



BROWARD HOUSING COUNCIL MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: A regular meeting of the Broward Housing Council was held on Friday, October 24, 2014, commencing at 10:07 a.m., in the Auditorium of the African American Research Library & Cultural Center (AARLCC), located at 2650 Sistrunk Boulevard, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311.

ROLL CALL: In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair called the meeting to order. Roll call was conducted by Mr. Albert Cummings.

Council Members Present:

Lisa Vecchi, Vice Chair
Robert Baldwin
Ann Deibert
Vice Mayor Caryl Hattan
Richard Lemack
Gino Moro

John Peters
Frank Schnidman
Ralph Stone
Randall Vitale
Commissioner Lois Wexler

Council Members Absent:

Monica Navarro, Chair
Richard Barkett
Frances Esposito
Mercedes Nunez
Dr. Rosalind Osgood

Staff:

Henry Sniezek, Planning & Redevelopment,
Housing Council Board Liaison
Angela Chin, Planning & Redevelopment, Assistant
to Housing Council Board Liaison
Albert Cummings, Planning & Redevelopment
Mark Journey, Office of the County Attorney
Vena Paylo, Planning & Redevelopment
Michael Wright, Homeless Initiative Partnership

Guests:

Rosemarie Fallon, Housing Finance & Community
Development
Sandra Veszi Einhorn, Rebuilding Together Broward

I. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 27, 2014 MEETING MINUTES

***MOTION:** It was moved by Randall Vitale and seconded by Commissioner Wexler to approve the Minutes of the Broward Housing Council Meeting of August 22, 2014. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.*

II. CHAIR'S REPORT

Vice Chair Vecchi, No Chair's report.

III. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Henry Sniezek spoke about the Board of County Commissioners initiative to review and update the Broward County Land Use and Comprehensive Plans. He mentioned the first kickoff meeting was held in August followed by a number of focus area meetings. He announced that on Wednesday, October 29th at 1:30 p.m. in Room 422 of the Broward County Governmental Center, there will be a focus area meeting and one of the topics being discussed is housing. He mentioned that staff along with subject matter experts will revisit the existing policies and make recommendations for improving the policies of both the Broward County Land Use and Comprehensive Plans. He extended an invite to Council members.

IV. HOMELESS INITIATIVE PARTNERSHIP (HIP) ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT & HOMELESS CONTINUUM OF CARE (COC) BOARD REPORT

Mr. Michael Wright focused the Council members attention to a spreadsheet that was handed out earlier which identifies 23 proposed projects. He then spoke about HUD's Continuum of Care (CoC) Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) competition for 2014. Mr. Wright mentioned that one of the requirements from the NOFA is that the CoC advisory board rank all of the projects from the list that are currently up for renewal. One project that the county is currently operating is a temporary transitional housing projects for individuals that are 55 years of age and older which will no longer operate after December 2015. He stated that those funds will be reallocated. Based on current funded projects, he stated, two agencies were offered the opportunity go after a new allocation project. The first project is the Samaritan Expansion through the Broward Housing Solutions (BHS), and the second project is through the Broward Housing Authority Shelter Plus Care (S+C) project which will add an additional 30 new beds for the chronically homeless. Mr. Wright stated that out of the \$10.2 million annual renewal demand, Congress will only appropriate 98% of the total which equates to approximately \$9.9 million. He stated that of the 23 projects from the list, 22 will be funded if all projects pass the threshold, and the one project which serves the highest sub-population, the chronically homeless, will have to compete nationally for funding. Mr. Wright revealed that Congress also appropriated \$40 million nationally for continuums to compete for a bonus project in which the BHS will be submitting an application. Mr. Wright indicated that he believes they are in a good position to receive funding for all 23 projects as well as the bonus project. He indicated that the outcome if all projects are funded will result in the creation of over 170 new units of permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals and families.

