

Rhode Island Housing Resources Commission
Minutes of September 17, 2010
Quarterly Meeting



Commissioners & Designees:

Cola, Jeanne – Chair

Bodington, Susan	Raymond, Joseph
Botts, Christine (Rep. Grenon, Paul)	Rodrigues, Melody (Rep. Corrine Russo)
DeLuca, William	Ryczek, James
Dennehy, Peter	Sanzaro, Melissa (Rep. O'Rourke, Stephen)
Dunphy, Gail (Rep. Alexander, Gary)	Sekeres, Bonnie
Evora, Michael	Stenning, Craig
Flynn, Kevin	Tondra, Mike
Gallo, Juan	Valliere, Albert
Hajian, Kaveh	Vanderslice, Robert (Rep. Ana Novais)
Hannifan, Chris	Zaslow, Carrie

Staff:

De Los Santos, Doris	Neirinckx, Ray
Frumerie, Caitlin	Price, Darlene
Kue, Simon	Vittorioso, Dawn

Guests:

Coleman, Paula; RI Housing
Ventura, Carol; RI Housing

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Jeanne Cola, Chair at 8:34 a.m.

2. Approval of September 17, 2010 Minutes

Kevin Flynn moved acceptance. William DeLuca seconded. Minutes approved.

3. Report of Chair

Introduction of New Chairperson, Jeanne Cola

Effective June 10th, Susan Baxter has retired as Chair of the Housing Resources Commission. Susan's dedicated service and leadership for over a decade has made possible the many accomplishments of the HRC. The Office of Housing and Community Development staff offers its congratulations and best wishes to her in retirement.

The Governor has named Jeanne Cola as Housing Resources Commission Chair. As a long-standing Commissioner of the HRC, Jeanne's commitment and expertise will no doubt prove beneficial in furthering the mission of the HRC, improving housing opportunity and quality in the State of Rhode Island. OHCD staff looks forward to continuing work with Jeanne in her new leadership role.

Appointments:

The HRC is pleased to welcome two new appointments to the Housing Resources Commission:

Albert Valliere has been appointed as the representative of the Rhode Island Builders Association, replacing Mark Van Noppen. We would like to thank Mark Van Noppen for his years of service and dedication to the mission of the HRC. Both RIBA and Mark have been great partners to the HRC.

Joseph Raymond has been appointed as the local Building Official Representative, replacing Brian Lombardi. Mr. Raymond is the Building Official for the Town of Burrillville.

Personnel/Related announcement(s) - Noreen Shawcross, Executive Director of the HRC and Chief of the Office of Housing and Community Development, retired earlier this year. Michael Tondra, who had been serving in this position in an "Acting" capacity since June, has been selected for the position of Executive Director of the Housing Resources Commission on a permanent basis. Michael has worked for the State for over two decades in the housing and community development field.

Marcie Coleman, who had served as Legal Counsel for the HRC in previous meetings, has moved to a new position. Peter Dennehy will now be available to answer legal questions/issues raised at HRC meeting.

Meeting Schedule

The tentative meeting schedule for FY 2011 is as follows:

Friday, December 10, 2010

Friday, March 18, 2011

Friday, May 20, 2011

All meetings will take place in Conference Room A, Department of Administration, One Capitol Hill - 3rd Floor, Providence, RI.

New Opportunities/Initiatives

Legislation - Following is status on legislation raised in previous meetings.

Bill Numbers S-2292 and H-7326 entitlement "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 related to low/moderate income housing. At a hearing on 7326, the bill was tabled for further study. 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.

While House bill 7326 had some movement in June, neither bill was finalized prior to adjournment of the 2010 Legislative Session.

Programs

BHRI/NOP - The Commissioners will review the Distribution Committee recommendations at this HRC meeting and will approve a portion of 2011 funding. The 2010 BHRI bond issue has occurred and funds have been wired to RIH for distribution. Many groundbreakings and ribbon cuttings have occurred or are planned. OHCD staff assures Commissioners are notified of upcoming events as they are scheduled.

HEARTH - The HEARTH Act (enacted in 2009 - most changes effective 2011) will change the way HUD homeless funding is distributed. A portion of the funds will be distributed on a formula basis to States (Emergency Solutions Grant) replacing the ESG and HPRP managed by OHCD. A Continuum of Care competition with significant changes will continue. OHCD staff will be participating in a HEARTH/HMIS conference in the next month.

