



Morristown United for Healthy Living

March 27, 5:30pm- 7:30pm, St. Margaret's Catholic Church

Agenda

Minutes in green

5:30 **Welcome & Introductions**

5:40 **Updates on Ongoing Work**

- Neighborhood Clean-Up Day
 - o Volunteers for lunch planning and clean-up needed; contact morristownunited@njhealthmatters.org to volunteer
- Mapping of the 435
 - o Many have requested a map of the 435 to help visualize information from multiple sources (e.g., rented and owned homes, green spaces, zoning, vacant lots). We will be working on a map; If you have data to share or a specific request for data to be included, please let Ashley know.
- Upcoming events
 - o **Fair Housing Committee Tenant Rights Workshop** (April 4th, Housing Partnership, flyer distributed with these minutes)
 - o **Morris County Committee** of the North Jersey Health Collaborative quarterly meeting (April 13, 10:00am, Morris County Public Safety Training Academy)
 - o **Spring Clean-Up Day** (April 22nd,
 - o **Meeting of the Fair Housing Committee**, a workgroup of the Morris County Human Relations Commission (May 4, 9:30am at Homeless Solutions Transitional Housing Program)
 - The mission of this Committee is to act as an advocate and educator for fair housing. To this end, the Committee will:
 - Further the purpose of existing federal, state, and local fair housing laws and tenant/landlord rights and responsibilities.
 - Develop, sponsor, and implement awareness, education, and training programs for the Morris County Community.
 - Engage and mobilize Morris County social and economic organizations who provide housing services.
 - Contact osmandavies@hsinj.org to join the FHC (thanks to Emily Frisch for this great overview)
 - o **Housing Alliance and Continuum of Care presentation to the Freeholders** (May 8, 9:00am)
- Other updates?
 - o One and two bedroom apartments are currently available at Beverly Gardens
 - o Free tax preparation is underway by United Way



5:55 **Joint Learning Opportunity**

- Family Promise (Dominique Tornabe)
 - o [Family Promise](#), founded in 1986, helps individuals and families living in a situation of homelessness (the word *situation* is key; intention is to change the mindset around homelessness)
 - o Family Promise has multiple programs/initiatives, including but not limited to:
 - o [Emergency shelter](#) for families and single women, which involves a partnership of over 75 local congregations and 1,600 volunteers. Host sites provide a place for families to stay and support sites provide things like meals, basic necessities, and companionship. There is space for 14 people at a time and they provide all of the resources people need during their situation of homelessness, including transportation.
 - o [Day Center](#) that provides resources including case management with a social worker, laundry, a place to store belongings, and donations (basic necessities)
 - o [Community support](#)—once people come to Family Promise, they have support for life. People can come back to the different services, as needed. There is also 24-hour on-call crisis support. This includes *Our Promise*, which is a location in Morristown that provides support for individuals, warming/cooling, social worker, and an address for mail delivery, etc.
 - o [Transitional housing](#)
 - o [Housing voucher program](#) (separate from Section 8)
 - o [Landlord education and other trainings](#) such as financial literacy, parent education, tutoring, nutrition education, good neighbor training (all dependent on the needs of their guests)
- *If you/your organization would like to present at an upcoming meeting, please let Ashley know!*

6:10 **Funding Opportunity (to support our strategies)**

- Funding Request Form, criteria and eligibility
 - o Funding is now available via Morristown United to support the work of our coalition. This is an ideal opportunity for partner organizations to request funds to tailor programs/initiatives for the 435 and for our workgroups to apply as a group for funding to support one of our selected strategies
 - o Eligibility and criteria details are included on the form. If you need an additional copy, contact Ashley.anglin@atlantichhealth.org

- Q & A

6:25 **Strategy Review**

- Our selected strategies are now included on the Morris County Community Health Improvement Plan page of the NJHC website: www.njhealthmatters.org/tiles/morristownunited
- Performance measures will be added after review/discussion at an upcoming meeting

6:35 **Break-Outs by Group**

- *Notes from each group are included in the updated “Morristown United strategies by category” document distributed with these minutes*



7:10 **Report-Backs by Group**

- During the report-backs, it became clear that the group could benefit from learning more about the different housing vouchers that are available, who is eligible, how they are distributed. Dominique will ask Joann Bjornson from Family Promise if she will provide a brief “vouchers 101” at the next meeting.
- There were also some questions regarding landlords accepting housing vouchers (or not). Emily Frisch from Homeless Solutions provided the following information via e-mail after the meeting:
 - o “The NJ Law against discrimination covers owners, agents, employees and brokers and makes it unlawful to refuse to rent, show or sell property based on many factors, but includes source of income. Therefore, it is illegal to refuse to rent to someone with a voucher. As someone mentioned last night, although it is illegal to not rent to someone with a voucher, landlords can refuse to rent for other, legal reasons, like poor credit, which is why it is so important to encourage residents to improve their credit (and refer them to services that will help them do so), so that there is no lawful reason to not be rented to. It is also so important to educate residents on this fact that it is illegal to not rent because of a voucher, as I have had many clients who were unaware and just accepted that a landlord didn’t want to rent to them because of their voucher. If someone has been discriminated against, they can file a complaint with the state through the NJ Division of Civil Rights or a Federal Complaint at <https://portal.hud.gov/FHEO903/Form903/Form903Start.action>. That way, at the very least, there is a complaint filed against the landlord which will hopefully prevent them from unlawfully discriminating against someone else in the future. People with housing vouchers face so many challenges from the start, like finding an apartment within the FMR limits, in a specific geographic region, and within a relatively short time frame. If they are able to find an apartment that meets the criteria of the voucher, which is already so difficult, it is heartbreaking when they are told that landlords do not want to accept the voucher. There is not guarantee that they will find another opportunity before their voucher expires, and can lose the voucher altogether. That’s why I feel so strongly that as a committee, we should work on enforcing this law and educating the residents on their legal rights.”
 - o Link for more info on the Law Against Discrimination: <http://www.nj.gov/oag/dcr/housing.html>

Next meeting April 24th, 5:30-7:30pm