

HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes

Basement Conference Room City Hall

July 15, 2009

12:00 pm

Members:

Charlie Armstrong, Co-Chair
Peter Loach
Chris Murray
Richard Spurzem
Sasha Farmer
Karen Waters
Cheri Lewis
Joy Johnson
Art Lichenberger Co-Chair
Amy Kilroy
Kathy Galvin

Staff:

Melissa Celii

Meeting began at 12:10.

Introductions/Welcome/Lunch: Members were happy to see that lunch was provided and hope that attendance is improved as a result.

New Agenda Format: The HAC will have a new meeting agenda format that will feature a guest speaker at each meeting. Also, because the HAC has a track record of getting things done through smaller groups, Action Committees will be formed to tackle issues and projects as they happen. These smaller groups will work through the issues and then present their findings to the larger HAC. It is hoped this format will prove to be more efficient and allow the larger HAC meetings to focus on guest speakers and broader issues. The August HAC guest speaker will be Mike Harvey from the Thomas Jefferson Economic Development to talk about how employment and affordable housing are related. Members asked that agendas be made even more specific as to the subject matter that will be discussed.

There was a brief discussion about scheduling five minutes in each meeting for an update from Amy Kilroy or Randy Bickers about CRHA happenings and the redevelopment process.

Action Committee on Housing Report: This group was formed out of concern about the original version of the report. The group is looking at past data and costs, estimated future costs, and ideas for the future. The report will try to determine how much it costs per unit to do affordable housing. It will also look at how much it would cost just to maintain our current stock of affordable housing and how much it would cost to add new units. A section of the report will discuss new ideas or areas for affordable housing. The

report will have a summary page and will also include sound bites that politicians can use to support the report. Energy costs and energy efficiency will also be addressed in the report. The report will also discuss leveraging funds and how much leveraging is needed. The Action Committee will meet again on 7/31 at 12:00 pm in the NDS conference room. The Action Committee hopes to have the report completed in a timely manner, but won't sacrifice the quality of the report for the sake of time. The full HAC will have an opportunity to discuss the report, most likely in September.

Approval of Minutes from 6/17/09: Mr. Armstrong asked that members strive to arrive on-time to meetings. A lot of what had been discussed needed to be repeated for late-comers. The HAC now had enough members present for a quorum. Motion to approve minutes was made, seconded, and approved.

Update on Housing Position: The City received a number of applications for the housing position. Conducted six interviews, and really liked one candidate. Salary negotiations are currently underway. A decision will hopefully be reached by the next meeting.

Possible Future Action Committees: Members discussed possible action committees to be formed in the future. One group could look at how to keep the media and larger community informed about housing policy, issues, and incentives. Another could look at creating a database of accessible units in the area. Another group could focus on energy efficiency and housing and working with the upcoming revolving loan fund. It was suggested that Cynthia Adams from the Public Works department and Linda Rayner from CECP talk to the HAC about how energy efficiency relates to affordable housing. It was pointed out that it is important to 'break down silos' and have different departments working together such as housing talking to transportation and energy and visa versa. Another possible Action Committee could look at how transportation costs affect housing costs or could be considered a housing cost.

Other Business: VHDA will be launching a database for renters and landlords regarding availability of units statewide. The underwriting criteria for mortgages are becoming tighter and requiring governmental insurance making it harder for those in the 50-60% AMI group with credit problems to obtain mortgages. This is going to result in a much greater need for financial literacy and credit counseling. AHIP's Treesdale project has made it through the first round of Tax Credit funding. There will be a Forum on Poverty at PVCC on July 18; more information is available on the City's webpage.

It was brought up that Council has approved the SRO ordinance, but there is concern that the units will be too expensive because they will each be required to have private kitchen and laundry facilities. There was also concern that the ordinance may have been tailored to one specific group. It was suggested that there needs to be another ordinance that allows for 'concrete' housing that has shared spaces and facilities.

Ms. Lewis will revise and redistribute the bylaws that were agreed upon at the last meeting. Paul Martin from the Batten School will be having a class on housing policy. It

was suggested that the students can look at mixed income housing in their study. Errors were found in the monthly market snapshots; staff will correct those errors and resend.

Ms. Kilroy distributed fliers on upcoming CRHA redevelopment master planning meetings. Further information including a first draft of the report is available at cvillehousing.org. The July meetings will be reviewing different scenarios to discuss what community members like and dislike in each. The final draft will include a financial model as well as a service plan. Members expressed concern that the consultants have not contacted the HAC. There was also concern about why CRHA and not WRT consultants is taking the lead in advertising the events. Members want WRT to make a presentation to the HAC. Ms. Kilroy will provide the different scenarios that will be presented before the July meetings.

There was a brief discussion about CRHA's designation as 'troubled.' Ms. Kilroy explained that this was because of years of deferred maintenance resulting in units not meeting HUD's physical standards. CRHA will no shortly whether they have passed their most recent inspections.

There was concern about how WRT was selected to serve as the consultants and how much they are being paid. The contract is currently for around \$375,000. There was a public bid process with two review committees and two rounds of scoring. WRT received the highest score. Members said that they want to see more contexts in the consulting such as school districts, zoning, and consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Staff will write a letter to WRT inviting them to come and talk to the HAC and discuss the master plan.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:30.