Other programs related to the HRC, including the Consolidated Homeless Fund (CHF), Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) and Disaster Assistance will be covered under the "Budget and Program" discussion to follow.

4. Budget and Program Report

Mike Tondra began discussing the budget as shown below. Mike pointed out that the Neighborhood Opportunities Program (NOP) funding was previously eliminated and as shown in the budget report, it has been partially restored. Next, Mike noted that Noreen worked with the budget office to allocate a portion of the funds in the surplus Supplemental Emergency Shelter funding to the Consolidated Homeless Fund distributions for FY11.

Housing Resources Commission Program Budget

	FY 10	FY11
Lead Program		
Administrative Fee	\$ 106,000	\$ 89,040
Lead Hazard Control Inspections	\$ 544,000	\$ 500,960
Credit Reports		
Relocation Costs		
Lead Public Awareness Program		
Required Match		
Total Lead	\$ 650,000	\$ 590,000
Homelessness		
Consolidated Homeless Fund - State	\$ 1,290,000	\$ 1,190,000
Supplemental Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG)		\$ 100,000
Total Consolidated Homeless Fund - State	\$ 1,290,000	\$ 1,290,000
Shelter Funds-27 Agencies (SHP Match - TBD)	\$ 160,000	\$ 160,000
HMIS Database	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
Homeownership Connection	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000
OHCD State Lead Staff (TBD)		\$ 60,000
Total-HRC Program Budget	\$ 2,170,000	\$ 2,070,000
Neighborhood Opportunities Program (NOP)	\$ 2,500,000	\$ 1,500,000
Affordable Housing Bond	\$ 12,500,000	\$ 12,500,000
Consolidated Homeless Funds - Federal	\$ 1,720,299	\$ 1,723,000
Total HRC Program Funds	\$ 18,890,299	\$ 17,893,000

At this time, Mike asked if anyone had any comments or questions. Kevin Flynn noted that all State departments are in the process of developing FY11 budgets. Kevin explained that each department has been asked to cut 5% to 15% in budget reductions. The Department of Planning, which includes the Office of Housing and Community Development will have reductions in both Federal and State funding.

Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re Housing Program (HPRP):

Mike said that Rhode Island is very fortunate to have this funding opportunity available. This program prevented many individuals from entering the homeless system. To date, the expenditure targets are being met; 1,800 individuals have been assisted. Mike said that the agencies are doing a great job with helping individuals find homes.

The Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP):

Mike reported that (NSP) funds have all been allocated. He then announced that the State has been awarded an additional \$6.3M under the current round of NSP; which is the third round. \$1.3M has been awarded to the City of Providence directly and the remaining \$5M will go to the state program. The Office of Housing and Community Development has partnered with RI Housing to design a plan for the distribution of the program funds.

Disaster Funds:

Even though the disaster funds are not directly administered by the HRC, Mike reported that a Supplemental Appropriations Act passed; which will allocate disaster funds to the State of RI under the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG). Amounts awarded, specific details and restrictions have not been determined. Mike noted that the funds will be used to address the disaster recovery needs from the 2010 spring flooding. Mike said he would continue to keep the Commission informed as the details are received.

CDBG Program:

Mike reported that the FY11 awards were completed and are being reviewed by the Governor's office. It is anticipated that the announcements will be mailed in the near future. Mike explained that these awards will have a significant impact for agencies and projects that have been funded with HRC funding. Mike noted that the BHRI project was jointly funded by CDBG and HRC for housing projects; CDBG is often used for operating or service support for Homeless Provider Agencies.

At this time, Mike asked the Commission if anyone had any questions or comments. Jim Ryczek asked if the delay from the Governor's office would hinder implementation of funding for some of the programs. In response, Mike explained that he expressed concerns to the Governor's office that further delays could impact fall construction projects.

Bob Vanderslice asked how the disaster relief funding will be released. Mike said he is unsure because he has not been notified of the program requirements.

