

FAIR HOUSING COMMITTEE

February 4, 2009 Meeting Minutes Approved 3.4.09

Fair Housing Committee members in attendance: Sheila Mondshein (chair), Henry Korman, Josephine McNeil, Phil Herr, Susan Paley, Esther Schlorholtz, Bev Droz (HHS staff)

Staff: Trisha Kenyon Guditz

1. Status of the Fair Housing Committee: Mayor Cohen has not created the Fair Housing Committee (FHC) as of the meeting date. After the permanent body is established, the Mayor will need to appoint the committee members. In December, Sheila Mondshein provided the Mayor with a list of nine individuals (the current members of the Fair Housing Task Force) who have agreed to serve on the FHC. The group agreed to postpone a discussion about identifying possible new members and new organizational affiliations until the Mayor has officially created the new Fair Housing Committee.

2. Organizational acts: The group discussed the draft Mission and Organizational Structure Statement that Sheila had circulated in advance of the meeting. Comments on the number of members, length and structure of terms and elections included the following:

Esther: Raised the idea that the document should “encourage a sense of welcome.” This point remained on hold for further discussion.

Josephine: Stated that 15 people on a committee were “too many.” She recommended between seven and 11 members.

Phil: Raised the issue of having a sufficient number of members for a quorum saying that a quorum is interpreted as a majority of members.

Henry: Reminded the group that the Fair Housing Action Plan states that the FHC will be comprised of 15 members. He suggested that an exact number of members not be included in the organizational acts. He also suggested that members be appointed for renewable three-year terms.

Josephine: Reflected that a lot of effort needs to go into creating diversity on the committee. She proposed that the membership should reflect the diversity of individuals who are protected under civil rights laws.

Phil: Stated that membership terms should coincide with the federal fiscal year beginning July 1. He suggested that new chairs should serve for an initial two-year term with the ability to serve one additional term.

Henry: Stated that it wasn't necessary to establish a term for an initial chair. He suggested that a chair be able to serve for two two-year terms and then a vice chairman steps in. He went on to say that it wasn't necessary to include that level of detail into the document

Phil: Stated that there should be a term limit for an initial chair since committees needed the imperative to move chairs on.

Esther: Disagreeing with Phil, she said that it is hard to find leaders and that chairs can be voted off a committee if they aren't performing. (This discussion was put on hold.)

Phil: Stated that there needs to be a vice chair. The group all agreed.

3. Work going forward: The group discussed whether they had the time to undertake an event or program to celebrate Fair Housing Month in April. They agreed to try to develop a program related to foreclosures and predatory lending. The public needs to know what kind of lending is taking place that promotes fair lending and CRA.

Esther agreed to contact the speakers: Jim Campen, Executive Director, Americans for Fairness in Lending and Len Raymond, Executive Director, H.O.M.E. (Homeowner Options for Elders).

Susan volunteered to contact various venues to schedule a room.

Proposed dates are May 4, May 5, May 11 and May 12.

Phil made the point that there needs to be take away information.

The group asked Trisha to find out whether the FHIP NOFA has been announced.

The meeting was adjourned.