

Humboldt Community NETWORK

August 5, 2004 Meeting Report

Marshall Family Resource Center

Kim Puckett and Cathy Rigby, NETWORK coordinators, welcomed everyone to the NET meeting and introduced guest speaker, Richard Dorn.

~ Presentation ~

Richard Dorn, Dorn & Company-Eureka, gave a PowerPoint presentation on statistical information concerning housing affordability and Humboldt County's General Plan. He stated 19% of California residents can afford to buy a home and 27% of our county residents are considered financially able to purchase a home.

Using last year's home sales at his multiple listing company, he determined 2/3 of homes purchased were by local residents, leaving about 1/3 by new residents which dispels the idea of home prices being driven by outsiders willing to pay more. Later discussion added his criteria for 'local' was a person residing in the county for more than one year. He plans to track this local vs. outsider issue and add the price paid by these groups; no historical tracking of this issue was found.

Richard displayed affordability and housing availability by occupations such as teachers, nurses and firefighters on the basis we typically want and need these people in our communities. He determined these occupations would have from 5 to 25 homes to select from in our current market. Nationally, 51% of homes go to first time buyers and are believed to create a stable community. Later discussion of first time buyer assistance programs noted restrictions to lead-free paint homes eliminates many pre 1978 homes and income/home price limitations further reduces the access to these programs.

When Calpine LNG considered establishing their industry in our area, it was estimated they would have needed 60 homes that our market did not have. He reviewed statistical information on affordability index; housing lost which was not made up by new construction; available land audited for build-ability (estimated to be 62% unbuildable on available land in some cities); forest resources, timber harvest, and national trends in timber ownership noted in relation to our county.

State bill AB855 has been postponed. State regulations, water quality boards, and increased traffic and sewer hookups for new developments along with the cost estimates by the Dept of Public Works for typical roads, gutters, curbs and sidewalks all affect housing availability, affordability, and construction. Richard indicated excessive regulations add to the cost of housing. He felt Humboldt County's 1984 General Plan was not adhered to for the last 20 years, citing the "not in my back yard" reasoning for lack of enforcement which resulted in loss of the

density plan, lack of housing site inventory, lack of experimental building technology, and no streamlining of permit processes.

Suggestions of solutions included political commitment to adhere to General Plans, infrastructure funding by Mello-Roos (tax-exempt bond financing to pay for infrastructure of public facilities, such as roads, sewers, water facilities, etc., and repaid by special taxes on the property over 20-30 years, 1982 legislation, source online) or other assessments or borrowing from Headwaters Funds, needs political leaders to be accountable for implementation of General Plan.

Group Discussion & Questions and Answers: NET participants reviewed: school population has decreased but community population has not, aging population, county median age about 8 years older than national average; infrastructure costs are an unsolved issue, TPZ tax breaks and infrastructure costs; philosophical discussion of the number of homes in a small area with open spaces compared to urban sprawl based on density and the kind of housing density determined by a General Plan.

The General Plan is to be updated. County Supervisor Jimmy Smith indicated livable communities are the goal and recommended public review of the proposed four sketches (developed from public meetings) for General Plan update which were presented in the past year and can be viewed at website www.co.humboldt.ca.us/planning/gp/ or www.plan.org He encouraged community participation and public comments at the August 25th Board of Supervisors meeting.

Marianne gave an example of subsidized housing for working families through Veteran's Administration which allowed them to get started, contribute to community, and later were able to benefit from the increase in property values which further stabilized their community. Jimmy gave an example of Proposition 13 property tax protection of less than \$400 annual tax on a 1973 home purchase comparable to a more recent home purchase resulting in a \$2400 annual tax. He stated the rate of exchange is not tracked on home sales with Prop 13 protections.

The 4 Sketch Plans for the updated General Plan will have their final public comments soon, then the Board of Supervisors will make their selection followed by plans on infrastructure needs and economic elements. Richard indicated this is backwards because the plan is chosen before infrastructure and economic needs are considered.

Another group referred to was Healthy Humboldt, has made presentations relating to environment and economic health tied to Plan choice, info at <http://healthyhumboldt.org>. Marianne asked who is advocating for low cost housing; several responded, Arcata House, 822-4528.