5. Building Homes Rhode Island (BHRI)

- Neighborhood Opportunities Program (NOP)

a. **Resolution: Approve Funding: FY'11 BHRI**

Jeanne introduced Ray whom began discussing the following document:

Resolution of the Rhode Island Housing Resources Commission

Rental	\$8,654,213			
			Units	Location
Coventry Housing Assoc.		\$2,360,000	44	Coventry
SWAP		\$2,190,000	37	Providence
Church Community Housing		\$800,000	20	North Kingstown
Amos House		\$560,000	14	
Ocean State Consortium		\$440,000	11	Woonsocket
REACH		\$390,000	6	- Central Falls - Two Vacant Buildings - Non-profit
Neighbor Works BRV		\$360,000	9	Woonsocket
Opportunities Unlimited		\$250,000	6	Former Group Home working with Opportunities Unlimited
ARC of Blackstone Valley		\$200,000	10	Pawtucket for developmentally disabled
REACH		\$195,000	3	Central Falls Foreclosed properties
Smith Hill CDC		\$150,000	3	Foreclosed properties
Build Green LLC		\$140,000	3	For Profit Developer Smith Hill
REACH		\$130,000	2	Central Falls
Cumberland Housing Authority		\$130,000	2	Cumberland
House of Hope		\$130,000	2	Warwick Formally foreclosed property
Rockville Mill LLC		\$129,213	14	- Hopkinton - For Profit Developer - Mill Converted to mixed use
Smith Hill CDC		\$100,000	2	Formally foreclosed property
Homeownership	\$1,984,579			
			Units	Location
SWAP		\$807,479	50	West Greenwich
Narragansett Affordable Housing		\$455,000	7	Charlestown
Church Community Housing		\$195,000	3	Jamestown
Habitat for Humanity - South County		\$170,000	4	South Kingstown
Habitat for Humanity - Greater Providence		\$105,500	2	- Providence - Vacant Lots - New Construction
Habitat for Humanity - Greater Providence		\$69,100	2	North End Vacant Lots
Olneyville Housing Corporation		\$65,000	1	formally foreclosed property
Habitat for Humanity - West Bay		\$65,000	1	Cumberland
Habitat for Humanity - Greater Providence		\$52,500	1	Vacant Lot
N.O.P. Operating	\$657,626			
			Units	Location
Ocean State Consortium		\$351,120	5	
SWAP		\$306,506	6	

At this time, Ray asked the Commission for approval for the above recommendations and then asked if anyone had any questions or comments. Bob Vanderslice asked if these projects were consistent with State Land and Transportation Plans. In response, Ray said yes; it is a requirement of the program and the Division of Planning staff reviews all the applications for consistency with the State's plans. Mike noted that he is working with the Division of Planning staff to create a guidance plan for municipalities that will assist them with projects to ensure consistency. Bob asked if the distributions can be linked to other efforts to ensure that they are maintained. Ray said yes, considerations such as public safety, education, food, after school activities and access to employment are all part of the community development process.

Chris Hannifan also noted that Community Development Corporations will do anything to assist a community with housing, daycare, after school programs, job training, parks, playgrounds, etc; all are fully engaged with community development.

As there was no further questions, Robert Vanderslice moved acceptance to allocate \$8,654,213 for BHRI rental subsidy; \$1,984,579 under Homeownership and \$657,626 to N.O.P. Operating. Craig Stenning seconded. Budget approved.

b. Resolution: Approval of Reallocation of NOP Escrow Funds

Ray asked the Commission to approve the operating allocation of \$90,000 from the Neighborhood Opportunity Program interest escrow account as follows:

Neighbor Works BRV \$90,000

- Neighborhood Blackstone Valley Board action in March to meet operating support out of interest account.

Jim Ryczek moved acceptance to reallocate \$90,000 of NOP Escrow Funds for Neighbor Works BRV. William DeLuca seconded. Budget approved.

6. Announcements

Jeanne took a moment to congratulate Doris De Los Santos and Ray Neirinckx. Both were recently recognized for their hard work and dedication. Doris was named by the Providence Business News as the under the age 40 winner and Ray Neirinckx received the 1 Million Homeowner Achievement award from the National Foreclosure Mitigation Counseling Program with his work with homeowners facing foreclosure.

7. Public Comment Period

Juan Gallo, representing Housing Works RI took a moment to announce that their recent report on the economic impact of BHRI resulted in \$747M. The Housing Fact book has been released; information is broken down by cities and towns.

Susan Bodington provided an update on the Hardest Hit Fund. Treasury has provided \$56M to Rhode Island through RI Housing to assist homeowners facing foreclosures or if they are

experiencing issues paying their mortgage. Susan said that this program is being piloted to assist families facing economic hardship and employment. The program will begin on November 1, 2010.

Mike Tondra announced that Bob Paquin is no longer employed at the HUD office in Boston, MA. Robert Shumeyko will be the point of contact for the Boston office.

The meeting adjourned at 9:32 a.m..