

NORTHAMPTON HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Minutes

December 5, 2016

Members Present: Gordon Shaw, Chair, Richard Abuza, Mark Goggins, Ali Brauner, Patrick Boughan, Jim Reis, Greta Hagen, Michael Roy, Rev. Todd Weir. Guest, Laura Baker, Real Estate Project Manager/ Valley CDC; Linda Driscoll-Sbar, Center for Human Development CHSSP and Peg Keller, staff.

Call to Order: Chair Shaw called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. Introductions were made to Ms. Baker. The minutes from the November meeting were approved as submitted.

Valley CDC/ Request for Letter of Support

Laura Baker was present to formally request a letter of support from the Partnership for VCDC's Community Preservation Act funding proposal. Their plan is to apply in January. She came before the NHP in September to present the proposal and said she would return to present more information and request a formal letter. She presented renderings of the site and planned addition. A summary of the project is as follows:

- 82 Bridge Street/ existing 15 room single room occupancy building owned by Valley CDC since 1990/ building was constructed in 1820 and needs upgrading
- Project plans are to rehab the existing building, install an elevator and construct an addition to accommodate 16 additional units, for a total of 31.
- Valley is conducting environmental due diligence now. Plan to request \$500,000 from the CPC either under the affordable housing category or historic preservation.

Discussion followed. Mr. Roy asked if the abutters had been contacted and if historic review was required. Ms. Baker said she has contacted the property owners on either side and heard from neither, but she would continue to reach out. She noted that a comprehensive permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals will be required so all abutters will be notified as part of that process. She also has reached out to the Ward 3 Neighborhood Association. She stated that the property is not in a local historic district but she has been to the Historic Commission as it is next to the Historic Northampton properties and she will go back as the plans evolve. Mr. Reis asked about the targeted population for the affordable and market rate units. She said 25% will be set aside for homeless. The building is full and VCDC properties have a waiting list. The current tenants will need to be relocated for 6-12 months. The expected start date is fall of 2018,

which is when the Northampton Lodging tenants will be invited back to Pleasant Street. She said she has met with the tenants who are excited to see the planned improvements. Mr. Reis wondered if there is enough demand to fill these new units, in addition to the ones on Pleasant Street. She replied that the LumberYard units are 2 and 3 bedroom units which are for families and the Lodging project is creating 48 units where previously there were 58, so there is a net loss there. Additionally, the SRO inventory has continued to decrease, with the 21 lost units at Shaws Motel and the ones at Augies on Hawley St.

Chair Shaw asked about subsidies. She said there are 8 Section 8 vouchers being utilized there now, and they will ask for more. All units will be affordable but not all will have subsidies. The "market rate" units will be approximately 600-650\$ a month. Mr. Roy asked about on-site support services. She said those tenants that are Department of Mental Health case managed will have their own workers. They are hoping to have a Resident Services Coordinator that will make referrals to other resources but there would not be trainings or workshops on site. Linda Driscoll-Sbar added that services from the Center for Human Development's SRO Outreach Program would be available, as they are now. In answer to an inquiry about job training/ employment Ms. Baker replied that the SRO population is aging so there is not a strong need for those types of support services. HAP will be managing the LumberYard project, so it will either be HAP or Valley's current property manager overseeing this property. With regard to funding, Valley will also be looking to secure CDBG funding (which will involve a recommendation from the Partnership) and apply to the State for the remaining funds. Total project cost is expected to be around 6 million dollars. There were no further questions.

Mr. Abuza made the following motion: "The Northampton Housing Partnership has long recognized that single room occupancy units are a critical component in the housing inventory to serve formerly homeless and those with very low and low incomes and our community has a compelling need for housing of this type; it is for this reason the Housing Partnership wholeheartedly endorses this project to address that need". The motion was seconded by Mr. Boughan and the **vote** in favor was unanimous. Peg will get the support letter to Ms. Baker to accompany their CPC application.

