



London Breed,
Mayor

Michelle Ruggels,
Director of DPH Business Office

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 30, 2021

TO: Commissioner Dan Bernal, President of the Health Commission
Members of the Health Commission

FROM: Michelle Ruggels, Director of DPH Business Office *MR*

RE: Prop I information for the Harm Reduction Therapy Center to consolidate staff into a single leased location at 21 Merlin Street, San Francisco 94107

The purpose of this memo is to provide a summary and supporting documentation pertaining to the hearing scheduled for August 3, 2021 at the full Health Commission for a new DPH project, and to document the Department's compliance with its own Good Neighbor Policy. It should be noted that the Health Commission's approval action is the authorization for the Department to enter into contracts that fund a "project". In this case, however, the funding to support the proposed new leased site will occur through a reallocation of existing funding within the Harm Reduction Therapy Center (HRTC) contract. As a result, there is not a corresponding contract subject to approval at the August 3, 2021 Health Commission meeting. Instead, this hearing will provide an opportunity for the Health Commission to hear comments and concerns, if any, with the proposed site.

The Department established its Good Neighbor Policy following Citywide legislation adopted in June 1998, to allow interested residents to bring concerns regarding City funded projects involving new construction, a change in use, or a significant expansion of an existing use at a specific location to a public hearing. The Department's Good Neighbor Policy includes public posting requirements established in the City's legislation, referenced as "Prop I" and detailed in Chapter 79 of the San Francisco Administrative Code. Additionally, the Good Neighbor Policy requires the Department to convene a minimum of two public meetings, with the second meeting being held before the Health Commission.

Under the Good Neighbor Policy two meetings are required to allow interested residents and the public-at-large to bring concerns or comments pertaining to HRTC's proposed lease at 21 Merlin Street. The first of these was held as a community meeting on July 12, 2021. The second will occur at the August 3, 2021 full Health Commission. DPH completed its signage posting for the required community meeting and for the Health Commission hearing on July 1, 2021. There were 40 attendees at the July 12, 2021 community meeting (attendees included Department staff, HRTC representatives, and the public). There was no opposition raised, and all questions were addressed.

For more information about the required community meetings, and other Good Neighbor Policy requirements, please see the Attachments, as summarized below. For more information about HRTC and the services that they offer to the community, please see Attachment IV.

Additional Information may be found in the following Attachments:

- Attachment 1: Summary of Project Proposal to the Health Commission
 - Summary of Project and DPH's process to meet Proposition I requirements
- Attachment II: Copy of meeting posting signage
 - The text of the signage posted at the location, 21 Merlin Street, to advertise the Community Meeting, and the Health Commission meeting.
- Attachment III: Photo of the signage posting at the site, or 21 Merlin Street
- Attachment IV: Copy of Hand Distributed Flyer Information
 - Copy of flyer with information about HRTC and an invitation to the community meeting, hand delivered to the residents and property owners surrounding the proposed site.
- Attachment V: Summary notes from the July 12, 2021 Community Meeting
- Attachment VI: Copy of attendees, as downloaded from ZOOM
 - Individuals that attended the Community Meeting, held on July 12, 2021
- Attachment VII: Muni Transportation Availability



City and County of San Francisco
 London N. Breed
 Mayor

ATTACHMENT I (1 of 3) San Francisco Department of Public Health

SUMMARY OF PROJECT PROPOSAL FOR THE HEALTH COMMISSION

In compliance with Chapter 79 of the San Francisco Administrative Code, (put into effect July 9, 1998 upon the passage by voters of Proposition I “Citizens Right to Know” Act of 1998), and the Department of Public Health’s (DPH) “Good Neighbor Policy”, established in response to Chapter 79, the purpose of this meeting is for the DPH Health Commission to allow interested persons and the public-at-large the opportunity to bring up their concerns prior to the final funding and approval of a project. (Note: The Health Commission’s approval action is to authorize the Department to enter into the contract that funds a “project”. In this case, however, the rental funding to support the proposed new leased site will occur through a reallocation of existing funding within the existing and approved HRTC contract).

Table 1: General Information

Contract Agency:	Harm Reduction Therapy Center (HRTC)	DPH Division/Section:	Behavioral Health Services (BHS)
Proposed Contract Program:	Relocate existing HRTC outpatient offices from two locations to a single consolidated location.	DPH Project Sponsor:	Hillary Kunins, MD, Director, Behavioral Health Services and Mental Health SF.
		Business Office of Contract Compliance (BOCC) Contact:	Tom Mesa, MSW, MPH Director of BOCC
Date of Health Commission Meeting:	August 3, 2021	Contract Agency Contact:	Pat Denning, PhD, Clinical and Training Director HRTC

