

Rhode Island Housing Resources Commission
Minutes of March 19, 2010
Quarterly Meeting



Commissioners & Designees:

	Baxter, Susan – Chair	
Aaronson, Roberta Hazen		Kravitz, Tom
Bodington, Susan		McGunagle, Joanne
Cola, Jeanne		Novais, Ana
Coleman, Marcy		Rodrigues, Melody
DeLuca, William		Ryczek, Jim
Flynn, Kevin		Sekeres, Bonnie
Hajian, Kaveh		Stenning, Craig
Hammarström, David		Tierney, Terence
Hannifan, Chris		Zaslow, Carrie
Kiesel, Marilyn		

Staff:

De Los Santos, Doris	Price, Darlene
Kimes, Charlie	Tondra, Mike
Kue, Simon	Vittorioso, Dawn
Neirinckx, Ray	

Guests:

Lagace, Nicole, HousingWorks RI

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Susan Baxter, Chair at 8:33 a.m.

2. Approval of December 11, 2009 Minutes

Craig Stenning moved acceptance. Kevin Flynn seconded. Minutes approved.

3. Report of Chair

Appointments and Reappointments: As of this writing, we have no updates regarding appointments and reappointments. We are working with Deborah Smith, Director of Municipal and External Affairs in the Governor's Office to move these forward. We are very pleased that our current commissioners continue to serve.

Jeanne Cola and I met with Rhode Island Housing and HRC staff on February 12 for a detailed update on the progress of the developments in the pipeline funded by the **Building Homes Rhode Island bond and the Neighborhood Opportunities Program**. It was determined that an RFP should be issued for funds that are available before the end of FY 2010. The RFP has been issued and applications are due on March 22, 2010. Policy and administrative issues were also discussed. The Commissioners will approve the full Distribution Committee recommendations at the next HRC meeting.

Meeting Schedule: The Friday, May 14, 2010 meeting will be rescheduled to Friday, May 21, 2010. This will provide an additional week for the BHRI/NOP Distribution Committee to make recommendations to the HRC.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: The Commission staff will continue to implement both the Neighborhood Stabilization Program and the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program. Should Commissioners want to keep updated with documents/progress, these are available at:

www.hrc.ri.gov/NSP.php
www.hrc.ri.gov/HPRP.php

Legislation: To date, there are two bills filed in the General Assembly that would impact the Housing Resources Commission. Bill Numbers S-2292 and H-7326 entitled Low and Moderate Income Housing would expand the definition of "low or moderate income housing" to also mean all rental units, not subsidized, in which rents fall within amounts as defined by applicable federal or state law relating to low and moderate income housing. At a hearing on 7326, the bill was tabled for further study.

Susan asked Sue Bodington to provide additional details about the Bills. Sue explained that due to the issues that might be raised, a recommendation was submitted to have the Bill transferred to the Study Commission. Sue said that the purpose of the Act is to increase the number of units counted. Jeanne Cola asked if this was an attempt to have the cities and towns reach the ten percent affordable housing requirement without building additional developments. Sue confirmed this.

Susan continued with the Legislative report and explained that Bill Number H-7730 would add the Neighborhood Opportunities Program to the powers and duties of the Housing Resources Commission with \$10 million in funding. Susan reminded the Commission that NOP will not be part of the FY 2011 budget. If funding becomes available, it would become the responsibility of HRC and it would be included within the policies and programs. Jim Ryczek reported that the

Bill has not been heard; however, it has been introduced to the House by Representative Pacheco. Jim explained that productive discussions with leadership have occurred in relation to funding NOP under a general operating budget or allocating the funds to a permanent account.

In addition, Jim added that a celebration for NOP's ten-year anniversary will be held on April 8, 2010 at 3:00 p.m. at the State House in the Governor's State Room. Jim said he plans to have a representative from all the communities. Jim also noted that the initial sponsors of the program will be honored at the celebration. Jim and Chris Hannifan will be mailing invites to the Commission.

Announcement: Noreen Shawcross will be retiring on June 5, 2010 after nearly five years as Executive Director of the HRC.

