



HOUSING COMMISSION MINUTES

Regular Meeting

October 7, 2009

5:30 p.m.

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Moser called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. in the Administrative Building Conference Room.

ROLL CALL

Housing Commission Members Present: Patricia Boyle (Vice Chair), Carolyn Clarke, Elizabeth Lasensky, Anne Moser (Chair), Katherine Strehl.

Housing Commission Members Absent: John Bautista, Brian Steuer.

Staff Present: Douglas Frederick, Housing Manager; Deanna Chow, Senior Planner.

A. PUBLIC COMMENT –

Chair Moser welcomed Katherine Strehl, a recently appointed commissioner and asked her to introduce herself to the rest of the Commission. The other commissioners introduced themselves in return.

No Public Comment

B. BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Approval of BMR Agreement for 1706 El Camino Real

Housing Manager Frederick introduced Deanna Chow, Senior Planner. Senior Planner Chow described the project to be located at 1706 El Camino Real, discussed the approval process that the project has been through, and detailed the BMR contribution that has been proposed. Commissioners asked several questions of Phil Gurlani, the project developer, concerning traffic impacts and mitigation and the potential for housing at the site and why it was not included. A motion was made to approve the BMR Agreement by Vice Chair Boyle and seconded by Commissioner Lasensky. The motion passed 5-0-0.

New Commissioner Carolyn Clarke arrived during the discussion of the 1706 El Camino Real project. Between agenda items 1 and 2 Chair Moser welcomed her to the Commission and asked her to introduce herself to the other commissioners.

2. Report of Council Study Session on September 15, 2009

Housing Manager Frederick described the topics covered at the September 15th City Council study session on housing. Commissioners asked questions about potential development of the Agency owned property on Hamilton Avenue and the process being used to get the project moving. Housing Manager Frederick described the development of conceptual site plans that will be used to stimulate discussion in the community engagement meeting to be held in a couple of months. Chair Moser questioned if taking conceptual plans would be the right course, rather than starting with a blank slate and letting the community guide the process. Housing Manager Frederick indicated that the limited timeline for getting the project underway requires that preplanning for the community discussion would be necessary and that City Council had requested that conceptual sketches be developed. Commissioner Lasensky asked if a Commission study session in Belle Haven would be a possibility and might the Commission appoint a sub-committee to work with staff on the project. Other ideas offered included placing a branch library in the development as part of the mixed-use space and that consideration of transportation issues be taken into account, particularly during the community engagement process.

The Terminal Avenue site was briefly discussed, with questions from commissioners about Habitat possibly altering the site plan and what the Beechwood School might like to do if additional land were available to it.

3. Report on Council Action of Foreclosure Programs on October 6, 2009

Housing Manager Frederick related the events of the previous evening while presenting three programs to the City Council for approval. The first, reimbursement of Habitat for Humanity for homes purchased through their Neighborhood Revitalization Program, passed on the Consent Agenda.

The second, the Foreclosure Prevention Program, was pulled from the Consent Agenda and passed on the Regular Agenda after questions from Councilmember Boyle. Slight changes will be made to the program guidelines in response to the councilmember's questions.

The third, the Neighborhood Stabilization Program, was on the Regular Agenda and prompted some questions from Council. With some minor issues resolved, Council approved the program guidelines. All three programs are now fully authorized by Council, with the Habitat program well underway.

4. Approval of September 2, 2009 Minutes

M/S Boyle/Moser to approve the September 2, 2009 minutes as amended; 2-0-3 (Only Chair Moser and Vice Chair Boyle had attended the meeting, so the other three commissioners present abstained).

C. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**1. Update on Housing Activity (Report from Staff)**

Housing Manager Frederick said the Hill project is still delayed pending clearance of some title concerns. A minor repair project is underway. Chair Moser asked that the new commissioners be briefed on the BMR homes that are in legal challenges. Housing Manager discussed the home that the City is having to foreclose on and a second BMR home where the owners had borrowed considerably more than their equity in the home. He then reported on progress on the resale of a BMR home that had been discussed at a previous meeting and informed the Commission of a second home to be resold by a owner in the Hamilton Park development.

2. Report from the Chair

Chair Moser reported meeting with the President of the Belle Haven Homeowners Association, Ash Vasudeva. It was suggested that perhaps a future Commission meeting could be held jointly with the homeowners association.

3. Commission Member Reports

Commissioner Lasensky reported on the final public workshop for the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan.

Vice Chair Boyle reported she attended the ABAG Transit Oriented Development conference, at which the Menlo Park Priority Development Plan was presented. She found the discussion of the plan by planners in attendance to be helpful. She also announced that the Housing Leadership Council will be holding it annual Housing Leadership Day event on October 23rd and encouraged the commissioners to attend. She also pointed out that the Silicon Valley Leadership Group is having a housing tour in the near future and that the Silicon Valley Community Foundation was having an event at the Fox Theater in Redwood City on October 15th.

D. INFORMATION ITEMS**1. Monthly Report on the Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program for August 2009**

The Commissioners accepted the report.

E. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 PM. M/S Boyle/Lasensky 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Douglas Frederick
Housing Manager