
There is Room at the Inn: Converting Hotels/Motels into Shelter and Permanent Housing

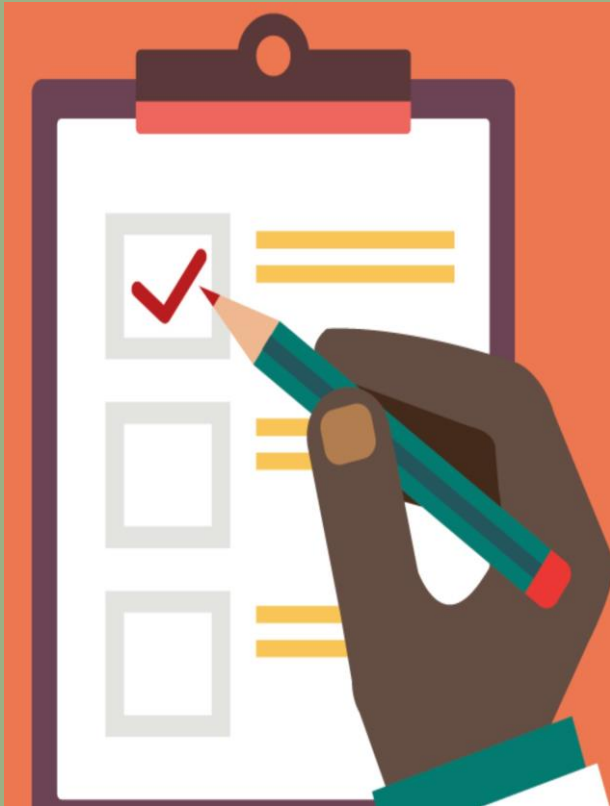
Homes Within Reach Conference
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Suzanne Wagner, Housing Innovations

swagner@housinginnovations.us



Agenda



Welcome and Introductions

Conversion Examples

Danbury Motel

Days Inn

Casa de Esperanza

Susan's Place

Kearny Vista Apartments

Lessons Learned

Introductions



- Suzanne Wagner, Housing Innovations
- Roles? providers, funders, advocates, COC leads, persons with lived experience of homelessness, others?
- Turn to the person next to you and:
 - Introduce yourself, your name, your agency or role, and your favorite morning beverage AND
 - Explain why you were interested in this session



Background



- Almost universal shortage of emergency shelter and permanent affordable units
- Development - cost prohibitive and slow
- COVID created a unique situation with vacant hotels/motels and lots of cash coming from COVID Relief (CARES Act) and ARRA (American Rescue and Recovery Act)
- Hotels/motels – initially, emergency options for locales with crowded shelters that needed to de-concentrate
- Longer Term – purchase/lease
- COVID Relief and ARRA Funds
 - CDBG – Community Development Block Grant
 - ESG – Emergency Solutions Grant
 - EHV – Emergency Housing Vouchers
 - ERAP – Emergency Rental Assistance



Danbury Motel



Location: Danbury, CT

Service Provider – Pacific House

Current Configuration: 70 motel units

Model/Units:

- Model/Units: Combination of ES & PSH
- 30 Emergency Shelter beds
- 40 units of PSH

Funding:

- Acquisition - CDBG – CV – 3.2 million and 400k from CT Department of Housing
- Services - State funding, surplus Rental Assistance Program (RAP) funding

Timeline: Agency purchased building this fall, anticipating winter/spring conversion

Days Inn

Location: Hartford, CT

Owner/Service Provider: Community Renewal Team

Current Configuration: 50 motel rooms

New Project

- Model/Units: Combination of ES & PSH
 - 76 Emergency Shelter beds
 - 10 units of PSH

Funding:

- Acquisition/Renovation: 3.6 million – State Bond Financing
- Services: State funding, surplus Rental Assistance Program (RAP) funding

Timeline: Agency purchased building this fall, anticipating winter/spring conversion





Casa de Esperanza

Location: Fort Worth, Texas

Current Configuration: 122 motel rooms

New Project

- Model/Units: 119 units of PSH

Funding:

- Acquisition/Renovation: \$10 million – City of Fort Worth through the federal CARES Act in the form of a forgivable loan.