4. Budget Update

Susan introduced Simon Kue who began discussing the following Housing Resources Commission Program Budget as of March 15, 2010:

Lead program	FY 10	YTD - Grants Drawdown	Balance
Administrative Fee	\$106,000	\$106,000	
Lead Hazard Control Inspections	\$544,000	\$544,000	
Credit Reports			
Relocation Costs			
Lead Public Awareness Program			
Required Match			
Total Lead	\$650,000	\$650,000	
Homelessness			
Consolidated Homeless Fund - State			
Women Shelter - Urban League	\$200,000	\$150,000	\$50,000
Harrington Hall - House of Hope	\$210,000	\$157,500	\$52,500
Supportive Service Program - Riverwood	\$300,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
Crossroads Family Shelter	\$450,000	\$337,500	\$112,500
Emergency Shelter - Family Resources	\$50,000	\$37,500	\$12,500
Transportation Program - RIPTA	\$75,000	\$75,000	
Winter Overflow Shelters - Amos House (PEH)	\$5,000	\$4,000	\$1,000
Total Consolidated Homeless Fund - State	\$1,290,000	\$911,500	\$378,500
Shelter Funds-27 Agencies	\$160,000	\$160,000	
HMIS Database	\$30,000	\$30,000	
Homeownership connection	\$40,000	\$30,000	\$10,000
Total	\$230,000	\$220,000	\$10,000
Total - HRC Program Budget	\$2,170,000	\$1,781,500	\$388,500
Neighborhood Opportunities Program (NOP)	\$2,500,000	\$2,500,000	
Affordable Housing Bond	\$12,500,000	\$2,218,000	\$10,282,000
Consolidated Homeless Funds - Federal	\$1,720,299	\$1,267,399	\$452,900
Total	\$16,720,299	\$5,985,399	\$10,734,900
Total HRC Program Funds	\$18,890,299	\$7,766,899	\$11,123,400

Simon began by announcing that 82% of HRC funding has been allocated. Additionally, Simon noted that he is working with the Budget Office to have the remaining funding from the Affordable Housing Bond funding disbursed. Simon said that 60% of the Consolidated Homeless Fund federal funds have been disbursed on target, and the remaining funds will be disbursed by year end.

Susan asked the Commission if anyone had any questions for Simon. Kevin Flynn, referring to the Affordable Housing Bond, asked if the Commission is waiting for the State to do a Bond Sale on affordable housing. Simon said yes, we are waiting for the funds to go into the account.

5. Resolution: Approval of the Reallocation of NOP Escrow Funds

Susan introduced Ray Neirinckx who began explaining that the NOP at one time provided capital and a ten-year operating award to agencies that received funding under two of the three programs; permanent supportive housing and the family housing program. Over the past ten years, both programs provided operating support to assist the agency with maintenance, social service, case management and other development needs. Ray explained that over time, some organizations depleted funds quickly or experienced a miscalculation in terms of the development needs with the reflection of the market; particularly maintenance and utility costs or other housing needs that were not anticipated.

Jeanne Cola noted that when the ten-year awards were made, organizations were not provided with ten years worth of funding and those funds were set aside in a separate escrow account earning interest.

Ray explained the following four projects will require additional funding.

Community Works		
Rhode Island (FKA GENS)	Adelaide Avenue Tax Credit Project	\$88,000
REACH	30 Earle Street	\$40,000
	Riverside Gateway Tax Credit	
Olneyville Housing Corporation	Project	\$76,500
Blackstone Valley Mental Health	Newell Avenue	\$53,900
Total Operating Allocation Recommended		\$258,400

In response to a question from Susan, Ray explained that interest income in the escrow account would fund these. Future funding flexibility would be available as necessary as the interest received would be recycled. Ray asked the Commission to approve \$258,400 in operating allocations. There was no further discussion. Motion to approve was made by Jim Ryczek, seconded by Carrie Zaslów. The motion carried.

