

HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
Minutes  
Basement Conference Room City Hall  
January 16, 2013  
12:00 pm

<b>Attendance Record</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
<b>MEMBERS</b>		
Bob Hughes	X	
Carmelita Wood	X	
Charlie Armstrong		X
Chris Murray	X	
Connie Dunn		X
Dan Rosensweig	X	
Frank Stoner	X	
Jennifer Jacobs		X
Jennifer McKeever	X	
Joy Johnson		X
Kaki Dimock		X
Kira Drennon	X	
Kristin Szakos	X	
Mark Watson	X	
Nancy Kidd	X	
Wes Bellamy	X	
<b>NON VOTING MEMBERS</b>		
IMPACT		X
Ron White		X
Vicki Hawes		X
<b>STAFF</b>		
Kathy McHugh	X	
Melissa Thackston	X	
Jim Tolbert		X
Tierra Howard		X
<b>OTHERS</b>		
Ed Bain - TJACH	X	
Edith Good - PHAR	X	
Joyce Dudek - AHIP	X	

The meeting began at approximately 12:10 PM with lunch provided for those in attendance. Kathy McHugh advised that while Chairperson Johnson had not yet arrived, that she would start the meeting to keep on schedule and that Ms. Johnson could take over once she arrived.

#### **Staff Updates**

Advised the group of plans to provide a briefing on homelessness issues at the upcoming March meeting as well as plans to have a HAC sponsored forum on Homelessness and Housing this coming fall. Handout was provided with details.

Upon hearing about plans for the fall conference/symposium, the group commented that both academic and private sector involvement would be helpful when selecting speakers. Also, that there

are stages with homelessness and differing strategies (prevention, shelter and rapid rehousing) for how to deal with each, so perhaps the agenda could be arranged around these stages. There were also comments about the need to frame homeless prevention and responsiveness efforts and how to leverage public support. Lastly, there was a suggestion that there be break-out sessions where everyone can participate in a round table discussions with housing experts, as this would provide an opportunity to have candid discussions about a variety of issues.

Went over the items approved by City Council since November meeting, as follows:

- AHIP Block-By-Block \$400,000
- Use of dollars previously allocated for CRHA redevelopment - \$250,000
- Habitat for Humanity of Greater Charlottesville – Belmont Cottages \$300,000
- AHIP Emergency Rehab - \$100,000

As planned, the group then began an informal round-table discussion regarding items related to housing and the work of the HAC. Members took the opportunity to speak about a variety of issues, with the general discussion issues captured/recorded as follows:

**Bob Hughes** – as a relator, there is a real problem with finding housing for people on the fence. Matching lenders to people with marginal ability to pay is extremely difficult. Demand is steady and would be even greater if buyers had enough money to be able to afford / get into a house. Responding to questions from the group, he explained that as to condition, houses at the \$150k price point are livable, but there is more supply in the County than the City and \$175k is a more viable number. Typical clients for this type of home are first time buyers. By working this market, there are long term benefits because of repeat business.

**Mark Watson** – explained that he works for PHA and that the organization deals with a lot of first time homebuyers, assisting them with financial literacy and down payment assistance. At a project level, PHA works with infill development and Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects. As the market picks up, they are looking at new initiatives such as the Hope House project (where PHA would work to purchase from MACAA and renovate the property using non-competitive LIHTC). In addition, they have also submitted a letter of intent to the Charlottesville Abundant Life Ministries (CALM) for a mixed income development along 5<sup>th</sup> Street S.W. and are also talking with property owners (Blake Caravanti and Brevy Cannon) about a small development on Oak Street backing up to the joint City/Southern Development/Habitat project on Elliott Avenue. PHA has just signed a contract with Piedmont builders to construct proffered units at Willow Glen at 80% AMI.

Mark responded to questions from the group about Friendship Court and the plans for the SOHO (south of the hospital) development. He explained that Friendship Court is coming up at the end of its LIHTC compliance period in 2017 and that owners will likely refinance with additional LIHTC financing with possible re-configuration of the site to free up space. For SOHO, Mark explained that PHA is looking at new market tax credits and are leaning toward considering even higher levels of commercial space because Barringer / Gleason properties are not selling. The housing component would be roughly one-third low, middle and high. PHA is also involved in a 60 unit project in Crozet and is currently revising the site plan for this. Lastly, there will be a forum in February for use of PHA CDFI funds, as the organization needs to finalize its plans for use of some \$1.4 million that was awarded through this program.

