applicant will be given an opportunity to review application file and has the right to present evidence and witnesses in support of the application before the Board of Directors.

## Approval

Upon final approval, the applicant will be asked to sign a lease and house rules. Prior to this point, the person is a guest and may be asked to leave at any time.

## HOUSE RULES

House members and their guests will be expected to:

- Always show respect for others and yourself.
- Refrain from harassment, discrimination or abusive conduct (see definitions below)
- Attend House meetings twice a week.
- Participate in conflict resolution training.
- Serve on the grievance committee rotation.
- Participate in household chore rotation.
- Be actively working on goals (ex. seek employment, seek benefits (SSI, SSDI), address mental health and medical issues, AODA treatment)
- Participate in trainings offered to house residents.
- Pay rent or provide work hours in lieu of rent.
- Keep your room in clean, safe and sanitary condition.
- Refrain from littering
- Smoke in the smoking area (need to designate the smoking area with the help of the neighbors)
- Refrain from loitering or trespassing on or near neighboring properties
- Follow park rules
- Refrain from engaging in illegal activity
- Not invite "crashers" in the non-residential portion of the building.
- Have guests sign in if they stay in the residential portion of the building.
- Have a roommate agreement regarding guests before inviting guests to stay over night.
- Have your guests become a member of Occupy Madison, Inc. if they stay frequently.

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Note: - Guests will be allowed according to law. Madison General Ordinances state that 32.05(1)(g)

A landlord may regulate guests, but may not prohibit, a tenant from having all guests. Guest regulations, if any, shall be included in the rental agreement. Guest regulations shall be in conformance with the definition of a Family provided in Chapter 28 of Madison General Ordinances. Guest regulations shall not permit the violation of zoning regulations, including capacity standards, provided in Chapter 28 of Madison General Ordinances. Nothing in these ordinances shall prohibit a landlord from commencing an eviction action against a tenant for permitting a person to reside in the tenant's rental unit in violation of Madison General Ordinances or state law.

## HARASSMENT AND ABUSIVE CONDUCT



Occupy Madison, Inc is committed to maintaining a positive environment for its members and guests. All individuals have the right to enjoy an environment free from all forms of conduct that can be considered harassing, threatening or intimidating. True cooperation can exist only when every person is free to pursue expression of ideas in a non-threatening atmosphere of mutual respect. Occupy Madison, Inc. is committed to protecting freedom of expression of all members and this policy against harassment and abusive conduct will be applied in a manner that protects those freedoms. Harassment and abusive conduct are offensive, impair morale, undermine the integrity of relationships and cause serious harm to the productivity, efficiency and stability of our organization. They are unacceptable and threatening to the success, well-being, and growth of all members of our community and will not be tolerated. This policy applies to all members, officers and staff.

**Definition: Harassment**

Harassment: Unwelcome verbal or physical conduct or discrimination based on race, color, creed, ancestry, national origin, age, disability, sex, arrest or conviction record, marital status, sexual orientation, membership in the military reserve or use or nonuse of lawful products away from work, or any other protected class. This also includes sexual harassment, defined as unwelcome, severe, and pervasive verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

**Definition: Abusive Conduct**

Abusive Conduct: Behavior that creates an intimidating environment and is likely to interfere with an individual's work or home life. This conduct can be verbal, physical, or communicated in writing or electronically. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Threatening or intimidating behavior or words
- Obscenities or profanities directed towards an individual or group
- Degrading a person or a group
- Taunting, jeering, mocking or humiliating another person
- Screaming and/or yelling at or around others
- Insulting someone or their performance, especially in the presence of others
- Endangering the safety of an individual or individuals

**FEEDBACK**

**EMAIL**

1/16

Brenda:

A step in the right direction, though on the residential side I think your Board needs to make hard decisions as to what's the right profile of an MB Housing Coop member—and what the Coop needs to provide those members. For example, the needs and objectives of a family seeking residence in the house (probably shorter term) could be very different from a single adult who may look at OM House as a permanent housing

## Occupy Madison Timeline

### SUMMER

- We looked all summer for an alternative to sleeping in the campgrounds and a back up plan for when they closed, we found nothing viable. We looked at 100s of options. We found no legal camping options within the city limits on a bus line. We found no other non-camping options that were viable with the help of a volunteer realtor.

### NOVEMBER

- When we were camping on Lake View Hill, November 9 – 20, a property owner stopped by to see if he could help. He owns a building we looked at over the summer, and he offered to let us camp on some private land he owns elsewhere, but it wasn't on a bus line. So we started looking at the possibility of renting the building for 5 months. And we started looking into what it would take to make the building into a mission house and if we could get it zoned properly and if it would be cost prohibitive.

### PROJECT BEGINS

- November 21 – Initial contact with Matt Tucker (Zoning Administrator) about requirements we would have for zoning and occupancy.
- November 22 – 25 – Thanksgiving
- November 26 – Dec 1 – Working on building issues with the city and our architect.
- November 27 - Meet with Matt Tucker to figure out best zoning options and schedule DAT (Development Assistance Team) meeting.

### DECEMBER

- December 6 – Meet with the Development Assistance Team (DAT) to see if the project is viable
- December 7 – Submitted an (not so awesome, quickly slammed together) application for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund
- December 7 – Notify Alder Rhodes-Conway and Supervisor Heidi Wegleitner about the project.
- December 11 – Initial quote from the construction company – \$15,000 more than we expected and it no longer makes sense to rent for 5 months while we investigate buying.
- December 12 – 13 – Investigate if we can avoid an additional \$20,000 for a sprinkler system.
- December 12 – Find out we can buy the building on a land contract.
- December 14 – Incorporate.
- December 17 – Meets with board and makes decisions necessary to make this happen.
- December 17 – Submit site plans for review at the city.
- December 18

Membership meets to pass by-laws

Board meets to ratify the by-lawys to finalize our organizational meeting of the organization.

