

NEWTON HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Newton Housing & Community Development Program
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JULY 2006 MEETING MINUTES

Date: July 12, 2006
Time: 7:45 a.m.
Location: City Hall, Room 202

Members Present: Phil Herr, Josephine McNeil, David Stein, Deb Crossley, John Wilson, Maritzie Rudden, Henry Korman, Dan Violi, Steve MacDowell, Jeanne Strickland, Bart Lloyd, Liz Kirsch, Nancy Andersen

Members Absent: Kay Khan, Carol Ann Shea, Lynne Sweet, Bart Lloyd, Ellen Feingold, Andrew Franklin

Staff: Steve Gartrell, Trisha Kenyon Guditz and Margaret Siciliano

Minutes prepared for the Housing Partnership by Margaret Siciliano, AICP, Housing Development Planner.

1. Minutes from the June 14, 2006 Housing Partnership meeting were approved.
2. Mission and structure, other than Project review, involving both the Mission document and the attendance chart.
Based on the comments from the June Partnership meeting the Statement of Mission and Organization Structure was revised by Margaret, Trisha, Phil, and Josephine.

Josephine McNeil began by requesting that the Partnership adopt the Statement of Mission and Organization Structure.

Phil Herr explained the changes made to the Mission document. One change that did not get discussed was the issue of having a nominating committee to review and make nominations to the Partnership. The changes also lay out what happens when someone has missed a lot of meetings.

The next step is for the Partnership to send the Statement of Mission and Organization Structure, which will replace all previous Partnership mission and organization documents, to Mike Kruse for review.

3. Project review update. See Phil Herr's Advisory Structure memo and Density Table memo. Phil Herr began the discussion by suggesting there should be a meeting with members of the Partnership and planning staff (i.e. Mike Kruse, Nancy Radzevich). He reviewed the diagram/flow chart of the Partnership's role. In the first diagram, the Partnership chiefly acts as an advisory board. The second diagram shows the Partnership having direct communication with planning staff. This is important because the write-up by the planning staff becomes the dialogue at the ZBA hearings and Board of Aldermen meetings. Phil Herr added that the Partnership could bring a clear insight into project design from the perspective of the residents. There is very little research on the resident perspective.

John Wilson added if the Partnership are advocates for affordable housing this relationship would give us more insight into the structure and approval of the project. We would need to see everything that goes to the planning staff.

Phil Herr commented that the Partnership is ill informed since it doesn't get all the information. The amount of information that goes to the Board of Aldermen is much more than the Partnership ever sees.

Bart Lloyd pointed out that design is a trade-off for feasibility. We need people who have a design background.

Phil Herr asked what if the City had a design review committee?

Deb Crossley explained that she sees the design very much within the purview of the Partnership as part of the project's long-term affordability and sustainability. She suggested the Partnership could establish a set of performance standards.

Henry Korman added that the Partnership ought to operate at a 5,000 foot level and look at the bigger issues. It's in Mike Kruse's interest to have the land use staff interact with the Partnership. It is important that we are all on the same page when we send letters to MassHousing.

Phil Herr stated that we don't want to create another hurdle for people to go through but to facilitate.

Bart Lloyd disagreed with Deb Crossley's earlier recommendation to establish a limitative set of performance standards.

Josephine McNeil suggested that the Partnership not talk about design but about livability and how the design will impact the people living there.

Trisha Guditz added that building design is an issue but it's not talked about straightforwardly when developers meet with staff.

Steve Gartrell suggested that if the Partnership comes up with a list of standards then housing staff could bring these issues up at development team meetings.

Phil Herr replied that this would be fine but we still want the Partnership to directly interact with land use staff.

Dan Violi added that the Partnership needs to be very clear on what we are requiring with respect to energy and building systems.

Henry Korman agreed and added that barrier removal and accessibility should be in the list of requirements.

Phil Herr explained that the next step is to send Mike Kruse the Advisory and Mission memos and then have Mike and Nancy attend a Partnership meeting.

4. Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance (IZO) discussion, both mechanics and policies. See Phil Herr's and Steve Gartrell's memos.
Steve Gartrell began the discussion by summarizing the two most recent IZO projects, two homeownership units at Oxford Housing and four units on Watertown Street where the developer opted for the cash payment option. He added that based on these projects there are a number of mechanical and policy changes that need to be made.

Josephine McNeil pointed out that according to the minutes from last meeting the Programs and Policy Committee was to review these changes before it goes to the full Partnership.

Phil Herr verified that the changes should go to that subcommittee.

Phil Herr reviewed his memo titled "Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance topics for consideration" dated July 11, 2006 with the Partnership. The Partnership discussed the questions listed in the memo and agreed that the Programs and Policy Committee should conduct a further review of the topics listed in Phil Herr's memo. Steve and Phil's memos will be integrated and then sent to the committee.

5. Announcements.
 - CAN-DO's Cambria Road is now complete. There will be no formal open house. Residents are moving in the first of August.
 - The City is receiving two awards. One from NCDA for our CDBG Week events and rally and the Municipal Leadership Award from CHAPA.

Meeting adjourned.