**Chris Murray** – employed by JABA he explained that he is still learning the ropes for building housing for seniors and that use of LIHTC funding is basically the “only game in town.” As an organization, JABA owns all or a portion of several independent living facilities including Park View at Pantops and Woods Edge north of Rio Road East off U.S. 29N (roughly 100 units combined), Ryan School in Nelson County (32 units), and Timberlake (27 units).

JABA is currently working with Habitat at Sunrise and with a collaborative of several other partners to develop the former HT Ferron property into the Program for All Inclusive Care of the Elderly (PACE) center, which is separated from Sunrise by Carlton Avenue. They are looking at building 50 rental units at the two sites, but are currently focused on using LIHTC funding for the PACE housing. The PACE program will serve dual eligible (Medicaid and Medicare) seniors. JABA's partners for this effort include both Riverside Health and UVA. The addition of co-located housing is vitally important because of the close proximity to the PACE facility which will provide access for both PACE clients and service providers. The project will involve some subsidy component to provide units for PACE patients.

Chris went on to say that there is a real bias for homeownership in the U.S. and that this is not supported by the current housing market. Rental property is essential and he believes that housing policy should shift to include this and that the ownership model needs to be refocused.

**Joyce Dudek** – representing the Albemarle Housing Improvement Program (AHIP), she explained that her organization is focused on providing owner occupied housing rehabilitation in both the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County. The current waiting list is about one third elderly and AHIP works closely with owners to preserve their homes, enabling individuals to remain as well as age in place. AHIP is also involved in the management of Park's Edge apartments

**Kristin Szakos** – as the City Council representative, she expressed gratitude over the group setting time aside to have this type of discussion because (so frequently) the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing.

Kristin went on to talk about some housing examples she learned about from attending a recent League of Cities meeting. Specifically, she mentioned two examples from Boston. 1) Roxbury Neighborhood and 2) Dudley Street / Boston Neighborhood. She stated that they were doing some exciting things with the use of a land trust, which was a particularly useful tool in Dudley Street where foreclosures were common throughout the neighborhood, except for land trust houses. Further, through financial education, she thought that the land trust was doing a good job of communicating information about building wealth. Specifically, that putting all one's money into a house can be risky and that use of a money market account might provide a higher return on investment.

She also discussed that affordability is not just one end or the other and that we need to keep our eye on the 80% - 120% AMI housing needs for local workers, so that we can figure out ways to enable this group to live closer to work.

Lastly, Kristin mentioned a recent discussion with HUD Richmond about our public housing authority and two issues of concern about 1) lack of using project based vouchers to maximize benefit, and 2) need for subsidized housing with supportive services.

**Carmelia Wood** – Expressed concern over the needs of homeless persons who have lost their jobs. She asked about local programs to allow them to learn a trade to work and learn how to get to the point where they can build their own homes. She asked if the City could buy foreclosures and provide them for people in need.

The group discussed the use of foreclosed homes generally with comments about the City's lack of legislative ability to do this and liability issues. Dan Rosensweig mentioned the Casa Alma Model here in Charlottesville as well as the fact that Virginia has a Housing Trust Fund for the first time ever. Chris Murray remarked that the trust fund will have some set asides for helping homeless and persons with disabilities. Kristin Szakos mentioned the Boston model and use of a savings program to assist first time home buyers.

**Ed Bain** – Explained his involvement with the Thomas Jefferson Area Coalition for the Homeless (TJACH) and the Haven, a day shelter serving about 85 persons per day with clientele consisting primarily of males mostly in their early 20's. He also stated that TJACH/Haven are working closely with PACEM on implementing the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Lastly, that he had spoken with Kaki Dimock about the HAC homeless symposium this fall that he would encourage the group to make the meeting as broad based as possible.

Fielding questions from the group about the homeless population in general, Ed explained that the homeless point in time (PIT) count for Charlottesville is next week and that Open Knowledge Collaborative is working with TJACH to collect data and produce reports on their behalf. He felt that the count would not be able to identify some families / couch surfers but that they are getting information from local schools and the 40 question survey to solicit data should be very useful if people will participate. He also mentioned that the service providers council now includes a veteran's representative from Richmond and that a medical navigator is needed in the homeless community. He also expressed hope that the opening of the Jefferson School might provide some additional opportunities for more medical services.

Kristin Szakos mentioned that in her role as Council representative on the Jail Board that she was aware of a recent report that looked at repeat offenders and that the pool of those who frequented the local jail had dropped in half since the opening of the Crossings, which is a testament to the need for such a facility.

