

HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting Notes

Basement Conference Room City Hall

November 20, 2008

12:00 pm

Members:

Charlie Armstrong

Reed Banks

Dave Norris

Karen Waters

Overton McGehee

Theresa Tapscott

Chris Murray

Cheri Lewis

Karen Reifenberger (PHA)

Staff

Melissa Celii

Jim Tolbert

Non-voting Members

None

Others

Amy Kilroy

Edith Good

Introductions: Introductions were made.

Update from the Chair: None.

Other Business: Members expressed disappointment that lunch was no longer being provided. While they understood the budget reasons behind it, they felt that they're sacrifices and volunteer effort to be a part of the HAC warranted lunch.

There was also a discussion about the Joint Housing Task Force report. The Task Force will be meeting again in early December. There was some concern that some of the recommendations are not doable or achievable. For example the 3 tiers of affordable housing proffers. This recommendation came out of the concern that not all levels of income were being served equally. In the City, the size of projects makes it undoable because proffers are usually only 1 or 2 units. Need to look at other options to serve lower tiers besides proffers. It was suggested that perhaps the City can commit to serve all three tiers over the course of a year instead of by project.

This led to a general discussion of cash proffers instead to allow more control to ensure the city serves lower incomes. It was asked what the cash proffer is set at. Planning Commission Rep, Cheri Lewis, said that currently for the City, the amount is not set but the goal is to set it at 15% of the entire project. It was asked if the County does not do 3 tiers will the City still do them. Council Rep, Dave Norris, explained that the City is in a weaker position to enforce proffer policy in the first place because the County has more legislation enabling them to do so. It was also suggested that instead of proffers density increase bonuses that have affordable units built into the formula may be a more applicable way to ensure even scale affordability.

Staff Updates: Mr. Tolbert discussed how the four policies drafted by the HAC were taken to Council and combined into three policies that have been adopted. At that same meeting, Council also clarified membership and charge issues. Beginning January 1, 2009 members will begin serving 2 year terms. Members currently serving will continue serving from present through the first term.

The charge is the same as was adopted originally in 2005. The HAC can make recommendations to amend the charge, but they would have to go to Council for approval. Procedural issues still need to be determined such as chair rotation, quorum, etc. There were concerns that the new membership positions will just create new vacancies.

There will be a new housing intern who will begin working in December. She will be working to gather the data requested by the HAC.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made, seconded, and passed to approve the minutes from October 16, 2008 and October 23, 2008.

Role and Purpose of the HAC: In addition to the above mentioned, the HAC discussed some procedural issues. It was agreed that it is important to rotate the position of chair to allow for 'fresh blood' and fresh thoughts. There was a discussion about how to select the new chair, and questions about whether non-profit members should serve because of questions of objectivity. It was felt that this may not be that important because the committee makes decisions as a whole. It was agreed among the members present that the chair should be someone who has been already serving on the committee and is familiar with it. If no one wants to serve as chair, Mr. Armstrong said he would continue his reign, though he would prefer not to.

The HAC asked that Mr. Tolbert and Mr. Norris speak to what they specifically want the HAC to do because the charge is too vague. They said that the HAC should ask for very specific data and what that data will be used for. The HAC should be setting up the housing goals that the City should be striving for. It was suggested that the committee meet quarterly to make the most of its time and meetings. The HAC could provide Council with recommendations on refining some of the broader or vague charges. The HAC should set up a calendar that clearly states what needs to be done and when. For example the HAC should begin working in June on gathering current data, and begin recommending budget proposals in the fall. One member suggested that instead of just regulating how CHF is spent make recommendations on how the budget for CHF is structured and set up. All the housing players (CRHA, Habitat, PHA, AHIP etc) should provide data and annual updates to the HAC. The HAC said it would like to know what the current status of Dogwood Housing is. It was suggested that the HAC could also make suggestions to Council on CRHA for opportunities or concerns that they see. Data needs should also be regimented with a calendar and timeline for reporting. Mr. Tolbert mentioned that all the data in the world won't solve the affordable housing problem and that the HAC should focus on what data is the most useful and will result in things

getting done. Data needs should also focus on what has been done and accomplished already.

The question was asked if the work of the HAC is based on the funding or the need. There needs to be a big picture on what we have and gaps to help guide Council. The HAC should also look outside the City and how long it will be available as affordable. The question was asked if the HAC should be bogged down in the nickel and dimes. Another suggestion was that the HAC can do the broad research and then say that in a certain year we need X units of rental available for say 30% AMI or lower and then next year reevaluate the need and let Council decide what actually gets funded.

The HAC requested that they be kept up to date on the CHF funding process. Some members said that they would like to see the RFPs of what is funded and what is not to see what the people on the ground are actually doing and where they see the opportunities.

The data should focus on the abstract—this is what we need—and also realistic—this is what can get done. The HAC should set up quarterly timelines such as in the 3rd quarter policies are set and in the 1st quarter have the CDBG Task Force make a report on what they have funded and why.

Data Needs: The HAC began a more in depth conversation about what data is needed. In general the HAC needs to determine what's available, for how much, how it relates to AMI, the inventory and current vacancies, where they are located. Once base data has been established it could be tracked annually. There were concerns about how students would skew the results. The results of the discussion are attached.

Meeting adjourned at 1:50.

HAC DATA NEEDS

General:

- Calendar / Quarterly To-Do List for both HAC and Staff
- Updates on Funding Process
- Summary of Funding Requests
- Feedback from CDBG Task Force on Requests by policy, what was funded, what wasn't funded, what was requested.

Homeless:

- Census: Include # of beds and # homeless
- Reports in March

Rentals:

- # of Section 8 Vouchers and Utilization Rates
- # Turned back to in to agencies, why
- # on wait lists
- Location of tax credit and Section 8 housing
- Affordable Market Rate Rental Snapshot by AMI tiers (30, 50, 80)

Homeownership:

- Data fro CAAR, PHA, Habitat
- What is available for sale snapshot by AMI tiers (30, 50, 80)
- Information on housing quality, blighted structures lists, wait lists for AHIP, inspector data
- Age of housing stock in lower AMI tiers if available
- Permits, what's on the drawing board, affordability of approved units and proffers under construction
- Failures and defaults by AMI tiers

Benchmarks:

- Housing/Wage NHLIC
- Utilization of Section 8 Vouchers
- Homes for Sale at affordable rates on a given day, mls
- Fair Housing Complaints
- Percent of UVa Students (all levels and schools) living off grounds in city
- Units for rent by AMI snapshot/anecdotal/craigslist
- Availability of accessible housing stock