



HOUSING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 3, 2010 at 5:30 p.m.
701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025
Administrative Building Conference Room, First Floor

Chair Boyle called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. in the Administrative Building Conference Room.

ROLL CALL – Patricia Boyle (Chair), Carolyn Clarke, Anne Moser, Brian Steuer (Vice-Chair), Katherine Strehl, Brigid Van Randall.

A. PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

B. REGULAR BUSINESS

1. Consideration of Changes to the BMR Guidelines for Recommendation to the City Council

Housing Manager Frederick explained that, although the proposed changes were originally recommended by the Commission in late 2007, the completed draft is just now coming to the Commission because the changes were not a City Council priority and had to take a back seat to other work. Housing Commissioner Moser had some questions about the draft revised BMR Guidelines and suggested some changes.

M/S Moser/Strehl to require that all (adult) household members who are applicants on the BMR waiting list for purchase units must complete the one-time pre-purchase homebuyer education requirement; 6-0-0.

Management Analyst Nee noted that being a first time homebuyer is not currently a requirement for households on the BMR waiting list or households actually applying to purchase BMR units. She requested that households that are already on the BMR waiting list who are not first time homebuyers be allowed to remain on the list, and thereby eligible to purchase BMR units. She noted that many of these households own homes far away, where homes are more affordable, and commute to Menlo Park for work. These households are on the waiting list because they cannot afford to purchase homes in Menlo Park and would like to live closer to work. The Commission discussed this at some length.

M/S Steuer/Boyle to have an exception to the first time homebuyer requirement for households that are already on the BMR waiting list as of March 2, 2010; 6-0-0.

M/S Steuer/Strehl to create an exclusion to the first time homebuyer requirement for households that currently own homes as their primary residences more than fifty (50) miles outside Menlo Park city limits; 4-2-0, with Commissioners Van Randall and Moser dissenting.

M/S Moser/Van Randall to recommend the amended changes to the BMR Guidelines to the City Council; 6-0-0.

The Commission also discussed the one-bedroom BMR unit at Menlo Square on which the City had to foreclose. The merits of selling it as a market rate unit versus keeping it in the BMR program were discussed.

M/S Van Randall/Strehl to retain the one-bedroom unit at Menlo Square as a BMR unit; 6-0-0.

2. Consideration of the Senior Housing Needs Assessment and Implementation Plan for Recommendation to the City Council

Housing Manager Frederick reported that staff would like to present this to the City Council on March 2nd. He noted the Needs Assessment was conducted about two years ago but was not a priority for executive staff due to conflicting demands. Executive staff would now like to move this forward and the Implementation Plan component is new. After a short discussion the motion was made.

M/S Moser/Steuer to recommend the Senior Housing Needs Assessment and Implementation Plan to the City Council for approval; 6-0-0.

3. Consideration of Additional Funding to Habitat for Humanity for Recommendation to the City Council

Housing Manager Frederick explained that the City has so far provided Habitat's Neighborhood Revitalization program with a total of \$500,000, which equates to \$100,000 for each of five homes purchased. Moving forward, Habitat is requesting that the amount of funding per home purchased be increased to \$125,000, due to an increasingly competitive local real estate market.

M/S Strehl/Van Randall to recommend allocating \$125,000 for each of five additional homes to Habitat's Neighborhood Revitalization program; 6-0-0.

4. Consideration and Comment on the New Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan

Housing Manager Frederick explained there is not a lot for housing in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) because housing is not considered a capital improvement. He noted that moving forward however the Council would like the Commission to identify major concerns that may be addressed as part of such a plan. Some Commissioners expressed concern that the new process does not allow adequate input from the Commission. Housing Manager Frederick said that non-CIP goals can be advanced at a staff level. Commissioners asked about the Hamilton Avenue project and the potential for a free-standing Belle Haven Library. The Commission also discussed the City Council Goals and Housing Commissioner Moser stated that implementation of SB 375 should be included somewhere.

M/S Steuer/Moser to ask the City Council if they intended not to consider with respect to housing SB 375 in both their Council Goals and their CIP Plan; 6-0-0.

5. Approval of January 6, 2010 Minutes

M/S Moser/Strehl to approve the minutes as amended; 6-0-0.

C. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Update on Housing Activity (Report from Staff)

Housing Manager Frederick reported on the following January housing activity:

- The City acquired a home in Belle Haven that will be rehabilitated and sold through the BMR program. Staff is talking to Job Train about their ability to assist in cleaning up the house.
- Two BMR re-sales are under way, not including the foreclosed unit at Menlo Square.

2. Monthly Report on Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program for December 2009

The Commissioners accepted the report.

3. Report from the Chair

Chair Boyle announced that Don Weden will present “Cities for All Ages: Land Use Planning and Our Aging Population” at the new performing arts center on Thursday, March 25th at 7:00 p.m. The City is partnering with the League of Women Voters in putting on the presentation. Commissioner Moser has volunteered to get the word out to local churches and Commissioner Van Randall said she could distribute information to local real estate offices. The final flyer will be available on Monday and will be available electronically.

Chair Boyle also provided an update on the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan.

4. Commission Member Reports – None.

D. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Hamilton Avenue Update

Housing Manager Frederick provided an update on the Hamilton Avenue development site. Staff is planning to hold additional community meetings later this month but the dates haven’t been set. Postcards about the meetings will be mailed to approximately 500 addresses in the area surrounding the project site. The meetings will allow community members to comment on development concepts for the site.

E. ADJOURNMENT – 7:05 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Megan Nee, Management Analyst