6. Resolution: Approval of the HRC Annual Report

Susan introduced the annual report (below) to the Commission and then asked the Commission to review the document and forward comments and concerns to Noreen.

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND



HOUSING RESOURCES COMMISSION
ONE CAPITOL HILL
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

March 2010

www.hrc.ri.gov



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

Department of Administration
OFFICE OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
HOUSING RESOURCES COMMISSION
One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908

March 22, 2010

To: The Honorable Donald Carcieri, Governor of Rhode Island
The Honorable M. Teresa Paiva-Weed, President of the Senate
The Honorable Gordon Fox, Speaker of the House
Members of the General Assembly

From: Susan Baxter, Chair
Rhode Island Housing Resources Commission

Noreen Shawcross, Chief
Office of Housing and Community Development
Executive Director, Housing Resources Commission

RE: **Annual Report**

Please find enclosed Annual Report of the Housing Resources Commission (HRC) for calendar year 2009. We wish to express our gratitude for the resources afforded to the Commission by Governor Donald Carcieri, Senate President Teresa Paiva-Weed, Speaker of the House Gordon Fox and the leadership and members of the House and Senate.

We also want to acknowledge the Commissioners who dedicate their time and expertise to improving housing opportunity and quality in the State of Rhode Island. Through their efforts, we will continue to identify issues and promote solutions related to housing, homelessness, and lead paint poisoning.

If you have any questions about this report, please do not hesitate to contact this office at 222-5766. Thank you.

Introduction

Susan Baxter, Chair, and the members of the Housing Resources Commission respectfully submit this Annual Report in compliance with Section 42-128-16 of the Rhode Island General Laws. The Act requires the Commission “to submit for each calendar year by March 1 of the next year a report to the governor and the general assembly on its activities and findings and recommendations regarding housing issues, which report by census tract, shall include the number and dollar amount of its programs and an assessment of health related housing issues, including the incidence of lead poisoning.”

The Office of Housing and Community Development and Housing Resources Commission: Structure

In July 2005, a significant change occurred in the structure and administration of the Housing Resources Commission. Through an organizational restructuring, Governor Donald Carcieri established the Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD) which consolidated the Commission’s work with that of the state Community Development Block Grant and Emergency Shelter Grant Programs. The programs are located in the Division of Planning within the Department of Administration.

The Chief of the Office of Housing and Community Development also serves as the Executive Director of the Housing Resources Commission. Within the Commission and the Community Development program, a total of eight other staff members carry out a number of programs. All work in a coordinated team approach sharing skills, resources and ideas.

Due to the federal Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (HERA) as well as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), the work of the Office of Housing and Community Development and the Housing Resources Commission has greatly expanded. Funding provided to the community by the OHCD has more than doubled. Therefore, this report reflects the overall work of the OHCD as well as the activities of the Commission.

This report, as well as the attached chart of Lead Reduction Loans by Census Tract, is for the calendar year ending December 30, 2009. The following report describes Housing Resources Commission accomplishments in 2009 and the work of the Community Development Program related to housing issues.

The Housing Resources Commission

The Commission completed its first 11 years of work in February 2010. During that time, it has greatly expanded its activities from those envisioned in 1999. Among the many notable achievement have been:

- A significant increase in housing production through the Neighborhood Opportunities Program and the Building Homes Rhode Island bond;

- A reduction in homelessness through ongoing systems change in terms of consolidation of funding for homeless programs, an emphasis on permanent housing rather than shelter, and a new focus on prevention and rapid re-housing;
- Implementation of a state strategic housing plan and tracking of local housing plans; and;
- A significant decrease in incidence of childhood lead poisoning through lead hazard mitigation.

The Commission has been provided with funding for programs and operations through the State of Rhode Island since FY 1999. With support from the Governor and the General Assembly, the Commission has contributed to the economic, social, and physical well-being of the people of Rhode Island. It continues its mission to provide housing opportunities for all Rhode Islanders, to maintain the quality of housing in Rhode Island, and to coordinate housing functions within the agencies and subdivisions of the state.