Community Housing Support Services Project Update

Ms. Driscoll-Sbar was welcomed and introductions made. She distributed a handout of her program statistics to date and reviewed them. She said most referrals are coming directly from the Housing Authority Attorney and Meadowbrook. Out of a total caseload of 40 households, 16 are from the NHA and 15 from Meadowbrook. These are

all people in danger of being evicted due to non-payment issues. Discussion followed about the Partnership going back to the Community Preservation Committee next fall to get the funding renewed. Peg mentioned the need to identify additional funding sources for longevity and competitiveness. Chair Shaw noted the need to provide information about successes with resolving underlying housing stabilization issues, as opposed to just a stat on the number of evictions prevented. He quoted a recent Boston study that indicated two thirds of those being seen in Boston Housing Court facing eviction are households with rental subsidies. Discussion followed about the need for the longevity of the CHSSP for the value Linda has in staying in regular and long term contact with the families. Mr. Roy said he thought the Committee would want to see evidence of financial literacy training. Mr. Reis noted HAP used to do this work in Hampshire County and no longer does; they may have some funding available.

Mr. Boughan noted that breaking down barriers and accessing resources is information the Partnership can disseminate and Ms. Brauner noted that compelling success stories, particularly from those with addiction issues once they are housed, are powerful. Peg will be in touch with the sub-committee willing to work on this and check in with the CHD Program Supervisors about identifying other funding sources. Linda was thanked for her attendance.

Action Plan Update

Community Education/ Landlord letter signed by the Mayor, going out in the annual census later this month was reviewed. Peg noted that Steve Connor, the City's Veterans Agent asked for a few minutes at the February session to ask landlords to consider housing homeless Veterans.

Op-eds/ Rev. Weir confirmed the willingness of the Gazette to run a series. Topics were discussed. Ms. Hagen offered to create a first draft and circulate it. The focus will be context, where we are, description of need and how to get involved.

Fair Housing/ Ms. Hagen, Mr. Reis and Chair Shaw will help Peg with the January CPC application to have the Impediments to Fair Housing Analysis updated. A meeting will be held. Peg will send out HUD's plan requirements, the CPC application and the CPC schedule.

Zoning/ a meeting will be held with Peg, Mr. Boughan and Mr. Reis to review the Agora report and draft the memo to the Planning Department.

Project Updates

Affordable Housing Production

- LumberYard Project/ The MassWorks application to fund Pleasant Street Infrastructure and the underground storm drain channel on the lumberyard parcel has been awarded! 2.5 million will be forthcoming. DHCD had said they would fund the housing portion of the project if the MassWorks award was secured, so that project should be moving forward. (!!!!)
- 155 Live/ demolition has occurred, CDBG funds will start to be drawn for relocation expenses/ all seems to be on track.
- Friends of the Homeless/ continuing their search for an 8-10 unit building to purchase for unaccompanied homeless youth

Housing Rehab Program/ the initial 4 applications are moving forward; rehab scopes were circulated to give members a sense of work being undertaken

Refugee Resettlement - no permanent housing units identified yet as Steering Committee assesses what the future may hold post Presidential election results

Community Legal Aid Needs Assessment Sessions

Chair Shaw described the community listening sessions being held to inform CLA's work in the future. Peg will attend and asked members if they had anything they wanted her to relay relative to legal issues they have observed being experienced in the community.

Adjourn/ The meeting concluded at 7:10 p.m. Respectfully submitted, Peg Keller

Follow Up Tasks	Person	Completion Date
Fair Housing Plan/ CPC application Send CPC application form, schedule, plan requirements from HUD	Peg to Gordon, Greta, Jim	12/6 done
Op Ed #1	Greta do draft, circulate	By 12/28 to review 1/2/17
Zoning/ schedule meeting	Peg to Patrick, Jim	?
82 Bridge St. Support Letter	Peg	1/2/17
CHSSP funding ideas	Peg to Yoshi, Jane/ CHD	12/7 done