



HOUSING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 7, 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 –

Commission Members Present: Patricia Boyle (Chair), Carolyn Clarke, Anne Moser, Katherine Strehl, Brigid Van Randall.

Commission Members Absent: John Bautista.

A. PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

B. REGULAR BUSINESS

1. Proposed Below Market Rate (BMR) Agreement for Menlo Gateway Project

The project applicant, Bohannon Development Company, was represented at the meeting by David Bohannon and legal counsel Jennifer Renk of Luce Forward. Justin Murphy, the City's Development Services Manager, was also present. The Commissioners asked questions and there was a discussion.

M/S Moser/Strehl to recommend that the City Council approve the proposed BMR Agreement for the Menlo Gateway Project; 5-0-0.

2. Approval of February 3, 2010 Minutes

It was noted that there was no March 2010 meeting.

M/S Moser/Clarke to approve the minutes as presented; 5-0-0.

C. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Update on Housing Activity (Report from Staff)

Housing Manager Frederick reported on the following housing activity:

- There are currently three BMR re-sales in process. One of the units is a three-bedroom single-family detached home located in the Hamilton Park development. Five households applied to purchase the home, of which two were eligible. The two households were asked to seek pre-approval with one of the program's partner lenders. If the applicant with the lower waiting list number is unable to secure pre-approval by the deadline, the opportunity to purchase will be passed on to the second applicant. The deadline for pre-approval is April 12th. The other two resale units are both one-bedroom condos. One is located

at 2160 Santa Cruz Avenue and the other at 1155 Merrill Street. The Merrill Street condo is the one on which the City had to foreclose. Applications to purchase the one-bedroom condos were due April 6th and a total of three applications were received.

- Work on the Neighborhood Stabilization Program's (NSP) first home is underway. The home is single-family detached and located on Hollyburne Avenue in Belle Haven. The three giant eucalyptus trees that were in its front yard have been removed. The project has been moving somewhat slower than expected, in part because a public comment period was required before the trees could be taken out and the trees themselves took one-and-a-half weeks to remove. They had to be taken out because they were a safety hazard and their roots had impacted the physical structure of the house. Renovation of the home could take an additional three to four months to complete.
- Staff is considering the possibility of acquiring an apartment building, which could be rehabilitated and then turned over to a non-profit affordable housing provider. Staff is working with its contract realtor and has looked at one building so far. It is preferable that the building be located on the west side of the city.
- The Senior Housing Needs Assessment will go to the City Council in May. It was delayed because management wanted to re-word staff's recommendation regarding adoption of universal design standards for building codes.

2. Monthly Report on Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program for February 2010

Housing Manager Frederick reported that work on the Hill home has begun. Two additional projects are in process and some other ones are in the pipeline.

3. Report from the Chair

Chair Boyle reported that two members of the Housing Commission have resigned their posts. Vice-Chair Steuer has a conflicting event on Wednesday evenings and Commissioner Strehl has been appointed to the Transportation Commission.

Chair Boyle invited comments from the Commission regarding Don Weden's presentation on March 25th. She reported that sixty people attended the presentation. She also summarized the feedback from attendees as provided on the comment cards. Overall, she said, the event was a success.

4. Commission Member Reports

Commissioner Moser said she attended a dedication ceremony for two recently completed Habitat for Humanity homes. The ceremony was held yesterday at the homes, which are located in Menlo Park's Belle Haven neighborhood. The homes are part of the new Habitat and City of Menlo Park Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP).

Chair Boyle reported that the Clara-Mateo homeless shelter, located on the grounds of the Veterans' Administration (V.A.) in Menlo Park, must vacate the

facility by this December. The V.A. is expanding and needs the space, so the shelter is looking for a new home elsewhere. She said that if the shelter leaves the city it will negatively impact Menlo Park's ability to provide shelter housing, which will also be reflected in the Housing Element.

Commissioner Van Randall reported that the City of San Jose recently received a second large infusion of federal stimulus funds, which will be used to provide foreclosure assistance. Housing Manager Frederick commented that the City of Menlo Park and the County of San Mateo had also applied for these funds but were denied due to not having enough foreclosures.

D. INFORMATION ITEMS

1. BMR Guidelines

Housing Manager Frederick explained that City Council Member John Boyle had asked the Commission to reconsider a few items regarding the changes to the BMR Guidelines. No other members of Council had these concerns. The Commission briefly discussed these items, particularly the clause that current homeowners on the BMR waiting list who reside within 50 miles of Menlo Park be grandfathered into the first-time homebuyer requirement. The Commission reaffirmed their original recommendations regarding these items.

2. El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan

Housing Manager Frederick provided a brief update on the project and identified upcoming public meetings.

3. Hamilton Avenue East Update

Housing Manager Frederick said the project will be temporarily placed on hold due to significant community opposition to the City's proposal for higher density development on the site. The deadline for developing the site is April 1, 2011 so he has recommended an approach to remove the deadline, giving the City and the community more time to form a consensus on the project.

E. ADJOURNMENT – 6:50 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Megan Nee, Management Analyst