In the past year, the Commission has worked closely with state agencies including but not limited to the following:

- The Department of Corrections on the problem of homeless registered sexual offenders and identification of housing resources for this population;
- The Departments of Mental Health, Retardation and Hospitals on: the SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR) initiative; the federal Access to Recovery (ATR) and Programs in Assistance to Transition from Homelessness (PATH) grants; providing behavioral health resources to homeless people staying in tent cities and in shelters; and in the ongoing work of creating permanent housing;
- The Department of Transportation in the closure of tent cities;
- The Department of Human Services serving on the Housing Workgroup of the Global Waiver Task Force, continuing a Memorandum of Agreement to manage the department's shelter funding, and providing the department with maintenance of effort funding;
- Bureau of Child Support on its fatherhood initiative;
- The Office of Energy Resources to address residential energy efficiency;
- The Department of Labor and Training on the Office of Homelessness subcommittee on Employment and Income.

Housing Resources Commission: Annual Report 2009

The 2009 year continued to focus on problems and opportunities related to housing that have developed due to the economic downturn and the foreclosure crisis. Households struggling with job loss, instability, and/or salary and benefit cuts found their problems compounded by lack of affordable homes. An increase in the number of home foreclosures has threatened significant progress that has been made in the quality of the state's housing stock. The HRC staff members have responded to over 3,000 calls and in-person contacts during 2009, most from people who are experiencing a severe housing crisis.

While we have some resources to address the growing problems, we can only assist a limited percentage of those who need housing assistance. The following programs have been successful in providing housing or preventing homelessness:

- The Building Homes Rhode Island bond;
- The Neighborhood Opportunities Program;
- The federal Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008, Neighborhood Stabilization Program (in partnership with Rhode Island Housing);
- Housing First Rhode Island;
- The Consolidated Homeless Fund (with funding through State of RI, Dept. of Human Services and the federal Emergency Shelter Grant Program);
- The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program;
- The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) CDBG-R;
- The ARRA Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (in partnership with the cities of Pawtucket, Providence and Woonsocket).

In order to address the state's housing challenges and plan for the use of resources, our staff of four Housing Commission Coordinators and our Executive Director, along with four members of the Community Development team, staffed the Offices of:

- Community Development and Technical Assistance;
- Healthy Housing;
- Homelessness;
- Homeownership, and;
- Planning and Operations.

The Commission, currently with 26 appointed and ex-officio members, held meetings in January, March, May, September and December of 2009. Each of the meetings of the full Commission exceeded the quorum required. Accomplishments of the Offices of the Commission in 2009 are detailed below.

Office of Community Development and Technical Assistance

Jeanne Cola: Chair

Raymond Neirinckx: Housing Commission Coordinator

- The Building Homes Rhode Island Bond and Neighborhood Opportunities Program Distribution Committee implemented Year 3 of the bond program funding a total of 549 homes with \$30,000,000 in funds, leveraging over \$9 dollars of federal and private funding for every state dollar invested.
- In year 3, BHRI awards have been made to developers of 186 rental homes, including 14 for homeless veterans, and 41 homeownership opportunities. An effort was made to combine BHRI funds the Neighborhood Stabilization Program funds so that vacant, blighted properties could be quickly rehabilitated and put back into use.
- Staff worked with the United Way and their Financial Stability Program is awarding funding to 9 agencies engaged in financial literacy and asset building.
- Staff was involved in key housing initiatives including: the Advisory Council for the Partnership for Community Development (Roger Williams University & the

Housing Network of RI) for continuing education of community economic development professionals; the Resident Ownership Communities (ROC USA) to offer technical assistance for residents to purchase their mobile home parks; the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Making Connections-Family Economic Success initiative for community engagement in Providence; and the Citizens Bank and NBC10 Champions in Action program.

