



## HOUSING COMMISSION MINUTES

Regular Meeting  
February 5, 2003  
5:30 pm

Administrative Building Conference Room, First Floor  
701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025-3483

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### CALL TO ORDER

Steve Bliss called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. in the Administrative Building Main Conference Room.

### ROLL CALL

Members Present: Steve Bliss, Chairperson; John Donald; Elza Keet;  
Carol Louchheim; Wendy McPherson

Members Absent: Clarice O'Neal; Jane West, Vice-Chairperson

Staff Present: Donald de la Pena, Director of Housing and  
Redevelopment; Gretchen Hillard, Housing and  
Redevelopment Manager;  
Beverly Beasley, Development Services Technician

### A. PUBLIC COMMENTS None

### B. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Beverly Beasley introduced herself, and explained that she will be providing administrative support for the Housing Commission.
2. The Commissioners welcomed new member, John Donald.
3. Gretchen Hillard reported that a qualified household had closed in the purchase of the two bedroom BMR unit at Menlo Square had been closed in late January. The City's purchase of the one bedroom unit closed January 31. The City's sale of the one bedroom unit to a BMR buyer is in contract and is expected to close in February.
4. A development application for residential units at 110 and 175 Linfield Drive has been received by the Planning Division. The proposal for the BMR contribution will be presented to the Housing Commission at its March meeting. The proposal is to build 59 housing units included ten BMR units.

### C. BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Approval of January 15, 2003 Minutes

The January 5, 2003 Minutes were approved as written.

(M/S McPherson/Bliss 3-0-2, Donald and Keet abstaining)

1. Housing Commission Priorities for 2003 – Potential sites and other options

The Housing Commission discussed its task of identifying another site or development for the provision of affordable housing, as described in the *Affordable Housing Action Plan*. First, the Commissioners discussed apartment building offer and purchase prices, based on a handout provided by Wendy McPherson. They also discussed the need for a site that would not run into the problems faced by the Oak Grove Plaza proposal, including very deep subsidies. They identified a potential immediate opportunity, to possibly purchase additional BMR units at the Linfield Drive site. The Commissioners also discussed the Gaylord site as an opportunity for housing development, and requested additional information about its availability. They asked staff to investigate the possibility and report back about it.

2. Peninsula Habitat for Humanity EIR Requirement

Ed Hayes, Project Manager for the Peninsula Habitat for Humanity proposal at Terminal Avenue provided background on the EIR requirement. He described Habitat's application for \$100,000 in preconstruction funds from San Mateo County's Community Development Block Grant program. This application required review under the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA). The NEPA review resulted in a requirement that the developer mitigate the noise that could result from proposed commuter train use of the adjacent railroad tracks. The mitigation will have to address noise both interior and exterior to the houses, which will probably result in a sound wall.

In addition the City of Menlo Park reviewed traffic impact data as a result of its environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and found the need for an environmental impact report (EIR) to address those impacts. Ed Hayes also described the discovery of degraded diesel that had been found 8 to 11 feet below the ground surface. A study of the extent and nature of the oil contamination is ongoing. Ed Hayes stated that Habitat is requesting that the City of Menlo Park relieve Habitat from the cost of the EIR because the cost could make the project infeasible. The ownership housing for very low income families is a substantial benefit to the City, and the City may wish to cover this cost to enable the project to be completed.

The Housing Commissioners asked questions to understand the technical nature of the findings, and to understand the cost implications. They noted the rarity of the opportunity to provide ownership housing to very low and low income and families and the need to protect this opportunity. The Commissioners requested staff to prepare a memo to the City Council reaffirming the Housing Commission's support for the project, including to contribute to the cost of the EIR to the extent that the City Council deems feasible, and reference to the great loss that would result if Habitat were unable to continue with the development. (M/S Keet/Louchheim 5-0)

#### **D. INFORMATION ITEM**

1. Belle Haven Park and Housing Developer Selection Committee

Wendy McPherson reported that Clarice O'Neal declined to serve on the Belle Haven Park and Housing Developer Selection Committee, so that Wendy will be the Housing Commission's representative.

2. League of Women Voters' Meeting on the Proposed San Mateo County Housing Trust Fund

Carol Louchheim reported that the League of Women Voters would be holding a meeting on February 26 with Rich Gordon, San Mateo County Supervisor, to discuss the proposed San Mateo County Housing Trust Fund. This is a private meeting and she invited the Commissioners to come as her guest.

3. Proposition 46 Update

Gretchen Hillard attended a Workshop on the funds that will be made available for affordable housing development as a result of the passing of Proposition 46, the housing bond. \$2.1 billion in funds will be made available over the next two to three years to fund existing and new programs, through Notices of Funding Availability. Each County will be eligible for up to \$2 million. She described the types of programs that will be funded, including multi-family, single family and Cal-HFA programs.

**E. ADJOURNMENT** The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gretchen Hillard  
Housing and Redevelopment Manager