

Temporary Homeless Encampment Code Development

March 6, 2014

Planning Commission

City of Sammamish

Tonight's Goals

- Goals:
 - Provide context for homeless encampments and the related code development process
 - Understand what further information Commissioners would like to have to better inform their recommendation to City Council

Tonight's Information

- Background
- Direction from Council
- Information staff is gathering
- Next steps

Context under state law

- Religious organizations enjoy protection under state law to host homeless encampments
- City can regulate time, place and manner
 - Frequency, location, duration
 - Permit process, public notice and comment
 - Standard requirements and authority for site-specific conditions
- RCW 36.01.290

Homeless In King County

- Seattle King County Coalition on Homelessness
 - Contracted by King County Coalition to End Homelessness
- One Night Count*
 - 2014: 3,123 without shelter
 - 2013: 2,736 without shelter
 - 2012: 2,594 without shelter (6,236 were served by local programs in shelters or transitional housing)
 - 2011: 2,442 without shelter (6,382 were served by local programs in shelters or transitional housing)

*www.homelessinfo.org

Encampments in King County

- **Tent City 1 and Tent City 2**
 - Est. in the 1990's
 - No longer operating
- **Tent City 3**
 - Est. in 2002 by a consent decree between City of Seattle and SHARE/WHEEL*
 - Current location: St. Dunstons Episcopal Church, Shoreline
- **Tent City 4**
 - Est. in 2004 on the Eastside
 - Current location: Faith United Methodist Church, Unincorporated King County
- **Nicklesville**
 - Est. in 2008
 - Current locations: 2020 S. Jackson St. and 1415 22nd Ave., Seattle
- **Camp Unity**
 - Est. in 2012
 - Current location: Unitarian Universal Church, Woodinville

*Seattle Housing and Resource Effort / Women's Housing Equality and Enhancement League

In Sammamish

- Tent City 4 at Mary, Queen of Peace
 - Temporary Use Permit
 - 60 days granted beginning on October 19, 2013
 - 30 day extension granted to end on January 17, 2014
- Six-month moratorium on temporary homeless encampments – expires July 14, 2014
 - City Council direction to produce permanent regulations as soon as possible

Permanent Regulations

Direction from City Council: research the experience of peer cities, gather stakeholder input and develop regulations for Sammamish to permit this type of temporary land use.

Peer Cities

- Mercer Island
- Bothell
- Bellevue
- Issaquah
- Kirkland
- Redmond
- SeaTac
- MRSC Research

Topics/Issues

- Length of stay
- Return timeframe
- Number of camps at once
- Number of camps in a given timeframe
- Warrant/sex offender checks
- Proximity to transit
- Public notice

City Council Direction: February Retreat

- Council supported the following staff recommendations for potential policy choices during the decision making process:
 - Limit encampments to one location in the city at any one time
 - Limit a site that has hosted from hosting again (say for 12 or 18 months)
 - Limit total sites hosting to one site every 365 days
 - Limit stays to 90 days plus move-in/move-out days (so about 94 total)
 - Work with hosts/encampment sponsors to ensure warrant and sex offender checks. Options to consider include:
 - All residents at move-in
 - New prospective residents that ask to move in
 - Returning residents that have been absent for four days or more
 - Proximity to transit or alternative mechanism provided by host site (e.g. 1/4 or 1/2 mile)
 - Public notice and comment opportunity

Example: Tent City Code of Conduct

- SHARE/WHEEL shall implement and enforce at all times at the site its Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct requires that all residents abide by the following:
 - No drugs are permitted in the encampment
 - No alcohol is permitted in the encampment
 - No weapons are permitted in the encampment
 - All knives over three and one-half (3-1/2) inches must be turned into SHARE/WHEEL for safekeeping
 - No violence is permitted
 - No open flames are permitted

Example: Tent City Code of Conduct (cont.)

- No trespassing onto private property in the host neighborhood is permitted
- No loitering in the host neighborhood is permitted
- Disturbing neighbors is not permitted
- No verbal abuse, intimidating remarks, yelling or degrading remarks against member(s) of the host or the host neighborhood is permitted
- No verbal abuse, intimidating remarks, yelling or degrading remarks against member(s) of SHARE/WHEEL is permitted
- No littering on the emergency encampment site or in the host neighborhood is permitted

Some Potential Sites

- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- Community Church of Joy
- Eastside Catholic High School
- Evergreen Christian Church
- Good Samaritan Episcopal Church
- Mars Hill Church
- Mary, Queen of Peace
- Pine Lake Covenant Church
- Sammamish Hills Lutheran Church
- Sammamish Muslim Association Prayer House
- Sammamish Presbyterian Church
- Spirit of Peace United Church
- Vedic Cultural Center

Tent City 4 Retrospective

- In addition to collecting the information before you, staff have been busy conducting retrospective interviews. Here are some of the common themes heard:
 - Safety inside the camp and outside
 - Pre-application notice and meetings
 - Security – police patrols and inspections
 - Need a process in place
 - More time prior to move-in date
 - Proximity to transit, schools, services

Tent City 4 Retrospective (cont.)

- City resource impacts
- Number of encampments allowed in the city at any one time
- Number of times an encampment can return to the city, or a specific site, within a given time period
- Tent City schedule
- Neighborhood outreach a key component
- More consistent leadership in the encampment
- Permanent barrier for frequent sites and/or temporary screening and set back requirements

Basic Process Schedule

- March 20 Planning Commission public hearing
- April 3 Planning Commission deliberation and adoption
- May 6 Hand-off to City Council
- May 19 City Council, first reading and public hearing
- June 3 City Council, 2nd reading and adoption
- July 14 Moratorium expires

Recap

- Context regarding homelessness in King County and tent cities
- Brief overview of the topics/issues to be discussed
- What we have heard/learned so far

Next steps and questions

- Staff work

- Compile records from peer jurisdiction code development processes
- Compile public comments
- Conduct further research into peer jurisdiction's adopted codes
- Research and answer questions from the Planning Commission
- Maintain and update the City's Web page:

www.ci.sammamish.wa.us/departments/communitydevelopment/HomelessEncampmentCode