

Report and Recommendations to the City Council of Normandy Park By the Task Force on Group Homes

August 14, 2012

The Task Force on Group Homes was created at the request of the City Manager in June, 2012 because of a growing controversy regarding the opening of a new clinic and residential treatment facilities for the severely mentally ill called Hanbleceya. Originally called the “Hanbleceya Task Force”, the group consisted of members of the broader community including residents of Normandy Park, Normandy Park City officials, State officials, a Board member of the South King County National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI), representatives of local mental health organizations, and subsequently officials of Hanbleceya, a group comprised of 25 initial members.

The first meeting was held May 30th, 2012, without representatives of Hanbleceya in attendance, to identify broad community concerns regarding Hanbleceya’s presence in our community, and to hear from recognized mental health professionals regarding the nature of introducing an organization of this kind into a community. The meeting was emotionally charged and subsequent Task Force meetings included a professional mediator from the King County Alternative Dispute Resolution Program, to help provide guidance to the group and facilitate objective, productive meetings. All further meetings included invitations to representatives of Hanbleceya to help identify a way for the City, the residents, and the staff and clients of Hanbleceya to effectively co-exist in the City of Normandy Park. While Hanbleceya did attend some meetings, they eventually withdrew, based on recommendations from their legal advisors, as well as their demands for specific actions that could not be accommodated by the Task Force.

The Task Force met a second time, and then created a smaller “steering committee” that included representatives of the City, the State, local mental health organizations, Hanbleceya and Normandy Park Cares, a citizen group. This smaller committee’s purpose was to identify potential and specific actions to the larger Task Force, set the meeting standards and, eventually, the overall purpose of the Task Force. Hanbleceya attended the first two Steering Committee meetings, but withdrew from all subsequent meetings. The Steering Committee recommended a set of questions be delivered to Hanbleceya, intended to address the broad community concerns. After receipt of their answers, the Steering Committee met a third time, without participation of Hanbleceya, and then met with the larger Task Force, with recommended City Council actions. The Task Force discussed the recommendations, made changes, and ultimately agreed that we should present an overall report to the City Council, as well as specific recommendations for action by the City.

The Task Force on Group Homes session on Wednesday, August 7, 2012 agreed upon the following findings:

- The Task Force members recognize the need for residential and therapeutic mental health services in our state, and the need for those individuals with mental illness to receive proper care;
- The homes owned by Hanbleceya should be regulated by the State of Washington in the same manner that it regulates other facilities of this type throughout the State of Washington;

- The Task Force members believe that Hanbleceya’s owned and leased homes are an extension of their clinical model and should fall under the jurisdiction of the Washington State Department of Health and/or Department of Social and Health Services as Residential Treatment Facilities, or similar entities; and
- The staff and Council representatives of the City of Normandy Park desire to bring accurate and relevant communication to the residents of the City of Normandy Park regarding this and other issues directly affecting City residents.

Based upon these findings, the Task Force on Group Homes respectfully asks the Normandy Park City Council to take the following actions:

1. Request a legislative process to investigate and determine which Washington State agency is responsible for regulating the residential treatment model used by Hanbleceya, whether by existing regulation, revised regulation or new legislation, as may be needed; and to support such a process with letters to legislators and agency officials, participation in meetings or testimony at hearings, as may be appropriate;
2. Initiate communication with leaders of other Washington State cities facing the same issue, and collaborate on support needed for the legislative and administrative processes described above, and to direct interest in support of legislation, if necessary, as indicated by process above, to the Suburban Cities Association, Association of Washington Cities, and other organizations that lobby on behalf of cities in Washington State and King County, with the intention of assuring that patients with severe mental illness are appropriately protected by the State of Washington;
3. Prioritize zoning code revisions, including a Reasonable Accommodation process, needed to bring the Municipal Code of Normandy Park to reflect current state, county and federal law, which includes directing City resources toward hiring consultants necessary to complete code revisions in a timely manner;
4. Authorize the City Attorney to meet with the Normandy Park Cares attorney, to identify mutual ways in which the City and NPC can cooperate in recommendations 2 and 3, in order to avoid any other actions which will potentially result in delay of resolution and/or higher legal costs;
5. Develop and implement a communications strategy, directed to the residents of Normandy Park, including but not limited to information on mental illness, personal and property safety, and how to communicate mental illness and personal safety to children;
6. Facilitate and actively participate in the creation, review and approval of a Community Agreement to be subsequently signed by the Mayor as a representative of the City of Normandy Park, along with other interested parties participating in the creation and approval of the Agreement. The Community Agreement will be developed cooperatively with Hanbleceya, the Task Force, and the City of Normandy Park City Council. Updates on process of Community Agreement will be provided at each and every City Council meeting until such time an Agreement is reached, to the satisfaction of all parties.

Task Force Members and Advisors:

Jeff Bean, Normandy Park resident and mediation professional
Mike Bishoff, Normandy Park resident and representative of Normandy Park Cares
Janet Bissell, Normandy Park resident and neighbor of a Hanbleceya residence
Clarke Brant, Normandy Park resident and Mayor of Normandy Park
Elaine Cotlove, Normandy Park resident and retired psychiatrist
David Emory, NAMI Board member and former Normandy Park resident
Chris Gaddis, Normandy Park Police Chief
Kris Hanson, Normandy Park resident
Sheri Healey, Normandy Park resident and owner of Sea-Dru-Mar residential treatment facility
Stacia Jenkins, Normandy Park resident and City Councilmember
Dan Johnson, Normandy Park resident and Marvista Elementary PTSA Safety Committee
David Johnson, Director of NAVOS Mental Health Solutions
Max Hanley, Normandy Park resident
Julie Neer, Normandy Park resident and Marvista Elementary PTSA Board member
Kerry Paulson, Managing Partner of Hanbleceya
Barb Runyon, Director of Washington State Department of Health Facilities Services Licensing Dept.
Tina Orwall, 33rd District State Representative
Doug Schulz, City Manager for City of Normandy Park
Amnon Shoenfeld, Director of King County DCHS/Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division
Scott Snyder, Attorney representing the City of Normandy Park
Raine Thompson, Normandy Park resident and immediate neighbor of a Hanbleceya home
Kathleen Waters, Normandy Park resident
Susan West, Normandy Park resident, City Councilmember
Chris Wilson, staff member of Hanbleceya
Ian Wolds, Clinical Director of Hanbleceya

Task Force Steering Committee:

Mike Bishoff, Normandy Park resident and representative of Normandy Park Cares
Elaine Cotlove, Normandy Park resident and retired psychiatrist
Sheri Healey, Normandy Park resident and Executive Director of Seadrunar residential treatment facility
Stacia Jenkins, City Councilmember
Tina Orwall, 33rd District State Representative
Susan West, City Councilmember
Chris Wilson, Hanbleceya staff member

Task Force Staff:

Ann McBroom, King County Alternative Dispute Resolution Program, Assistant Manager/Mediator
Greg Mowat, King County Alternative Dispute Resolution Program, Mediator
Jim Pearman, King County Alternative Dispute Resolution Program, Mediator