Commissioner Wexler asked Mr. Wright about the status of the City of Fort Lauderdale Commissioners Ordinance that would make feeding the homeless more restrictive. Mr. Wright responded by saying the ordinance will still allow churches to continue feeding the homeless, but at designated locations excluding servicing the homeless outdoors and in city parks. Commissioner Wexler asked if churches are exempt from applying for permits to provide porta potties and hand washing stations. Mr. Wright replied by saying that there are a different set of standards for churches. He also mentioned that the area where food will be served will have to be more than 500 feet from any residential property. A discussion followed amongst Council members. Mr. Robert Baldwin indicated that the City of Dania Beach is reviewing their ordinance because of the impact it could have on their City and he believes the City of Hollywood is following also. He stated that he could forward to her any kind of opinions rendered by the attorney. Commissioner Wexler then asked Mr. Wright if he could forward to her a copy of the City of Fort Lauderdale's Ordinance and requested that staff forward to Council members.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Adoption of the final report, "Community Reinvestment Act, Bank Performance in Housing Lending and Investment in Broward County"

The Vice Chair stated that while no changes were made to the content of the report submitted in June, there were some minor edits and formatting changes. She stated that at the last meeting, Council members implied that the report was in draft form and should be adopted by the Council. Commissioner Wexler implied that she would like to modify the motion to read "receive the report" instead of approving the report.

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Wexler and seconded by Robert Baldwin to receive the final report "Community Reinvestment Act, Bank Performance in Housing Lending and Investment in Broward County." The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

B. 2014 Work Program

Mr. Henry Sniezek provided a brief update on the current status of the work program. He indicated that Chair Navarro had suggested that the CRA report recommendations be added to the agenda under Informational only to allow Council members the opportunity to review and decide at the February meeting which recommendations to be included in the 2015 Work Program.

Commissioner Wexler indicated that the CRA report recommendations should have been added to the Old Business of the agenda so that Council members could vote on those action items. Mr. Sniezek stated that staff will add the CRA report recommendations to the work program for Council members to approve at the next meeting.

MOTION: It was moved by Randall Vitale and seconded by Commissioner Wexler to include the CRA report recommendations to the 2014 Work Program and bring back for approval at the next meeting. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Commissioner Wexler then asked Mr. Sniezek about staff being directed to investigate whether it is feasible to create a searchable and interactive database on the Council's website and conduct a joint workshop to explore the creation of a permanent Community and Banking Council Workshop and report back at the next meeting. She was inquiring why these recommendations/status updates were not included on the work program.

Ms. Angela Chin indicated that staff has set a date for the Community and Banking Council Workshop to be held at the Governmental Center on January 23, 2015. In addition, Mr. Sniezek replied that staff will be able to create a searchable and interactive database on the Council's website. Therefore, staff supports including these two items in the work program at this time.

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Wexler and seconded by Randall Vitale to include in the 2014 Work Program 1) the creation of a searchable and interactive database on the Council's website; and 2) conduct a joint workshop to explore the creation of a permanent Community and Banking Council to monitor and evaluate bank CRA performances, discuss issues, problems, challenges and opportunities and identify solutions. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Frank Schnidman commented on a sentence contained in Item VII. A. Potential Housing Linkage Fee Program for Broward County. The paragraph read, "...The study will provide for legal justification." He indicated that that sentence is a conclusory comment and suggested that it be reworded. Mr. Sniezek stated that staff will modify the sentence to read, "...The study will provide whether it is legally justified."

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Presentation by Sandra Veszi Einhorn, Executive Director, Rebuilding Together Broward

Ms. Sandra Veszi Einhorn presented to the Council the vision, mission and values of Rebuilding Together Broward. She highlighted some of their accomplishments since their establishment in Broward County in June of 2003.

She spoke about their four pillars: home improvements, safety upgrades, energy retrofits, and neighborhood revitalization. She indicated that their national mission statement is to bring volunteers and communities together to improve the homes and lives of local veterans, elderly, disabled and low income homeowners. Ms. Einhorn mentioned that last year, they had over 92,000 volunteers who donated approximately 980,000 hours and rehabilitated more than 10,000 homes. She showed before and after photos of homes they revitalized.

Ms. Einhorn then advised the Council that once a year, their program targets a specific low-income community with the goal of neighborhood revitalization for National Rebuilding Day. She stated that they received a one-time contribution of \$50,000 towards home repairs, safety improvements, and other modification projects in support of National Rebuilding Day 2014 for the City of Fort Lauderdale Northwest Progresso Flagler heights Community Redevelopment Area. Ms. Einhorn revealed that they have begun working with a number of City Departments, including Code Enforcement, to identify blighted homes that are in need of exterior repairs, focusing on revitalization and safety.

