

NORTHAMPTON HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Minutes

October 3, 2016

Members Present: Gordon Shaw, Chair, Richard Abuza, Jim Reis, Patrick Boughan, Rev. Todd Weir, Greta Hagen, Mark Goggins. Also present, Peg Keller, staff.

Call to Order: Chair Shaw called the meeting to order at 5: 40 p.m. Mr. Reis made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Boughan. They were approved as submitted.

Action Plan Update

Peg distributed a handout charting goals, tasks and timelines for completion. Each goal was reviewed and members discussed what tasks they might be interested in working on. Highlights of the discussion were:

- Op- eds: Rev. Weir, Ms. Hagen and Chair Shaw volunteered to work on these
- City Website: Mr. Boughan volunteered to work on increasing the presence of housing issues and resources on the Housing Partnership page.
- CHSSP Renewal - The Housing Partnership will re-apply to the Community Preservation Committee to renew the funding for the Community Housing Support Services Project. In order for new members to become more informed about the Project, the Coordinator will be invited to the December meeting for an update. The renewal will be submitted in the fall round of 2017.
- Landlord Support - Mr. Abuza explained how this involves logistical support, related to small “a” affordability - being supportive to landlords offering market rate affordable units (not formally subsidized) and identifying ways to help smaller multi-family owners retain their properties. Tasks could include the annual census letter from the Mayor which shows appreciation for their efforts; coordinating city departments when there are enforcement issues, etc. Peg will contact the City Clerk about sending another letter this year.
- Update Impediments to Fair Housing Analysis/ Chair Shaw, Ms. Hagen and Mr. Reis volunteered to work on this task. It will involve a CPC application.
- Zoning: Mr. Reis and Mr. Boughan volunteered to work on this task. The Agora Report was circulated for review prior to the meeting.

Peg expressed appreciation for members coming forward to work on tasks. As CDBG Administrator, her time to move these items forward is limited, so the more people doing the work, the more can get accomplished.

Project Updates

Affordable Housing Production

There has been no word to date on the MassWorks application which is needed for DHCD to fund the Lumberyard Project (55 units). 155 Live (70 units) is moving forward with demolition. Friends of the Homeless are still looking for a property to purchase to house 8-10 unaccompanied homeless youth.

Housing Rehabilitation Program

Mr. Reis offered to check in with John Fisher about future fair housing workshops and possible topics that could assist landlords. He will also see if there are funds in the State's Get the Lead Out Program to supplement our new rehab program. The informational session was attended by one person, but referrals from Valley CDC and the article in the paper has yielded 4-6 applications. Those will be verified for eligibility and be entered into the program.

Welcome Home Refugee Resettlement Effort

Peg said many volunteers have come forward to assist with supporting the families, but no actual housing units have been identified. There will be a meeting on October 24th to talk specifically about the housing component. Peg is doing outreach to realtors, property managers and the inter-faith community to attend the session. Housing Partnership members are welcome to attend.

CDBG Program Year

Peg circulated a handout showing the funded components of the CDBG Program for the year that began July 1, 2016. She described the projects and the status of each. The planning for the next year will begin in January of 2017.

Fair Housing

Peg had circulated the current Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing compiled by the Mass. Fair Housing Center prior to the meeting. There is a section on recommendations and areas for future research. Ms. Hagen suggested contacting the Mass. Fair Housing Center to ascertain the nature of fair housing complaints occurring in Northampton. The plan is to submit an application to the Community Preservation Committee in 2017 to hire a consultant to update the plan and develop annual action plans with goals to be accomplished.

Adjourn: There being no further business to discuss, the meeting concluded at 7:00 p.m.
Respectfully submitted, Peg Keller