



ATLANTA REGIONAL HOUSING FORUM *Seizing an Opportunity: Creating special needs housing*

Agenda • September 7, 2011 9:30 a.m. – 11:45 p.m.

9:00 a.m. Registration

9:30 a.m. Welcome – Bill Bolling, Context for Forum

9:45 a.m. **Seizing an opportunity: Creating special needs housing.** Our regional community is a complex quilt of many people with a variety of housing needs. Unfortunately, “supportive” or “special needs” affordable housing demands remain unmet while financial and other resources are available through various governmental agencies. Consider the following:

- Many single adults cope with a mental or physical disability. If they are also low-income, it is highly likely that their housing options are extremely limited. The U.S. Department of Justice ruled in October of 2010 in its Olmstead decision that Georgia was derelict in its provision of housing for such persons, and decreed that the state must increase its assertive community treatment options and case management in combination with supportive housing to serve 9,000 people with mental illness in community settings. How will the state accomplish this?
- According to a pre-recession report by Georgia State University and Pathways Community Network, more than 9,000 people experience homelessness in Atlanta in any given year. For many, the experience may be transient but approximately 20% are among the chronically homeless. Their number includes adults coping with substance addiction and/or a disabling physical or mental condition. Notable subsets of this population include veterans and ex-offenders. It is estimated that slightly more than half of the homeless are housed nightly in Atlanta’s homeless shelters. Still, others are spending nights in hospital emergency rooms and jails---very expensive “housing”.

The metro Atlanta housing market is awash with housing inventory that must be sold before the housing market and economic recovery can occur. Can the oversupply of housing be part of the solution to address special needs housing? Does recent action by the Justice Department create opportunities to further meet special housing needs? What do housing agencies, nonprofit organizations and developers need to know to maximize the opportunities available?

Studies have proven conclusively that special needs housing is a far more cost effective way to house these individuals than other taxpayer-supported alternatives. Our community needs to understand the issues surrounding supportive housing and that this housing can be delivered in a high quality fashion with minimal impact on the community.

Join us at the September 7, 2011 Regional Housing Forum to explore how our region can better connect the supply of housing with individuals and families with unmet housing needs. Panelist Include:

Paul Bolster, PhD
Principal Consultant
Support Housing

Carol S. Collard, PhD, LMSW
President and CEO, CaringWorks, Inc.
Assistant Professor, Kennesaw State University

Doug Scott
Housing Coordinator
Georgia Department of Behavioral Health &
Developmental Disabilities

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