Office of Health Housing (OHH)

Brenda Clement: Chair

Doris De Los Santos: Housing Commission Coordinator

- Continued promoting a healthy housing agenda by working with different stakeholders and initiatives.
- Participated in regional efforts sponsored by the Asthma regional Council of New England to address healthy homes using a holistic, coordinated approach to promote healthier housing across New England. The project includes goals such as conducting a regional needs assessment, the development and delivery of healthy homes training, and the creation of specialized working sub-groups.
- Continued collaborating with the Healthy Housing Collaborative initiative.
- Began implementation of the new filling requirements for lead inspectors.
- Continues to provide technical assistance to Lead Inspectors.
- Continues to respond to issues related to quality control for all programmatic areas of the office (inspection protocol, certified trainers).
- Assessed the online inspector application and developed a set of recommendations for improving the navigation and the collection of information. The recommendations are being analyzed by RI.gov.
- Continues to receive and process Presumptive Compliance and Affidavit of Visual Inspection applications.
- The Lead Hazard Mitigation Program issued 5,226 Certificates of Conformance and 900 Presumptive Compliance certifications. Since 2005 a total of 23, 911 Presumptive Compliance certificates have been issued and 4,900 Presumptive Compliance certifications.
- 25, 000 (*please note: number is in process being updated for Annual Report*) property owners have been trained in lead mitigation protocols and lead safe work practices through the Lead Hazard Awareness Seminar since 2005.
- Continues to distribute the booklets/fact sheets on the Lead Hazard Mitigation Act and lead information to landlords and tenants.
- Conducted our annual campaign to outreach hardware stores in the state to provide "Warning Signs" to be posted to alert consumers on the importance of lead safe work practices when doing home repairs.
- In conjunction with the Department of Health (DOH), continued the operation of the Lead Hotline 222 – LEAD (5323).
- Collaborated with the DOH in the planning and development of RI Healthy Housing Conference entitled "Stimulating Healthy Housing".
- Continued collaboration with the Attorney general's Office in the implementation of the programs created with the DUPONT/Healthy Kids Collaborative funds.

- Assisted the Healthy Kids Collaborative sub-grantees in targeted media events to increase the participants in their programs.
- Collaborated with the Providence Human Relations Commission in the creation of a “Landlord/Tenant Resources Guide. The Guide is still in the process of being developed.
- Assisted the Providence Schools Wellness Committee in developing a policy, goals and expectations relative to wellness, including nutrition guidelines and education for their student population.
- State Lead Hazard Reduction Program: since 1999 state has provided \$17,019,097 to the State Lead Hazard Reduction program administered through Rhode Island Housing to make 1,470 units lead safe (Please see page 12 for 2009 Status Report).

List of Publications:

- Current Property Owner Fact Sheet
- New Property Owner Fact Sheet
- Tenant Rights and Responsibilities Fact Sheet
- Landlord Handbook
- Guide to Lead Safety in Historic Buildings in RI
- Section on the Lead Hazard Mitigation Law in “The Landlord/ Tenant Handbook”

Office of Homelessness

Susan Bodington and David McCreadie: Co-Chairs

Darlene M. Price: Housing Commission Coordinator

- Staff updated the Action Plan to End Homelessness, noting a list of considerable achievements and establishing new goals and action steps.
- In order to closely monitor ongoing progress, the staff consulted with the Office of Homelessness to create a Coordinating Committee Structure.
- Staff organized additional winter shelter beds and identified management and funding for their operation.
- Staff represents the HRC as a partner agency in Project “Restore” with the Office of Child Support. The program addresses the needs of families and fathers who pay child support through case management.
- Staff administered the Consolidated Homeless Fund (CHF) which provides shelter and services, including transportation assistance with the overarching goal of placement in permanent housing through grants to 27 agencies.
- Staff worked with Rhode Island Housing on the HUD required Five Year Consolidated Plan and the annual Continuum of Care Application.
- Staff assisted in the coordinated efforts to address the needs of couples and individuals staying in tent cities. This led to the creation of a specialized shelter for couples by the Office.
- Staff works with local groups such as DARE, Pawtucket Homeless Work Group, Basic Needs Network and others to inform municipalities and groups on current practice and changes in the state homeless systems.

