

HOUSING RESOURCES COMMISSION

Quarterly Meeting

Rhode Island Foundation

One Union Station Providence, RI

April 7, 2006

MINUTES

The regular quarterly meeting of the RI Housing Resources Commission was called to order 9:15am.

Commissioners present were:

Susan Baxter

Joseph Caffey

Brenda Clement

Susan Bodington

James Ryczek

Roberta Aaronson

Housing Resources

Commission Staff:

Steven Adamo

Angela Lovegrove

David Hammarström

Barbara Fields

Noreen Shawcross

Valarie Voccio

Peter Walsh

Monica Staaf

Marie Stoeckel

Bob McDonough

Simon Kue

Ray Nierinckx

Darlene Price

Doris De Los Santos

Evelyn Quiñones

RI Housing Staff:

Carol Ventura

Amy Rainone

Guests:

Chris Gorham

Terence Tierney

Eric Shorter

Kaveh Hajian

Thomas Deller

Dennis Langley

Pursuant to Chapter 46 of Title 42 General Laws of Rhode Island, notice of this meeting was posted at the State House and at RI Housing Resources Commission offices.

1. Approval of Minutes of January 13, 2006

Susan Baxter welcomed Jim Ryczek the new director for the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless. She requested introductions by those present.

The Minutes of January 13, 2006 were accepted with the correction that Barbara Fields was not present.

2. Report of the Chair

Susan Baxter gave the report on legislation related to the Housing Resources Commission. Housing bills including a hearing on the proposed \$7.5 million bond to be heard today in House Finance.

The Technical Committee of the State Planning Council suggested some changes to the Strategic Housing Plan. The revised version is going through the public hearing process on April 18 and 19. The document is available at www.planning.state.ri.us.

On March 22, 2006, the Office of Homelessness held a meeting with the homeless providers regarding changes in the funding and allocation process called the Consolidated Homeless Fund. This begins a major change in how the state funds the shelters in the state. Noreen Shawcross noted no major opposition. Most seem supportive of the changes.

Commissioners will be notified of all Neighborhood Opportunities Program groundbreakings and ribbon-cuttings and Susan urges all to consider attending.

Barbara Fields noted on a successful tour of NOP projects with Rep. Gordon Fox and Senator John Tassoni. She also described a successful Woonsocket Neighborhood Development Corp. event attended by the Governor.

3. Approval of Memorandum of Agreement-Rhode Island Housing & the Housing Resources Commission

Commissioners had received copies of the MOA between the

Commission and RI Housing that had been approved by the Coordinating Council on February 10, 2006. Dennis Langley moved approval. Barbara Fields seconded. The motion passed.

4. Approval of Neighborhood Opportunities Program Resolution

Susan Baxter reviewed the membership and structure of the NOP Distribution Committee. We hope to have updated guidelines in June to make sure that the way the program is structured meets the needs of the community and the requirements of the law.

Ray Nierinckx presented the NOP Matrix of eight projects recommended for remaining funding in FY 06. There were questions about services (assured by contract) and maintaining long term affordability.

Dennis Langely moved acceptance of the resolution and Monica Staaf seconded.

Barbara Fields proposed a friendly amendment to the motion that would recommend forward commitment and of FY07 NOP funding for SWAP and GENS. Both are tax credit projects that have applied previously, but were delayed pending the award of tax credits which are once a year resources. By the time these agencies had received the tax credits, the FY 06 funds were expended. They must now go forward or cause risk to the developer. Barbara stated that the two

projects will create 100 units of affordable rental housing in the state.

There was a discussion of the fairness of forward commitment vs. the needs of the developers to move forward. Noreen Shawcross stated that she had some concern with the amount of funds committed to the commercial piece of the SWAP project and the fairness toward other applicants who might have wished to apply for forward commitment. Brenda Clement noted that she was comfortable with the commercial investment as it leverages a tremendous amount of housing. There was a lengthy discussion among Commissioners related to these issues and others.

The question was called and additional amendments were withdrawn.

In order to move forward to a vote, Dennis Langley accepted the friendly amendment and Monica Staaf seconded. The motion, as amended, to approve the remaining funding for FY 06 and to forward commit anticipated 07 funds passed. Eight were in favor, 3 opposed. Joe Caffey recused himself; Brenda Clement and Jim Ryczek abstained.

Susan strongly reminded Commissioners that NOP Disbursement Committee recommendations should not be discussed until the final recommendation of the Commission.

5. Approval of Annual Report

Commissioners received a e-mail version of the Annual Report on March 15. Noreen will accept minor revisions for the next week, but we cannot delay acceptance until June due to legislative mandates. Barbara Fields moved acceptance. Monica Staaf seconded. Motion passed.

6. Resolution Applicable to the State Lead Hazard Reduction Program

Simon Kue presented a motion to change regulations for the Lead Hazard Reduction Program.

Terry Tierney questioned on how we identified properties in receivership which not listed as a priority and questioned if they should be? Receivership will be considered but not a high priority. Are priorities both exclusive and ordered? And how high or low should they be? Terry proposed amending the regulations to add a bullet for receivership.

Motion to be tabled for June:

Brenda Clement moved to tale the motion until the June meeting for the Program Performance committee to discuss it further in the interim. David Hammarstrom seconded. The motion passed.

7. Reports of the Offices

Susan Bodington recognized Noreen's work for the remaining Katrina residents at the Anchorage. Barbara Fields noted the Citizens contribution to the Katrina families thanks to Jeanne Cola.

8. Public Comment Period

Joseph Caffey expressed some concern over legal advice for the HRC. Legal counsel for the HRC going forward needs to be at the HRC Quarterly Meeting. Motion to explore for legal counsel asked for Noreen to investigate legal counsel for HRC through the Dept. of Administration. To be reported back in June.

Brenda reported on the Historic Tax Credit changes and the risk of affordability to link prevailing wages to tax credit above \$1000.

LISC 15th anniversary events being held are being held.

The Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless, Journey Home Walk will be held on May 21-25 from Westerly to the State House.

Susan Bodington reminded people for the need for support of the proposed bond issue and reviewed its purposes.

Thom Deller stated Commissioners are invited to a breakfast at the Marriott that will be held on April 20 to announce Providence's housing initiatives and noted appreciation for NOP support.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am. The next quarterly meeting of the Housing Resources Commission will be on Friday, June 9, 2006. It will be held in Conference Room A, Dept. of Administration, One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI 02908.