Table 2: Project Overview

Name of Programs:	The following existing HRTC outpatient programs will be relocated to the proposed new location: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless Mentally Ill Outreach and Treatment • Transitional Youth Homeless Treatment Team • Outpatient Treatment Services
Purpose of Program:	HRTC wishes to consolidate its offices from two current locations (45 Franklin, San Francisco and 315 Broadway, Oakland) to one central location, providing 5 private therapy offices and 5 workstations. The proposed site would allow all staff to have a shared home space. Additionally, it will provide a calming location away from busy streets that is envisioned to be attractive to clients who are ready for a more stable therapeutic environment. The majority of HRTC programming is conducted off-site.
Location (Address):	21 Merlin Street, San Francisco 94107
Square Footage	3,412 square feet; no change in zoning required
Hours of Operation	10:00am – 6:00pm (Monday – Friday) (evening hours are envisioned in the future)

DPH Good Neighbor Policy Requirements Implementation:**Notice and Meeting Requirements**

Public notice of a proposed new City project must be posted at least 15 days prior to the date at which a new City project will be considered for approval (i.e. the Health Commission). In lieu of signposting requirements, notices may be mailed to property owners within 300 feet of the lot line of the property. The following is a summary of the Department’s actions to meet all notice and meeting requirements:

Table 3: Summary of Required Signage Posting, Required Meetings and Optional Activities

Item	Posting Date	Purpose	Meeting Date
Signage Posting for Meeting Notifications	July 1, 2021	Public Notification of DPH Mandatory Meeting #1	July 12, 2021- Community Meeting held on Zoom platform
	July 1, 2021	Public Notification of DPH Mandatory Meeting #2	August 3, 2021- Health Commission Hearing
Information Distribution	July 1, 2021	Optional Notification was provided by hand delivery of an invitational flyer to immediate neighbors by HRTC staff	Invitational flyer with the dates identified above.

DPH Public Notification:

- See Attachment II for the English versions of the two signage postings referenced in Table 3.
- See Attachment III for a photo of the postings at 21 Merlin Street.

As DPH implemented the required signage posting, a separate mailing of the notice was not required. However, to be as thorough as possible, HRTC distributed an invitation flyer to the immediate neighbors in the vicinity of the proposed 21 Merlin Street location.

- See Attachment IV for the copy of the informational flyer that HRTC distributed to the immediate neighbors surrounding 21 Merlin Street.

Required Community Meeting

DPH's Good Neighbor Policy establishes a required community meeting to be held prior to the Health Commission meeting (the second required meeting) for the involved contractor to give information to interested neighbors and the public-at-large about the project, and also to receive input from the public about any concerns regarding the project. Additionally, the Good Neighbor Policy speaks to DPH's commitment to ongoing collaborative work with its neighbors.

DPH and HRTC hosted a community meeting virtually on a Zoom platform on July 12, 2021. The meeting began with a welcome hosted by Pat Denning, PhD, followed by introductions of all attendees including HRTC staff, then a history of the agency, and a description of the scope of work provided to various areas of CCSF. Based on Zoom data, there were 40 attendees (attendees included Department and HRTC staff and representatives plus the public). There was no opposition voiced at the meeting and multiple attendees expressed support.

- See Attachment V for summary meeting notes from the community meeting. The notes were prepared by DPH Business Office staff who attended the meeting.
- See Attachment VI for a list of the attendees to the 7/12/21 meeting.

**NOTICE OF COMMUNITY MEETING
To Discuss the New Location for
Use by:
HARM REDUCTION THERAPY
CENTER
on
MONDAY, JULY 12, 6pm
VIA ZOOM**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81468653278?pwd=cnhnYTBnR2RHSzlvV1VWamM3TVMxUT09>

Phone: +1 669 900 9128

Meeting ID: 814 6865 3278 Passcode: 993138

**The Department of Public Health
funded program will be located at**

21 MERLIN ST

**For further information or to submit
comments, contact
Jeannie Little, Executive Director at 415-863-
4282, ext. 3 or
jeannielittle@harmreductiontherapy.org.**

NOTICE OF HEALTH COMMISSION MEETING

**The Health Commission will consider the relocation of
programs of**

**HARM REDUCTION THERAPY CENTER
At its meeting of August 3, 2021, 4 p.m.**

**The meeting will be held remotely. View the meeting at the
links below:**

<https://sfgovtv.org/DPHLiveStream>

<https://sfdph.webex.com/sfdph/onstage/g.php?MTID=e19f9da8c7ad1f8391b329b7297f059ee>

Note: depending upon your broadband/WIFI connection, there may be a delay when viewing the meeting live.

PUBLIC COMMENT CALL-IN: 415-655-0003

ACCESS CODE: 177-266-3637

After entering the access code, press # twice to listen.

For further information or to submit comments, contact:

Patt Denning: 415-863-4282, ext. 2

Or

pattdenning@harmreductiontherapy.org



Attachment V (1 of 2)

HRTC Community Meeting – July 12, 2021

This virtual meeting was on Zoom and began at 6:00pm.