- Staff serves as a member of fund distribution committees including: Thresholds, RI Emergency Food and Shelter Board, HPRP, and CHF.
- Staff participated in: Medicaid Global Waiver Task Force; Rhode Works Advisory Committee; Faith Based Service Providers Networking Meetings; Pawtucket and Westerly Project Homeless Connect organizational meetings.
- Staff also attended the following Access To Recovery (ATR) Trainings:
 - ATR Administration and Federal GPRA follow-up;
 - Discharge, Probation and Parole;
 - Strength Based Methods and Motivational Interviewing;
 - National Recovery Month: Real People, Real Recovery (networking).
- Staff organized the third annual Rhode Island Project Homeless Connect a one day, one-stop event that connects homeless persons with a wide range of assistance.
- The CHF changed management at Harrington Hall, the state's largest shelter. The programming and physical plant have been improved through this process.

Office of Homeownership

Chair: Peter Walsh

Raymond Neirinckx: Housing Commission Coordinator

- Staff increased direct case work with at-risk homeowners. This increased from 131 cases in 2007 to 157 cases in 2008. The 2008 total reflects an increase of 170% over previous years. Along with advocacy on behalf of homeowners, staff assisted an increasing number of tenants in foreclosed homes. Staff accepted both self-referrals and requests from elected officials seeking help for constituents.
- Staff conducted a workshop on the "Mechanics of a Workout" for the National Consumer Law Center's annual conference in Philadelphia. Staff also worked with FDIC, the Attorney General's office, the Housing Network and Rhode Island Housing on a foreclosure and rescue scam workshop.
- Staff worked with the United States office of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) HOPE NOW program and with local agencies on the implementation of Home Affordable Modification Program (HAMP) to assist at risk homeowners.
- Staff conducted a training session for United Way's Safety Net Committee on the foreclosure crisis and its impact on tenants and discussed risk to tenants in foreclosed homes with United Way's Homelessness Prevention Subcommittee.
- Staff continued to link foreclosed homes, community development, and HRC programs with Neighborhood Stabilization Program activities.
- Staff researched and monitored acquisition of HUD homes eligible under the \$1 house program to support community development stabilization initiatives. This task included outreach to municipalities and agencies.
- Staff continued to work with the Homeownership Connection around foreclosure prevention counseling work and training of local counselors.
- Staff discussed a possible legal clinic to address foreclosure rescue scams with Roger Williams Law School and the Housing Network.
- Staff provided technical assistance to several agencies seeking to develop foreclosed homes.

Office of Planning and Operations
Thomas Kravitz and Dennis Langley: Co-Chairs
Simon Kue: Program Services Officer

- Staff continues to analyze the data submitted for local affordable housing plan (AHP) annual progress reports and filed a statewide “Report on Implementation.” The staff worked closely with the Statewide Planning Program and Rhode Island Housing to measure progress made by the local communities.
- Since the General Assembly passed the Expedited Permitting for Affordable Housing in 2008, De La Salle at Black Point submitted the first application for an Expedited Permit. The HRC gave its approval in December 2009. The project will produce 80 LMI units for elderly persons, 9 affordable workforce homes, and 43 market rate homes with a projected investment of \$26 million.
- The Office managed and disbursed payments of over \$17.6 million dollars, mostly in federal funds, to Rhode Island Housing, 33 CDBG communities, and non-profit service providers for housing production, shelter, services, and homebuyer education.
- Funds managed by this Office include: Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing, Emergency Shelter Grant, Title XX Homeless Shelter and Services Grant, Housing Resources Commission budget, and Building Homes Rhode Island bond funds.

Future Goals

The Office of Housing and Community Development and the Housing Resources Commission will work diligently to alleviate housing problems and to proactively plan for the future. Please be assured that the Chair, Commissioners, staff are committed to the goals of increasing housing opportunity, improving housing quality, reducing homelessness, and contributing to economic development.

