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Flood Plain Concerns Force Relocation of First Footing Program Potential Home

New Braunfels, Texas – Flood plain mitigation requirements, and the timeline needed to implement them, have caused NB Housing Partners to abandon plans to renovate 655 Landa Street for use as the permanent home of its First Footing program.

NB Housing Partners and the Salvation Army entered into a verbal agreement with the Comal County Senior Citizens Foundation regarding the former activity center. The agreement was created to allow time to assess the structure’s viability for use by NB Housing Partners’ First Footing program and its partner agencies. A detailed environmental review and flood plain mapping study revealed extensive floodproofing requirements for compliance with City of New Braunfels occupancy codes.

NB Housing Partners and the Salvation Army had prepared for expenses associated with flood mitigation. However, due to FEMA reviews, the addition of up to two years to the construction timeline was not anticipated. The longer timeline is incompatible with the First Footing program’s relocation schedule.

“We are saddened 655 Landa Street didn’t work out for the First Footing program. However, NB Housing Partners and its partner agencies remain committed to filling gaps in the housing continuum for vulnerable people in our community,” said Kellie Stallings, administrator of First Footing. “We are continuing to explore other locations right now. As New Braunfels grows, so does the problem of homelessness. It only goes away with coordinated, effective intervention.”

The First Footing program serves adults experiencing homelessness and, to date, has operated in hotel rooms. The organization has ministered close to 300 individuals in its first 16 months of operation, with well over 80% of them being from the New Braunfels area – many of whom have lived their entire lives in New Braunfels. The program was created to offer homeless people social, behavioral, and health support services while they get back on their feet. The goal for each individual is to transition from the program into permanent housing.

“Offering a hand up to our neighbors is our mission,” continued Stallings. “Matthew 25:34-40 describes our commitment to ‘the least of these.’ We consider it a calling for our entire community to feed, clothe, welcome, heal, and love people in need. We also know that ensuring those experiencing homelessness get off the streets and receive help benefits the safety and well-being of both the person and the community.”

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About NB Housing Partners: NB Housing Partners is an organization made up of people from New Braunfels who want their city to be a place where every family and individual can count on something most take for granted – a bed. Learn more at www.nbhousingpartners.org.

For more information: Kellie Stallings, Administrator, NB Housing Partners
admin@nbhousingpartners.org 830-606-9526