- December 19 – Preparing for blizzard and campers at Token Creek.

### MOSTLY STALLED DUE TO BLIZZARD, CHRISTMAS, HOLIDAYS AND NEW YEARS

- - December 20 and 21 – Blizzard logistics, but continuing to get things for the fiscal agent (not final yet), get the land contract reviewed, finalizing stuff with the major donor for the project, managing media who are dying to do a story and we keep telling them not to until we have talked to people.
- - December 20 – Land contract reviewed by attorney and advice given on some details.
- - December 22 – Notify DAIS and Center for Families staff about the project because we are hearing complaints that we have not contacted them - got all vacation responses that they won't be back til after

the holidays. Facebook the folks I know.

- December 22 - 23- Blizzard Clean Up - spend most of the day moving people back to Token Creek and digging out from storm.
- - December 24 – Continue attempts to get bank account opened.
- -December 26 – Membership meets to work on policies.
- - December 26 – Notified that our fiscal agent fell through, so plans for fundraising and purchase of building put on indefinite hold until this is figured out.
- - December 27 – Meeting with and review of most recent bid from contractors
- - December 28, 29, 30, 31 & January 1 - Not much can get accomplished due to holidays.

## **JANUARY**

- January 2
  - Official bid from construction company and meeting to work on policies.
  - Talk to Mike from Center for Families
  - Talk to Shannon from DAIS
  - Informal meeting to work on policies
  - Set up neighborhood meeting
- January 3 - Meeting with potential fundraising consultant
- January 4
  - Meeting with Mayor to see if there are other options than Token Creek since project slowed down
  - No quorum for membership meeting
- January 6 - various meetings for organization
- January 7 - Meeting with Sherman Neighborhood Association
- January 8
  - Informal meeting to work on policies
  - Hire band for fundraiser
- January 9
  - Meeting with DAIS, Center for Families and Northside Planning Council representative
  - Meeting with city on Affordable Housing Trust Fund Application
- January 10 - Membership and Board meeting
- January 11
  - Set up bank account, paypal account
  - Architect meets with Matt Tucker to find out zoning in new zoning code - likely permitted use
- January 12
  - Neighborhood meeting
  - Fundraising, seeking sponsors for upcoming event

## **UPCOMING**

- January 17 - Meeting on affordable housing trust fund application
- January 29 - Fundraiser at the Fountain

Continued work by committees on OM Works, Co-op Housing rules, Media and Public Relations

## **OM House It's going to be different . . .**

It is estimated that there are over 400 people without homes sleeping outside in the Madison area that are somehow not fitting in to the homeless services system. We do not have all the answers, but we believe that it is most likely to be found while learning together within the context of community and relationships. We know that we need to work together to create a stake in the outcomes, not just a bed. Therefore this is not a typical housing project for persons without homes, it is a community and office space with cooperative housing, not a traditional social services program like those that are not working for people. The concept for this house is based on the work Occupy Madison has done in the last 15 months working together as a whole community (housed and unhoused) while people lived at 800 E Washington Ave. (October 2011 - May 2012) and camped at Dane County Campgrounds over the summer until they closed (May 2012 - October 2012), and the more recent locations at 800 E. Washington Ave. (October 27 - November 11), Lake View Hill (November 10 - 20) and now Token Creek Park (November 20 - present). It is also based on the recommendations in the report Madison-area Urban Ministry did for the county board over the summer.

Additionally, we draw from many newer less-traditional concepts that may be perceived to be on the cutting edge, but they work. They are cost effective. And most importantly it empower people to live in a community with dignity, respect and self-determination. A community that includes people in determining their outcomes. We draw our evolving vision from bits and pieces of theories like clubhouse models (Yahara House, Off the Square Club), Housing First (United Way, The Road Home, YWCA), restorative justice (MUM, Dane County Timebank) and newer concepts to our community like trauma informed care, harm reduction, self-determination theory and motivational interviewing. We also realize that this is work in progress and we hope to grow and change as we discover which strategies work best and we hope to incorporate emerging strategies and theories. Above all it addresses the need to acknowledge that there is no one-size-fits-all box we can put people in, that housed and unhoused people can work together to figure out how we can make our community stronger by using different strategies. Some ideas will work better for some than others. By providing a circle of support for people, we work together to provide help, advice, and laughter in all kinds of situations, to challenge us to be better than we are, to show hidden paths forward, to bounce ideas off of, etc. Isolation and derision has never ever been shown to work to better any human life. Personal ownership, community commitment, and a stake in outcomes does. Overall, it is the concept that every human being matters, that every voice is important, and that acknowledges that people have set-backs and failures, and when that happens we need to learn from that experience and realize that no one is to be thrown away because of those failures.

As a testament to what we have been able to do, we did track successes over the summer and of the 70 people who stayed at the Dane County Campgrounds over the 6 months this summer, 50 were regular folks who stayed for a period of time. 17 of the 50 moved on to other housing. Mostly on their own, without the help from existing traditional social service agencies that barely recognized their existence.

Some people who live in this cooperative housing may have a need for traditional social services, but largely this will get people into housing instead of a tent and stop the cycle of homelessness and reduce the amount of time people spend running around just to do laundry, take a shower and retrieve items from storage instead of looking for jobs and housing. This should reduce the need for services and improve people's chances of success better than living in an apartment in isolation without supports.