Timeline: Opened December 2020

Zoning: City Council approved zoning change for PSH

Casa de Esperanza (2)

- Units are 250 square feet – full size beds, private baths and kitchenettes
- Common Areas include: leasing center, case worker office space, open clubhouse area, outdoor community spaces including a pergola lounge area, outdoor grill, resident garden space and a pet park.
- Neighboring property owners welcomed the conversion - the property was in need of maintenance





Susan's Place

Location: Essex Junction, Vermont

Owner/Service Provider: Champlain Housing Trust

Original Configuration: 113 motel rooms

New Project

- Model/Units: Permanent Supportive Housing
- 68 units of PSH – Had to reduce to meet zoning

Funding:

- Acquisition/Renovation: \$12,821,350 – COVID Relief Funds
- Vermont State Housing Authority allocated 14 project-based vouchers and 30 tenant-based vouchers to the project
- Services: Funded through operating funds



Kearny Vista Apartments

Location: San Diego, California

Owner: San Diego Housing Commission

Original Configuration: 144 motel rooms

New Project

- Model/Units: Permanent Affordable Housing
- 144 units of affordable housing

Funding:

- Acquisition: \$39.5 million, CA Homekey Program
- project-based housing vouchers

Property: Selected extended stay hotels with kitchens & baths so could immediately be converted. State exempted property from zoning requirements. Was an SRO property

Show of Hands:

Can you think of properties in your community that could be converted?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

If yes, what are they?



Lesson Learned - Challenges



- Zoning – projects may face density barriers and need to reduce number of units
- There may be unit size requirements which don't work with current configuration
- Building code requirements may be different for permanent housing and upgrades can be expensive
- Original support service plan may not be as robust/intensive as what is needed once project is up and running
- Not-in-my-Backyard (NIMBY) - there may be resistance from neighbors

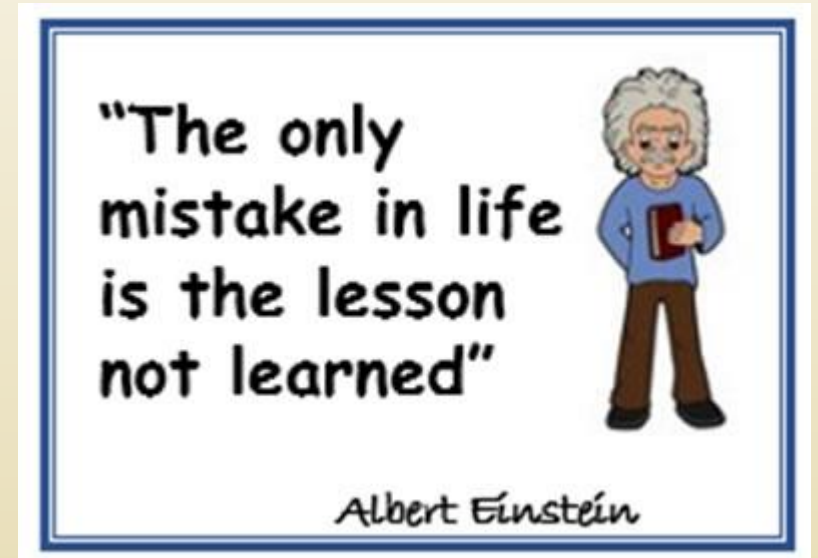
Lessons - 2

- Be creative with funding sources – tax credits, state funds, American Rescue Plan, CDBG-CV, philanthropic/private funding
- Ensure sufficient support services are in place for new project
- Educate the community on what the final project will look like. Make sure they know services/supports will be in place.
- **MUST** provide/arrange for services



More Lessons

- Property security is essential to ensure safety for residents and neighbors.
- When choosing a property consider: current zoning, immediate capital needs, potential community issues, pest control history, accessibility for people with disabilities, and proximity to services and transportation.
- Shared baths/kitchen only for emergency units, not permanent housing
- Work closely with neighboring property owners to obtain support for the project





Wrap up and Final Discussion
