

## **NORTHAMPTON HOUSING PARTNERSHIP**

Minutes

March 5, 2018

**Members Present:** Rev. Todd Weir, Chair, Patrick Boughan, Vice-Chair, Gordon Shaw, Jim Reis, Becky Lockwood, Mark Goggins. Also present, Peg Keller, staff and Julio Alves, pending member.

**Call to Order:** Chair Weir convened the meeting at 5:35 p.m. Introductions were made to Mr. Alves. The minutes were held until others arrived to achieve quorum.

### **Strategic Planning Session**

Chair Weir began by saying the primary task for the evening is to review prior Action Plans and establish new goals for the coming year, defined as July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019. Peg explained the Handouts. Jim stated a differentiation between member and staff responsibilities will help clarify and maximize member contributions and provide staff with additional assistance and support. The 2016 list was used as the basis for discussion. Highlights were as follows:

#### **Community Education**

- Done well in the past year
- 3 Op-Ed submissions on pertinent topics
- Fair Housing Workshop held 11/14/17 well attended
- Landlord Workshop held 2/13/18 well attended
- Consider OP ED with other housing partnerships on regional issues
- Workshop and NHP meeting locations could be rotated out into the community (i.e. Meadowbrook Apts. Community Room) to reach tenants
- Annual event/ had discussed holding annual Summits in the past, highlighting housing progress and challenges but never organized
- Do an annual report and presentation to the City Council
- Increase Networking/ NHP member presence at other events/organizations & invites to the NHP meetings building off of relevant connections  
For example: Domestic Violence organizations, Housing Developers (Valley CDC, Habitat, Wayfinders, TCB), Friends of Hampshire County Homeless, Northampton Housing Authority, Realtors, Property Managers
- Energy efficiency may not need to be a focus moving forward/ (other entities involved in that)

Mr. Alves asked if any of the work was cyclical in nature. Chair Weir described the Community Preservation Committee funding rounds (2 a year) which require support letters from the NHP. Peg described the HUD required 5 year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action plan reporting cycles.

### **Needs Assessment**

- Consultant for Fair Housing Analysis of Impediments will do data collection Housing Plan (2011) used 2000 data, never updated for 2010 census
- Members should review and identify census components and statistics worthy of note and track changes on a matrix
- When kept updated, help inform us about community education direction and focus

### **New Unit Creation**

- Continue to observe Amherst Tax Abatement Program for applicability here
- Continue to advocate for affordable housing projects via testimony and support letters
- Schedule meetings with Planning Director and Permits Planner for updates on potential housing developments that could include affordable units
- Establish time table for Partnership review and support of zoning revisions in order to provide testimony at public hearings and City Council meetings
- \*Receive periodic reports on private and municipal land availability for development

### **Preservation**

- \*Receive reports on status of Subsidized Housing Inventory
- Work to maintain/exceed 10% threshold for subsidized units in the City
- Continue to operate the Housing Rehabilitation Program with CDBG funding

### **Fair Housing**

- \*Major annual project/ Create RFP, Hire a consultant, produce a Fair Housing Impediments Analysis
- Schedule workshops / community education events

### **Zoning**

- Continue to identify zoning constraints that create barriers to affordable housing development, work with Office of Planning and Sustainability.
- Provide testimony and support at public hearings

\* Examples of items in need of clarification regarding member role vs. staff role

Suggested additions to this year's list:

Homelessness Prevention and Housing Stabilization

Monitor Community Housing Support Services Project and work to identify longer term funding

Inter-Departmental networking:

Establish time table for Partnership review and support of zoning revisions in order to be able to provide testimony at public hearings and City Council meetings

Other items discussed:

- Affordable Housing Trust Fund: Research need for activation? Assignment of CPC funds? Possibility of re-activating a Land Trust?
- Diversify member composition to include more voices of those we represent
- Maintain/add resources to the City website
- Identify speakers/guests we want to attend and schedule them
- Need for a landlord workshop that addresses building code violation remediation

It was agreed that more time needs to be spent fleshing out these goals and assigning implementation responsibilities. Peg will create a draft for circulation and additional review will occur at the April meeting.

**Other Agenda Items**

- ❖ Patrick described a program he has learned about called Nesterly. It is a web based networking operation that matches people over-housed with people looking for housing. Materials were distributed. More thought needs to be given to his pursuing this as an individual vs. NHP involvement.
- ❖ Live 155/ Wayfinders have funded a photographer and writer to document the history and residents of the former Northampton Lodging SRO. Opening is March 9th at Historic Northampton.

**Adjourn/** Meeting concluded at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Peg Keller