Ed went on to explain that the criteria for getting into the Crossings is very strict, including preference for disabled/medically vulnerable persons. While 80% of all homeless are only this way for 2 years or less, the chronic homeless who get into a program like the Crossings are typically more difficult cases. The typical stay with Virginia Supportive Housing (VSH) at the Crossings is about 4 years, but there is also potential for future use of scattered site subsidized units which has been successful in Richmond.

**Jennifer McKeever** - passed on her turn in order to allow others time to share.

**Nancy Kidd** – explained that she previously worked with the MACAA CARES program for 9 years but is currently working with the Hope House program which has operated previously as a transitional housing model for homeless families, but is having to modify its programs to conform to HUD requirements for Rapid Re-housing. Demand continues to exceed supply, evidenced by the fact that she has screened 30 families for 4 units over the past few months. There is a need for more housing for homeless families and her dream is to expand this program to the other 11 units on the site. Due to Rapid Rehousing, Nancy is also working with landlords to identify properties for transition from the Hope House to private housing.

Nancy explained that she is currently working on fund raising and that Hope House was the beneficiary of the lighting of the lawn at UVA this past year which raised \$5,800 (although this was a preliminary number and she is anticipating this will increase). In addition, she is working on an Altria grant to provide for maintenance expenses and purchasing of furnishings for the Hope House.

Lastly, she shared an example of a Hope House tenant who moved out in December after living there since November 2011. During that time, the female head of household was able to secure a job, purchase a car, obtain a driver's license, and accumulate \$4k in savings.

**Dan Rosensweig** – expressed his gratitude for having a round table discussion. He also explained that he thinks a public forum is a good thing for furthering the public understanding of homelessness and the associated issues.

As for his role with the Planning Commission, Dan explained that the Comprehensive Plan process is moving forward as well as the Livability Grant working with Albemarle County. He also touched on

the storm water utility as having merit, along with challenges. Lastly, he expressed the need to push the envelope with design/build projects such that these can reach a level where City engineering staff can approve plans with updated and progressive features.

As for Habitat for Humanity of Greater Charlottesville (HFHGC), Dan explained the new paradigm of affordable housing and the need to create mixed income communities while redeveloping pockets of poverty without resident displacement. He stated that HFHGC should be finished with Sunrise within the next year and that he is hoping JABA can get their financing together to purchase the other multifamily lot.

Dan added his thoughts about the value of community input to get at individual aspirations as demonstrated with the Dudley Street model, and mentioned previously by Kristin Szakos.

He went on to discuss Habitat's current partnership with the Thomas Jefferson Community Land Trust (TJCLT) on Cleveland Avenue and the potential for long term success using this tool.

Given that UVA wages are relatively low compared to housing costs, local options include increasing inventory of affordable housing stock or subsidizing individuals to afford existing housing. Through use of the current Habitat program, families will pay less for a mortgage than to rent slum housing and can build equity over time.

Dan also discussed the different models of homeownership and the importance of partnerships with other local non-profits such as Region 10, AHIP, JABA and Abundant Life Ministries.

As for next steps, Dan discussed:

1. The 2016 plans for the Southwood Mobile Home Park (346 trailers) and on-going efforts to hold community meetings to figure out who is there and what needs to be done. Ultimately, this information will help inform future plans for a 1,200 unit mixed income development with no displacement.
2. Belmont Cottages mixed income development is just getting started and will have 8 affordable units out of 15.
3. Burnett Commons through a partnership with Southern Development will provide four affordable units in phase two "The Woods."
4. Working with Southern Development to finalize a viable PUD application for 45 -50 mixed income units on the former City owned Elliott Avenue lot beside Oakwood Cemetery. Also looking to work with Region 10 on a group home at this location as well.

**Kira Drennon** – passed as it was time for her to leave.

**Melissa Thackston** – Mentioned that she had forwarded a housing survey from TJPDC and asked that people take the time to look at and complete the survey as HAC input would be invaluable.

**Frank Stoner** – as the sole private sector developer he stated that his firm would love to partner with non-profits and they are currently working with the Charlottesville Abundant Life Ministries to develop plans for a mixed income development on 5<sup>th</sup> Street S.W. He also invited the group to tour the newly rehabilitated Jefferson School property from 10 to 1 this coming Saturday. While financing was very difficult, the project has turned out great and HAC members should come enjoy the ceremony and open house.

**Wes Bellamy** – introduced himself as the newest HAC member as well as an Albemarle County High School teacher and founder of HYPE, a non-profit focused on helping young people evolve. He is also involved locally with a coat drive that collected roughly 800 coats this year. As to interest in housing, he stated that he personally knows a lot of folks who need better housing and more affordable options, which led him to get involved with the HAC.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Kathy McHugh as Chairperson Johnson was unable to attend the meeting.