Ms. Ann Deibert inquired about how homes are selected. Ms. Einhorn replied by stating that properties are selected based upon the needs of the community and the homeowners who apply for assistance. She mentioned that eligible properties must be homesteaded for a number of years, and owners must wish to remain in their homes but lack the means to make the improvements. She indicated that the average age of the homeowner they serve is within their mid to late 60s and the average time in their residence is 36 years. Following her presentation, there was a lengthy discussion amongst Ms. Einhorn and Council members.

Mr. Schnidman stated that nine municipalities in Broward County have established CRAs and out of the nine CRAs that collect tax increment financing (TIF) none of the TIF funds are being utilized for affordable housing projects as mentioned in Chapter 163 Florida Statutes instead the TIF funds are being used for economic development projects. He stated that the CRAs have completed Findings of Necessities Studies that identifies slum and blighted conditions and the lack of affordable housing within their redevelopment areas and yet no one is being held accountable for not applying TIF funds for affordable housing projects.

Mr. Richard Lemack stated for the record that the Town of Davie's redevelopment plan has done a great job and made tremendous investments in identifying, eliminating and preventing slum and blighted conditions within their community redevelopment areas.

The Council members thanked Ms. Einhorn for the information and presentation on Rebuilding Together Broward.

B. Presentation by Ralph Stone on the Housing Finance Authority of Broward County.

Mr. Ralph Stone gave a brief overview on the Housing Finance Authority (HFA). He indicated that he serves as the Executive Director of the HFA which meets on the second Wednesday of each month. He indicated that the HFA is authorized by state statute and through local ordinance as a quasi-governmental agency created by Ordinance in 1979 to provide capital to alleviate the shortage of affordable housing in the County. Mr. Stone mentioned that the HFA has issued approximately \$1.7 billion dollars in bonds since 1980. He indicated the difficulty of issuing single family mortgage bonds since the housing bubble in 2008. He mentioned an alternate program in the treasury rules that generate the tax credit allocation to convert mortgage credit certificates. Mr. Stone stated that the HFA budget and activities are self-directed but their expenditure and bond program still need go before the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) for final approval.

He stated that the HFA has also subsidized affordable housing staff within the Housing Finance and Community Development Division for many years especially recently since the reduction in federal and state grant programs. The HFA basically does bond issues either through tax exempt or 4 percent tax credit bonds for single family mortgages or new multifamily development. Mr. Stone indicated the HFA also does joint venture projects with the state, housing authorities, and all the for profit tax credit developers. In addition, Mr. Stone mentioned that the BOCC has approved the HFA for construction financing to build 18 new homes in the unincorporated area subject to the lots being transferred from the County.

Mr. Randall Vitale inquired about the low commercial rates and how these rates may affected the HFA. Mr. Stone stated they go to market with expenses imbedded to try and identify a mortgage rate that is significantly below the commercial rate.

C. Proposed Housing Council meeting dates, time, and location for 2015.

MOTION: It was moved by Randall Vitale and seconded by Commissioner Wexler to approve the 2015 Housing Council's meeting dates, time, and location. The motion was passed by a unanimous voice vote.

VII. INFORMATIONAL ONLY

A. Information provided by Michael Wright regarding Homelessness: Rapid Re-Housing/ Supportive Housing; Point-in-Time Subpopulations Summary for Ft. Lauderdale/Broward County CoC; and, Point-in-Time Count Veterans for Ft. Lauderdale/Broward County CoC.

Mr. Wright provided a hand-out on the Point-in-Time (PIT) Chronically Homeless Subpopulations. Commissioner Wexler asked Mr. Wright for clarification in the total numbers of chronically homeless individuals as well as adults with mental illness, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, and victims of domestic violence. Her concern was whether the totals included a duplication such as 497 people identified as chronically homeless and the 568 people identified with a serious mental illness. Mr. Wright answered, yes, that individuals may be added to all or some of the homeless subpopulations. He then proceeded to elaborate on the details of how those total counts were derived. Mr. Wright concluded by thanking Ms. Vena Paylo for her continued support in including information on the Council's website indicating that the information is also ADA compliance.

VIII. NEXT HOUSING COUNCIL MEETING

Friday, December 19, 2014
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
AARLCC – Seminar Room 2

IX. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no other business to discuss before the Council, the Vice Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:27 a.m.

Disclosure: The above captioned Minutes are transcribed in a summary format. To hear the full meeting, a compact disk of the meeting (#DR 14-SC-56) can be provided after 24 hour notice to the Document Control and Minutes Section at 954-357-6634.