



Collister Neighborhood Association

Quarterly Neighborhood Meeting

April 11, 2024, 6:15pm - 7:45pm

Library! at Collister

Collister Neighborhood Association Board

Greg Williams, *President*

Crystal Stafford, *Vice President*

Nate Black, *Member at Large*

Amy Vecchione, *Member at Large*

Jessica Aston, *Secretary*

Thomas Stafford, *Treasurer*

Claire Fenton, *Member at Large*

Minutes

- **Welcome, Introduction of the Board** (Greg Williams, President)
- **Neighborhood Business**
 - **Garden Tour - June 2** (Claire Fenton, Member at Large)
 - Tickets are for sale
 - Garden Greeter volunteers needed
 - **Transportation Meeting - May 7** (Amy Vecchione, Member at Large)
 - **Neighborhood Picnic - August 10** (Jessica Aston, Secretary)
 - Volunteers needed
 - Looking for local food trucks
- **Housing Symposium** (LEAP, Jesse Tree, Northwest Real Estate Capital Corp.)

Panelists:

- Brian Woodward, Chief of Staff, LEAP Housing
- John Vance, Senior Property Developer, Northwest Real Estate Capital Corp.
- Ali Rabe, Executive Director, Jesse Tree
- What makes their housing affordable?
 - Limiting rental rates based on the income levels of the folks they choose to serve .
 - Eligible individuals receive a utility allowance and there is an equation to determine their cost based on the percentage of Area Median Income (AMI) they earn.
 - Developers can get tax credits. They also have investors to raise equity, so they have a lower debt load. Investors use that to get tax credits to lower their tax burdens (they get their investment back in tax credits).
 - LEAP gets a different source of construction funds and works with HUD.
 - Earned income tax credit
 - They are not competing with the market rate developers, because there's nothing restricting market rents.
 - LEAP has developed 20 homes and are currently developing a 60-unit apartment building in Mountain Home. They sometimes get property donated, which makes their developments more affordable.
 - Some states have done is land banking
 - Land donations from churches for affordable housing - "Yes in God's Backyard" (YIGBY)
 - Partnership with LEAP and Jesse Tree to make the environment more human and they know when the affordable units are coming online.

- Data
 - Our Path Home is the entry point for affordable housing in Idaho. They collect data.
 - There are about 2,000 homeless people in Idaho and 200 families with children. They can only count people who choose to go to Our Path and share their information. Homelessness has increased over the last year and evictions and homelessness doubled after pandemic financial assistance ended.
 - Jesse Tree gets about 400 requests for assistance each month, but more people are being evicted than they can track.
 - According to the United Way, 30% of the population in the valley are renting and about 50% of renters are living paycheck to paycheck (one emergency expense away from losing housing).
 - The average cost to keep a family housed is \$2,000. Jesse Tree saves about 100 families from eviction each month.
 - Cost for CATCH to get someone out of homelessness is \$10-15k. They have a 2 year waiting list.
 - According to the Idaho Policy Institute, it costs the city of Boise \$53k per person per year for homelessness.

- How did you get into housing and why?
 - John Vance - He worked for a development company in Denver then got hired by Northwest Real Estate Capital Corp. He also serves on the Board for the Good Samaritan Society.
 - Brian Woodward - He co founded a nonprofit in St. Louis that bought houses and used them as classrooms to employ people.
 - Ali Rabe - She did nonprofit work with refugees and international work, then shifted back to domestic work with homelessness in the Bay Area. She is able to draw upon that experience in her role with Jesse Tree.

- Why focus on supply?
 - Some affordable housing is aging out of its affordability, because tax credits are expiring.
 - LEAP is starting a pilot program to allow folks to host RVs or movable tiny homes in hopes of making this a permanent option (currently not permitted by city code).
 - Boise has a low vacancy rate. Jesse Tree works with people to find new affordable housing and it is very competitive and difficult. Supply is a challenge.
 - LEAP also works on homeownership to work on ending generational poverty.
 - The highest income to qualify for affordable housing is 80% AMI.
 - Compliance agencies have different programs and audit tenant files to look at income verification, etc. Rent isn't based on income, but developments score higher if you say that you have lower AMI requirements.
 - Mixed income rentals are typically 30-60% AMI.
 - Affordable Housing developments and Jesse Tree all have waiting lists and the lists are audited regularly.

- What is the city's role in combating homelessness?
 - Zoning code rewrite, funding, collaborating and helping different groups fill their role, so they aren't going after the same types of projects.
 - Our Path Home - the city can also develop permanent supportive housing.
 - The state also has a role they need to fulfill - the market isn't taking care of the problem, because land and materials are too expensive.
 - Governments are taking more of a role - housing development, preventing homelessness, and addressing homelessness.
 - Our Path Home is working on getting better data about where unhoused people are coming from.
 - City of Boise renter protections were recently overturned by the state legislature.
 - The city needs all kinds of housing and has responsibility for all their residents.

- How long do people typically receive support from Jesse Tree?
 - One-time, short-term assistance and they rarely hear again from folks they have helped.
 - Their case managers help clients go through their budgets and make plans (social work and mediation support).
 - 95% of the people they have helped since 2018 don't end up in a shelter or come back to Jesse Tree.
 - Survivors of domestic violence are the most common in our homeless population.
 - 25% of the people they help are being evicted because of a medical issue.
 - The property management industry is overburdened and under-resourced - eviction is expensive for landlords.

- What should we know and what can we do?
 - Know the resources that are out there to help support people.
 - Increase housing supply by advocating for affordable housing or building an ADU.
 - Elect good people.
 - Stay informed and engage with elected officials.
 - Brian - Talk more than 30 seconds about the problem. Five years ago was different from today and we should know how the environment has changed. Make a donation last by giving to a land trust (deed restrictions guarantee affordable housing for 99 years). LEAP is getting into the business of lending to get money into local communities to give loans for 3% for qualified people (loan pools). Stay informed about what is changing in the marketplace
 - John - Break it down to one person / one family at a time. Donations can make you a part of the solution to end homelessness. Be more accepting of affordable housing projects in our communities. 6-8 people you met today would qualify for affordable housing. Think about it in terms of who is going to live in those developments, friends and neighbors.
 - Valor Pointe - Housing for formerly homeless Veterans - has lots of success stories (permanent supportive housing).
 - Housing also needs to have transportation access. Idaho is the only state in the country that doesn't offer state funds for municipal transportation. Boise can't afford to fund public transit for the entire valley
 - One of the keys is to build in critical transit areas or areas that have walkable access to services.
 - There are many reductions to parking requirements in the new city zoning code.

- **Adjourn**