The members of the Housing Resources Commission have approved this report on March ____, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Baxter

Noreen Shawcross

Chair
Housing Resources Commission

Chief, Office of Housing & Community
Development
Executive Director, Housing Resources
Commission

Housing Resources Commission Members: December 2009

Susan Baxter, Public Member (Chair)

Jeanne Cola, Designee, Rhode Island Mortgage Bankers Association (Vice Chair)

David Hammarström, MetLife Auto & Home (Secretary)

Roberta Hazen Aaronson, Childhood Lead Action Project

Gary Alexander, RI Health and Human Service Secretariat

Susan Arnold, RI Association of Realtors

Kathleen Bazinet, East Bay Community Development Corporation

Susan Bodington-Designee, RI Housing & Mortgage Finance Corporation

William De Luca-Designee, RI Department of Business Regulation

Michael Evora, RI Commission on Human Rights

Kevin Flynn-Designee, RI Department of Administration

David Gifford, M.D., RI Department of Health

Richard Godfrey-Designee, R I Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation

Kaveh Hajian, People to End Homelessness

Chris Hannifan, Housing Network of Rhode Island

Marilyn Kiesel-Designee, RI Association of Realtors

Thomas Kravitz, Town Planner, Burrillville, RI

Hon. Patrick Lynch, Attorney General for the State of Rhode Island

Mark Noble, Board Chair, Rhode Island Housing

A. Michael Marques, RI Department of Business Regulation

Joanne Mc Gunagle-Comprehensive Community Action Program

Ana Novais-Designee, RI Department of Health

Stephen O'Rourke, RI Association of Executive Directors for Housing

Melody Rodrigues-Designee, RI Department of Elderly Affairs

Corinne Calise Russo, RI Department of Elderly Affairs

James Ryczek, RI Coalition for the Homeless

Gary Sasse, RI Department of Administration

Bonnie Sekeres, Shalom Housing Inc., Senior Housing

Craig Stenning, RI Department of Mental Health, Retardation and Hospitals

Terence Tierney-Designee, RI Office of the Attorney General

Mark Van Noppen, RI Builders Association

Carrie Zaslow, Local Initiative Support Corporation

City/Town	Census Tract	Unit '09	Total Units	Committed '09	Total Dollars Committed:
Bristol	308		47		\$580,205
Barrington	301		2		\$23,690
Burrillville	129, 130.20		12		\$230,214
Central Falls	108, 110, 111		46		\$659,114
Coventry	206.01, 206.02, 206.03		9		\$134,185
Cranston	134, 135, 136, 137.01, 138, 140, 141, 142, 145		31		\$430,667
Cumberland	112, 113, 113.01		98		\$637,690
East Greenwich	209.01		6		\$51,405
East Providence	102, 106	1	4	\$24,689.50	\$83,478
Gloucester	131.01		4		\$45,325
Johnston	123, 124.01, 125	3	10	\$30,000.00	\$106,069
Lincoln	115, 116, 117.01, 117.02		8		\$82,826
Little Compton	414	1	1	\$39,999.67	\$40,000
Manville	115		21		\$260,000
Middletown	404		1		\$14,000
Newport	405, 406, 408, 409		7		\$91,227
North Kingstown	501.03, 512.00		1		\$23,985
North Providence	118, 119, 120, 121.02	1	9	\$17,143.50	\$106,965
North Scituate	132		1		\$14,578
North Smithfield	128.98		2		\$21,559
Pascoag	129	1	1	\$24,585.00	\$24,585
Pawtucket	150, 151, 152, 154 , 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 164, 165, 166, 167.98, 168, 170 , 171	13	113	\$130,000.00	\$1,020,945
Portsmouth	401.01, 401.02		2		\$38,810
Providence	001, 002, 003, 004 , 004, 005, 006, 007 009, 011, 013, 014, 015, 016 , 017, 018, 019, 020, 021, 022, 023, 024, 025, 026, 027, 028, 029, 031, 032, 034	55	593	\$313,796.50	\$6,474,328
Tiverton	416.01		66		\$150,000
Warren	305		6		\$89,753
Wakefield	512	1	2	\$24,601.50	\$32,439
Warwick	210, 211, 214.01, 214.02, 215.02, 217 , 219.02, 223,		42		\$367,432
West Warwick	201.02, 202 , 203	2	14	\$20,000.00	\$186,427
Westerly	508, 508.01, 509		7		\$104,260
Woonsocket	174, 176, 177, 184		173		\$237,708
		78	1,339	\$624,815.67	\$12,363,867

There was no further discussion. Motion to approve was made by Marilyn Kiesel, seconded by Jeanne Cola. The motion carried.