Jimmy stated "we are the plan" it is what you want your children to be in, what you want your aunts and parents to be in. He invited public review of the sketch plans with comments at the August 25th meeting and letters to the Development Director or your County Supervisor.

~ Humboldt County Supervisor Jimmy Smith ~

In response to the presentation and to questions, Jimmy indicated the County could have done a better job of implementing and upholding the General Plan. Jimmy stated housing permits and regulations are from federal, state, and county. An example was given of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regulations on a federally designated FEMA 'flood way' and what appeared to be a reasonable request by a local resident but needed County assistance to deal with the federal regulations. The array of regulations, codes and permits all need to be enforced, however, Jimmy stated the Board is trying to build a less cumbersome process to reduce the accumulative impact of federal, state, and county processes. After a brief group discussion of state taxes, estate taxes, business-in-home, open space and water shed protections, Jimmy stated people need to express what they want to the Board of Supervisors. Neighborhood clean-ups have been successful, people are on track with redevelopment for homes and family. New pressured systems for septic systems have almost zero water quality change and now meet perk regulations; it is expensive but available which may help develop new areas. Fiber optics installations that conform with neighborhoods would allow people to have long-distance employment and live where they chose. Infrastructure seeks to provide and service neighborhoods. In response to a question about expensive special project fee for building based on size of lot and set-back, the goal was to house disabled relative on family property with the appearance of separate and independent living, the permit was \$3,000; he suggested this could be addressed by the General Plan. Jimmy stated we can do better in the future and encouraged everyone to review the update sketches for the General Plan and participate with the Board. WE ARE THE PLAN.

~ Roundtable ~

Lucy Crackel, Blue Lake FRC, announced a fund raiser for matching funds to be used with a Humboldt First 5 grant, will bring fliers next time.

Pat Falor, Blue Lake Family Resource Center

Sheri Johnson, Director of field education at HSU-Social Work Dept., 826-4452, slj1@humboldt.edu, stated the Masters Degree program is accepting applications for full time students now and will have part time program curriculum available in the future. For more info please see the website (social work program): www.humboldt.edu/~swp

Rodney Hubbs, Area Agency on Aging-Southern Humboldt, Care Management Coordinator, 923-2275, sohum@A1AA.org, distributed business cards and flier for Case Manager Meeting 8/25 in Garberville. He invited social services and other representatives and volunteers to contact him, he is working to identify agencies and organizations that provide or could provide services in Southern Humboldt; willing to hold meetings in Eureka to coordinate case manager resources.

Annie Bolick-Floss, HSU Service Learning Coordinator, recruiting volunteers and inviting project requests for the annual Day of Caring on September 18th. Announcement and form inside NET mailer & eNET, or please contact 443-8637. This event is sponsored by Humboldt State University, Volunteer Center of the Redwoods (VCOR), and the United Way of Humboldt County.

Lorain Renner, Humboldt Family Service Center (non-profit counseling agency), ASW Trainee, 443-7358

Kari Love, RCAA Straight-up AmeriCorp, kari@rcaa.org, after one year hiatus (no funding) AmeriCorps is now recruiting members and service site requests for 2004-05, forms and fliers distributed.

Sandy Walsh, DHHS-PHB-MCAH-Child Passenger Safety Program, 476-4991, distributed Basic Guidelines for carseats & boosters for children from birth to age 12.

Annie Howell, DHHS-PHB-MCAH, ahowell@co.humboldt.ca.us, brochures will be available soon for 'Best Beginnings' a new program.

Michelle Baer-Guthrie, North Coast Clinics Network 442-6066, Certified Application Assistant provides enrollment assistance and outreach for Healthy Families and MediCal for Children, welcomes calls for assistance; will have a booth at Humboldt County Fair-invited everyone to visit.

Steve Moore, DHHS-PHB-Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) reporting, stated five newly reported cases of gonorrhea, in addition to 28 existing cases, and chlamydia cases are increasing. Steve suggested those working with youth at risk to please encourage STD screening to reduce long term health problems, and as always, to educate prevention of STDs.

