



Kent County Essential Needs Task Force * Energy Efficiency Subcommittee Meeting
Kent County Health and Human Services Building * 121 Franklin SE * Grand Rapids, MI 49507

September 25, 2018 Minutes

ENTF Energy Efficiency Subcommittee Members and Guests Present:

John Mitchell (United Way), Kendrick Heinlein (AAAWM), Sherrie Gillespie (Kent County Community Action), Susan Cervantes (Kent County Community Action), Tom Oosterbaan (Senior Neighbors), Wende Randall (ENTF), Brett Little (Grand Rapids Green Homes)

Susan Cervantes, presided.

I. Welcome/Introductions

Introductions around the room, state your name and organization.

II. Review notes from last meeting

III. Summary of services: Grand Rapids Green Homes Institute

Administer the Grand Rapids Green Affordable Housing Program:

Where is there a need to improve health and water conservation and other issues to make homes more efficient and affordable? Example, with the ICCF homes, GR Green Homes Initiative will be consulting and making recommendations for repair/renovation and then consult for the LEED certification; also work with Habitat for Humanity LEED certification. Right now, GRGHI is staying at or below 100% AMI. In addition, they are exploring work with WellHouse, 3:11 Youth Housing, Disability Advocates, veteran services and other projects; and working with utility companies, prior to the weatherization. Plus, they are working on ventilation and radon testing, and a water conservation project with low-income households for low-flow toilets and aerators on faucets.

IV. Coalition to Keep Michigan Warm Update:

Community Action received an email regarding increases.

V. MEAP Updates:

Contracts have not been received yet and the funds are supposed to be available October 1st. Since the new design is to have clients go through SER DHHS first, it might take a couple of billing cycles before the need hits the service provider offices.

There is a need to explore what other agencies may be part of the navigation for MIBridges and specifically MEAP. Currently, send clients to Community Action.

Consumers Energy has indicated that they are willing to do more electrical efficiency investment (related to Energy Optimization funds across the state), but have not really followed through with this

What do we want out of relationships?

The following were topics discussed:

Decrease duplication of services – what can we do to support the partners that are doing things really well? How can we build up the awareness of both eligibility and types of services to partner and refer with multiple providers?

Historically this group has been a coalition of the agencies that provide services. Due to the consolidation of services under DHHS, should this group re-envision the objective of the group? What do we see as our mission for the future? Can we turn the attention more to advocacy rather than coordination? We are the voice of the people at the state level and with the utility providers. And with weatherization and long-term solutions, there is a need.

Who is advocating for permanent housing for leveraging funding opportunities? Could there be a shift to long-term solutions for housing?

If we look just at utility assistance, that is generally the first indicator of risk of homelessness (that they cannot pay their utility bills). So, utility assistance is the first step in preventing homelessness. Additionally, weatherization is a key step to making housing more affordable. How do we help make sure that housing is affordable? Energy efficiency is an indicator.

Could we bring in the housing entities and the utility companies to see what need exists?

VI. Updates