7. Update: Lead Hazard Mitigation Compliance

Susan introduced Doris De Los Santos who began explaining that since the HRC implemented the Homeless Prevention Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP) through federal funding, a habitability checklist which includes lead safety was created. Agencies are asked to provide a Certificate of Conformance for each rental unit. However, there has been resistance from the 20 agencies to comply with the Lead Mitigation Law. Doris asked the Commission for their suggestions to help reduce the resistance from the agencies.

Susan Baxter asked Doris how the Commissioners could encourage providers to comply with the law. In response, Doris explained that resources are limited; therefore, enforcement has become an issue. Doris said that the lack of capacity is an issue in identifying property owners who have not complied with the law. Doris said that educating the public has been an issue because funding is not available.

Jim Ryczek, speaking from a HPRP point of view, asked Doris if property owners will need to attend a Lead Class before a lead inspection. Doris acknowledged that they will need to attend. Jim then asked Doris if a participating HPRP family wanted to access the funding, and the property owner is not complying, could the family take the Lead Class? Doris said that the family could do not do so.

Ana Novais said that the Department of Health is experiencing the same issues. Ana suggested setting up a meeting to discuss solutions and strategies from a tenant's perspective.

Joanne McGunagle said that families facing homelessness and are participating in HPRP often find adequate housing; however, the process is delayed by property owners failing to comply with the Lead Classes. Joann disagreed with the requirement of lead classes; she feels many times this becomes an obstacle and prolongs the search for adequate "rapid" housing.

Roberta Aaronson agreed that there is a shortage of lead-free housing and resources. Roberta mentioned that an Americorps person was hired to identify lead safe housing; the individual will also be responsible for building a database which will identify lead safe housing; this information can be shared.

At this time, Susan Baxter thanked the Commission for their input and then suggested that Doris set up a meeting to discuss the topic further for possible solutions.

8. The Homeownership connection: Presentation by Chris Hannifan

Chris Hannifan began by distributing pamphlet cards for the upcoming open houses hosted by the Housing Network and information about the Homeownership connection. Chris explained that the program is funded by HRC and is a HUD-certified counseling agency. Classes for individuals seeking homeownership are available in English and Spanish. Classes are two hours a week for six weeks. The classes include Homebuyer Readiness, Budgeting and Savings, Credit and Credit Issues, Finding the Right Home, Pre-approval of the Mortgage, the Purchase and Sales Agreement, and Closing on a Home. Individuals receive one-on-one counseling to assist in all stages of homeownership. Certified Housing Counselors meet with individuals to design personal plans that can help identify financing options, improving credit, default or foreclosure and predatory lending. Upon completion, the individuals receive a certificate.

9. Public Comment Period

Bonnie Sekeres mentioned that it was her understanding that all federal funding for both HUD 202 (for elderly) and HUD 811 (for the disabled) housing has been eliminated from the President's budget. Bonnie suggested the HRC write a letter to the congressional delegation to recognize the issues at stake and to note the HRC's concern and recommending that funding be restored. Marcy Coleman said this could not be done as it was not an agenda item. Marcy suggested placing this as an action item for the next HRC meeting. Bonnie suggested preparing a letter for next month's meeting. Susan Baxter said that it will be presented as an action item for the next HRC meeting, and a letter will also be prepared.

Jim Ryczek took a moment to recognize Noreen Shawcross for her achievements. Jim then asked if her position will be filled. Kevin Flynn said he plans to fill the position. Susan Baxter said that she would like to be part of the candidate selection process.

As there were no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 9:41 a.m. The next meeting will be on Friday, May 21, 2010 in conference room A.