Sarah Geyer, Humboldt County Probation, works with foster care placement

Linda Thompson, Humboldt County AOD Prevention, SPAN meetings monthly, interested people are welcome; distributed posters on Violence Prevention, please call 268-2132; AOD training scheduled, please call 445-7327, see SAMSHA website for Project Success.

Julie Hoffman, Safe & Drug Free School, 441-4668, jhoffman@co.humboldt.ca.us, new with health education programs and Parents Who Care program.

Bruce Kaye, Humboldt County AOD Prevention, 445-7326, implements Project Success program, new curriculum, Project Alert in junior high school, works with kids to prevent using alcohol and other drugs. He indicated having parents included is important to have all inclusive programs; can not implement the school curriculum program because everyday school time is not available.

Marianne Pennekamp, volunteer, Healthy Start collaboratives function as Family Resource Centers assisting with after school care and other needs based on community's self determination, she will bring resource booklet another time. The Humboldt Community Switchboard is now housed with United Way but their services, phone number and website remain the same, please contact 441-1001 for general services information and phone numbers in Humboldt. Switchboard services compliment the Area Agency on Aging's referral services for MediCare beneficiaries at 442-9591. Child Welfare redesign is bringing mental health resources to FRCs and plans to offer referral assistance to prevent acceleration of problems. Marianne welcomed the return of AmeriCorps to our communities!

Kathleen Adkins, Union Labor Health Fund, and Angel Fund, 442-2417, Eureka's General Hospital was formerly know as Union Labor Hospital, when they closed their grant fund program kept their name, ULH, they are not affiliated with any labor unions. In the last grant year they distributed \$88,000. They are a huge community resource and welcome grant applications. The Angel Fund (for medically related exams, procedures, equipment and certain services) and Children's Dental Action Project invite appropriate applications. Kathleen distributed Angel request forms which are accepted weekly, and Humboldt Area Foundation's list and application for Field of Interest Grant Program which will be accepted on or before September 1st call 442-2993 or see www.hafoundation.org

Lou Moerner, program specialist, Northern California Indian Development Council (NCI DC), 445-8451, please call for tobacco cessation programs. Also chairs for local coalition for Tobacco-Free Humboldt Program 268-2132, distributed brochures for QuitNet, a free internet-based service at <http://quitnet.com/>

Rafferty, VI STA-Humboldt Partnership for Active Living, 269-2054, to examine how infrastructure discourages or allows all to participate; partnership with International Walk, presentations at Parent-Teacher-Organizations to encourage students to walk to school, about 1% now walk compared to 70% in the 70's.

Cathy Rigby, NETwork, welcomed participants to share fliers at NET meetings but please take remainders because our meeting site does not distribute them.

Brian Davis, County of Humboldt DHHS-PHB Epidemiologist

Dianne Byington, North Coast Clinics Network 442-6066, invited everyone to view the NET monthly agenda and newsletter at www.theswitchboard.org, click on 'calendar' and the NET link posted at the first Thursday of the month. Representatives from The RAVEN Project left some pocket-sized resource referral guides, and fliers for RAVEN assistance for youth age 10-21, to be distributed at NET.

Rosie Thompson, Humboldt Mediation Services-Parent Teen Project, 445-2505

Gisele Albertine, North Coast Big Brothers Big Sisters 445-4871, distributed fliers- Big Sisters ready to match in Arcata and McKinleyville, please call. Need Big Brothers in all areas. She is also with Humboldt Mediation Services-Parent Teen Project.

Doris Hicks, Humboldt Mediation Services-Parent Teen Program 445-2505, director of Parent Teen Program, distributed fliers, referral forms and brochures; please call for workshop and meeting schedule begins in September.

Wendy Smith, The Exchange Club Parenting Center parentingcentercm@yahoo.com, 443-3484, provides home visiting services by volunteers trained by Exchange Club.

Kathryn Johnson, HCCC-Special Needs Connection, kjohnson@hccc1.org 445-1195 services for special needs children (0-8) and their families, resource center for special needs, Match Parent Program for telephone support, habla español.

Kim Puckett, coordinator of the NETwork, thanked North Coast Clinics Network for providing the refreshments today.

Also attended: Sandy Sathrum, 4-H Youth Development Program

The next NETworks meeting will be September 2nd