

## HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DRAFT Minutes

Basement Conference Room City Hall

January 20, 2010

12:00 pm

### Members:

Charlie Armstrong, Co-Chair

Art Lichtenberger, Co-Chair

Vicki Hawes

Amy Kilroy

Dave Norris

Dan Rosensweig

Karen Waters

Tony Waterfield

Chris Murray

Susan Pleiss

Peter Loach

Kathy Galvin

Jennifer Jacobs

### Staff:

Melissa Celi

Kathy McHugh

### Others

Marnie Allen

Edith Good

Roscoe "Sankofa" Boxley

Meeting began at 12:10 pm, as the Airport Authority's meeting ran slightly over time.

**Introductions/Welcome:** Members were asked to create a name tag so that introductions could be made, along with brief biographical information and personal interest / passion for affordable housing.

**Updates from the Chair:** Advised of the upcoming Affordable Housing Symposium on 2/5/10 being sponsored by the Batten School of Leadership & Public Policy at UVA. Mayor Norris added in that the Batten School event would be in sync with the housing report going to Council and also his proposal to Council for permanent dedicated funding for housing. He asked the HAC if any members are interested in sitting down with him informally (at a time to be determined) to discuss a presentation to the City Council regarding a dedicated fund for affordable housing from the Capital Improvements Fund. Dan Rosensweig added that the Planning Commission has recommended a set aside of \$1.4 million.

Discussed Haiti Benefit Concert being put on Saturday at 6 pm at the Fry's Spring Beach Club to raise money for Haiti relief to support Partners in Health. Attendees were

encouraged to come out for music and food, as well as a silent auction to provide financial aid to those in need.

**Updates from Staff:** Melissa discussed handouts and a vote was taken to approve the October 28, 2009 minutes with a motion by Art Lichtenberger and second by Karen Waters. The motion passed.

Melissa advised that the Goals for Affordable Housing would be going before the City Council on February 1, 2010.

**Discussion on Housing Report:** Karen Waters suggested that cover photograph be changed to show denser multi-family housing and Co-Chair Charlie Armstrong thanked Melissa for all her hard work on preparing and revising the report.

#### **Discussion on Other Issues:**

The group focused discussion for the remainder of the meeting on setting 2010 Housing Advisory Committee priorities and goals.

As to priorities and goals, Co-Chair Armstrong suggested that the group focus on where they go from here and to be as specific as possible by setting concrete short-term goals so as to put “big picture” issues into achievable action items.

Kathy Galvin had sent out some goals to the HAC and asked the group to consider putting housing into context and to not isolate it as a separate issue. Specifically, she asked that the group consider employment, transit, jobs, and design all together. She noted that housing is impacted by all of these issues and neighborhoods need to be looked at in terms of the big picture.

A group discussion / brain-storming session followed with input and comments from multiple attendees, as follows: It was stated that the Housing Authority and the City have similar needs in that while they are different, they share common concerns over provision and protection of affordable housing. As such, it was suggested that the next HAC meeting be dedicated to meeting with the CRHA group to determine what is planned / proposed for redevelopment of public housing in Charlottesville.

The need to have more transparency was also highlighted as a concern. The group wants to take an active role in communicating what affordable housing looks like and what is the desired “end result”. In short, it was thought that the HAC should fill in the gaps for the public to educate them as to how funding for affordable housing impacts them. Further, that the public needs to understand why affordable housing is relevant and why the drop in the housing market has not fixed the identified affordable housing needs of the city. In order to communicate this information, it was thought that a public event for educational purposes would be helpful.

Methods to achieve additional outreach included a series of articles in the C'ville News / The Hook, with a focus on those who impact funding for affordable housing and on those that need the housing. It was recognized that the general public needs to understand why it is important to fund affordable housing and what benefits come about as a result. Further, borderline cases (homeowners and renters) need to be informed about strategies that might allow them to stay in their houses and avoid foreclosure / eviction. Need to identify ways that affordable housing can be given priority through QAP.

Need to develop aggressive policies to encourage mixed income communities and ways to integrate more inter-generational housing were also identified as priorities.

The upcoming update of the City's Comprehensive Plan was thought to be a good way to update the housing section of the plan by making recommendations to be included in the Plan

A consolidated calendar of HAC events and associated housing activities was thought to be a must, as it would provide a way to identify relevant events and allow people to plan for attendance.

It was suggested that the HAC recommend to the City that they support affordable housing legislation that would encourage provision of on-site affordable housing and to examine the location of such housing.

Further, that enabling legislation be adopted to allow for revised tax assessment policy to allow for owners of deed restricted properties to pay taxes based on their ability to pay. Further, to examine funds expended as a result of tax abatement.

Long term fixes have been overlooked in the past in lieu of using band-aids / temporary fixes. Options were discussed that would provide a more long term solution. Options included providing people with more wealth potential so that affordable housing is no longer needed and or the need is reduced.

Transportation is a huge housing issue for people because they need access to jobs, as well as goods and services. Providing housing related jobs to low-income persons and allowing home businesses (through inclusionary zoning) are two policy methods to enable the private market to provide housing.

It was noted that prior criminal records (i.e., a felony conviction) can restrict housing opportunities even if the conviction was related to some non-violent offense such as writing a bad check. Also, that homeowner or condo associations can restrict home businesses, which would allow people to stay at home while earning income and ultimately reduce transportation and other associated costs to the family.

Promotion of housing types that allow for income producing uses (i.e., live-work units) was discussed as one way to provide additional assistance. Further, it was thought that

integration of mixed-use and mixed-income is a concept that the public needs to be educated about.

With respect to current City requirements for affordable housing, there was a discussion of the fact that there has been only one application (proffer or rezoning) that was required to meet City requirements. Ultimately, the developer was able to actually reduce their original offer to provide affordable housing units to a lesser number. As such, it was concluded that the current City ordinance is not producing the intended results.

Setting up an extended farmer's and/or community market would provide a place for people to be able to sell their goods. A subsidized building which provides inexpensive space would be necessary to make this work. Allowing people the opportunity to work and create home-made items would ultimately reduce the demand for affordable housing.

There are a lot of big (space) areas that are currently underutilized. Mixed use should not consist of just retail uses.

An upcoming visit by the CRHA to Greenville was mentioned as a potential venue for the HAC because of the chance to view successful mixed use development.

A summary of critical issues was reviewed at the end of the meeting and the following were highlighted:

- CRHA is to present their master plan to improve both the relationship and integration of housing efforts
- Need for transparency in public education
- Examine eroding existing affordability
- Provide HAC Calendar of events
- Look at potential enabling legislation issues
- Update housing section of Comprehensive Plan
- Track national policies and grant opportunities
- Offer business education classes to lift people out of poverty
- Use community centers as education centers

**Possible Future Action Committees:** Dedicate next HAC meeting to the CRHA and look at revisiting above efforts by subdividing HAC into teams/subgroups to discuss and identify tangible work activities.

**Other Business:** None.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:30 pm