Pat Denning, HRTC's Director of Clinical Services and Training hosted the meeting and began by asking all attendees to introduce themselves and announcing that the meeting would be recorded.

There were 40 attendees, counting the host and BOCC. As the introductions were experienced there were many who emphasized their support for the HRTC re-location. Attendees included the public identifying themselves as community members, Board of Director members from HRTC and several other organizations, the Yerba Buena Benefit District, a representative from the Sheriff's Office of Community Programs, someone working at a nearby Navigation Center, private practitioners, and persons who identified as neighbors.

After introductions were complete, Ms. Denning provided a history of the Agency, their recent operational practices, and their vision. She described the organization as consisting of 15 LPHA (Licensed Professionals of the Healing Arts) as well as 4 administrative persons. She described the purpose of the re-location as their desire to consolidate staff in one location. Since 1993 they have been providing integrated mental health/substance abuse therapy with a harm reduction model that has been recognized nationally and internationally; their books have been translated around the world. In 2000 their nonprofit organization was created.

Their model has included placing therapists within other organizations and currently they do so at 4 organizations, two of which specialize with youth. They have consistently seen approximately 1000 unduplicated clients each year. Their model emphasizes a "come as you are" approach where no one is turned away. They build relationships with clients who then can decide at their own pace where to start regarding treatment and recovery. Recently they innovated the placement of "pop-up" clinics on streets where they would park their vans or set up a canopy. The idea is to provide a relaxing place for client respite and the development of trust, with snacks and food provided. The COVID pandemic minimized the in-person gatherings, but outreach efforts continued, and services were provided in the shelter-in-place hotels.

HRTC views the proposed site as a calming, out-of-the-way place away from the noisy streets. The daily operation means that 2/3 of the staff are out in the neighborhoods in their vans, other organizations, or working to provide respite at a canopy. The new address is envisioned as a place that will be attractive to those clients who are ready for a more stable therapeutic relationship.

Daily operating hours will be 10am until 6pm, Monday through Friday. Expanded evening hours are envisioned in the future. Their vision also includes the expansion of staff to include a psychiatrist in the future so that medications can be prescribed on site.

HRTC envisions a brief build-out of the new premises and then opening in late August or early September; an Open House for the neighborhood will be held upon the new site being ready. The estimated client traffic will be 15-20 clients daily.

The meeting was then opened up to questions and comments.

Attachment V (2 of 2)

One question was regarding their outreach to the nearby SOMA neighborhood, which was confirmed by Ms. Denning, who added that they work closely with Street Medicine and make referrals to primary care and psychiatric care. With their pop-ups and vans, HRTC has been serving many districts of San Francisco, including Bayview, South of Market, Tenderloin, Haight, and Mission. She mentioned that as the pandemic winds down, HRTC will once again be in these neighborhoods.

Another question about waiting lists led to Ms. Denning's description of how HRTC provides immediate access to services without any waiting lists. This often means providing immediate care to clients in crisis. She emphasized that there are no time limits with their services and clients can be served endlessly because HRTC recognizes that it often takes time to make changes.

In response to another question, Ms. Denning described their relationship with the Sheriff's Department, which will be nearby the new offices; they currently receive referrals from that source. She underscored that while HRTC works with many clients who are in various legal systems, HRTC is not accountable to such legal systems and only discloses a client's involvement with HRTC at the request of the client.

There being no further questions or comments, the meeting was closed at approximately 7pm.

Attachment VI

Neighborhood Meeting Attendees, sorted in alphabetical order

1. 415-368-7952
2. 415-717-6742
3. 510-830-5079
4. Alex Boyder
5. Ali Riker
6. Anat Leonard
7. Anna
8. ATC
9. Barry Zevin
10. Bettie Williams
11. Cathy Maupin
12. Chris R.
13. Constance Cavalas
14. Corey Drew
15. Eileen Norman
16. Erica Stinemates (Host)
17. Gary Cohen
18. Helen Redmond
19. iPhone
20. iPhone
21. iPhone
22. James Pollet
23. Jeannie Little – HRTC ED
24. Jesse
25. Jia Son
26. John Carpentier
27. Krista
28. Lakietha Sanford
29. Laurie
30. Lydia Bransten
31. Maxx Malloy
32. Michael Cueva
33. Patt Denning – HRTC
34. Paul Harkin
35. Perri Franskoviak
36. Renee
37. Richard Rendon
38. SF IHSS Public Authority
39. Shantel
40. Tom Mesa

HRTC Public Transportation for 21 Merlin Street

Within 10 minutes walking time:

MUNI Bus: 27, 8, 47, 19

MUNI Metro Van Ness Station, Civic Center Station, Powell Street Station: J, K, L, M, N, T

BART: Civic Center Station, Powell Street Station

CalTrain at 4th and King