

NORTHAMPTON HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Minutes

May 6, 2019

Members Present: Vice-Chair Patrick Boughan, Becky Lockwood, Gordon Shaw, Alex Jarret, Julio Alves, Carmen Junno, Richard Abuza, Edgar Cancel, Mark Goggins and Peg Keller, staff. Also present, Tess Poe, membership pending, Allison Curtis and Catherine Ratte of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission. (Chair Rev. Weir is on sabbatical and will be absent for 3 months).

Call to Order: Vice Chair Boughan called the meeting to order with the presence of a quorum at 5:35 p.m. All present introduced themselves. Ms. Poe is the Chair of the Planning Board and will be serving as a liaison to the Partnership in that capacity. All were welcomed. Approval of the minutes was postponed until next month.

Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing/ PVPC Presentation

Ms. Curtis provided background on the draft report submitted to the Partnership last week. She reviewed some of the relevant findings and asked the members for feedback. PVPC's notes after the meeting included the following:

Data additions

- RFP asked for Future Housing Needs projections —how many additional affordable housing units does the city need for different income groups
- Add home sales prices more current than the ACSurvey data of 2017—to capture the recent increases
- City census data / examine for relevance to demographic/household data
- Percentage of workers who live in Northampton and those who work in Northampton but don't live there
- Household size by income
- Comparisons to other similar communities in Hampshire County

Other additions

- Map with census tracts and neighborhoods and possibly place Northampton on a map in the regional context to show that there are people of color in the region, just not in Northampton
- Add footnotes to make technical language more accessible
- Add context to show impact of housing on well-being
- Add quotes from community engagement to humanize issues
- Fact sheet with big takeaways from data collection
- Re-write sentence "It is clear that barriers in the form of policies, programs, and general attitude stop certain populations from living in Northampton: in second

paragraph in Executive Summary to clarify where city has authority/power to make changes and where the policies and programs and general attitude are out of the city's control

Presentation

- Use post-it notes for the activity instead of stickers so people can write comments
- Have a comment drop box for those who don't want to speak in public or use the internet
- Look into using Facebook Live to broadcast the event
- Print images of some of the data on posters and spread throughout the room.

Carmen noted the need for landlords to be offered information about how their rates, tenant selection practices are hindering access for people. Her past attempts in her work to address this with RentNoho were unsuccessful. Patrick asked for more graphs and charts vs. reading of text for the presentation. Richard said there are many abstract concepts related to fair housing, so, what would be helpful in the presentation and the report, is the contextual impact housing has on wellbeing. Our efforts vs. the regional context is critical. Dan said testimonials for the media outreach and during the presentation (similar to the recent situation with Stop and Shop employees) relate the abstract concepts to people's personal experiences. Patrick said teacher salary information is public and available for comparisons to housing accessibility and affordability. Allison said some of that information did come out during the public input session.

Julio also expressed concern about the lack of evidence in the draft of "people's voices". He pointed out a discrepancy in numbers on pages 35 vs. 66. Patrick also had other data requests reflected in the bulleted items on page 1 of these minutes. Allison said PVPC is writing the Press Release now and the transportation reimbursement logistics as well as childcare will be finalized and put in the outreach materials. The challenge of reaching people who don't live here now but would like to was noted. Reaching back out to the stakeholder participants (i.e. Holyoke Housing Authority) to encourage attendance was mentioned. Peg will distribute the flier or Eventbrite invite to that list.

New Member Guide – the current draft was distributed for review. Jim and Peg worked on the revisions. Comments will be taken for another week, before it is finalized. Peg needs to work on the Glossary. Patrick will schedule the New Member orientation with Carmen, Dan, Tess and Alex.

Policy Sub-Committee – Julio, Jim and Patrick will meet to discuss developing a protocol for use of the revenue generated by the Air B and B unit tax. The Mayor has

asked the Partnership to suggest a process by which to utilize those funds for affordable housing purposes.

Community Housing Support Services Project – Peg reported that she is still working to schedule a meeting with CHD to discuss future funding. The final year of CPC funding began April 1, 2019. Program personnel will be invited to a Partnership meeting to report on program accomplishments and funding updates.

Hampshire Heights/Florence Heights – Edgar reported that the Community Gardens project is going full speed ahead. A community work day is scheduled for Saturday May 18th. Raised beds will be constructed in which to grow plants. Residents and community volunteers will be coordinating with Healthy Hampshire. A meeting on site at Hampshire Heights is scheduled for May 9th to discuss the playground component with Housing Authority Staff. Edgar will participate. Alex, Becky and Peg will attend.

Membership – Tess relayed her knowledge about a person potentially interested in joining. Patrick can follow up and Peg said she is available to meet with the person. Alex put forward two names; one from Meadowbrook and one from Hampshire Heights. Transportation could be an issue. Carmen offered to transport anyone coming from Meadowbrook, as she lives close by.

Op-Ed - the latest piece on Housing Stability was submitted but has not run yet. Peg has asked the Gazette when it will run, but has not received a reply. She will follow up, as the next request to them will be to publicize the May 22nd event.

Zoning Sub-Committee – Patrick sent a memo to the CPC Chair and staff about his research regarding the ability to bond for housing projects. The Planning Director said he was aware of this, so Patrick considers our work on this completed. He spoke to the Planning Board staff regarding allowing two family dwellings by right. Tess said it was early in the process but yes, it is being examined. She said that detached accessory apartments are being looked at as well. Patrick reiterated the Partnership's willingness to advocate for these changes during the public hearing process.

Patrick noted that a session sponsored by the Grow Smart Alliance is being held in Easthampton this week and Gordon said he would still like the Partnership to hold a **landlord workshop** in the fall. Plans for that will take priority after the Analysis of Impediments process concludes.

Adjourn/ The meeting concluded at 7:05 p.m. Respectfully submitted, Peg Keller