



HOUSING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, October 6, 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 5:35 p.m. in the Administrative Building Conference Room.

ROLL CALL –

Commissioners Present: Patricia Boyle (Chair), Sally Cadigan, Anne Moser, Yvonne Murray (arrived at 6:10 p.m.), Brigid Van Randall (Vice-Chair).

Commissioners Absent: John Bautista, Carolyn Clarke.

Staff Present: Douglas Frederick, Housing Manager; Megan Nee, Management Analyst; Margaret Roberts, City Clerk.

A. PUBLIC COMMENT #1 - None

B. REGULAR BUSINESS

1. Continuation of Process for Commission 2-Year Work Plan

City Clerk Margaret Roberts lead the discussion of Step 5 (prioritize projects from urgent to low priority). She handed out a summary from the Commission's last Work Plan discussion in which the Commission identified its goals, priorities, and/or tasks. Per Chair Boyle's suggestion, the Commission decided to coordinate and give equal weight to the following two goals: (1) Housing Element and (2) El Camino Real Downtown Specific Plan as it relates to housing locations. The Commission gave these goals a priority/significance ranking of "1" (urgent).

The Commission discussed its third goal, community outreach for awareness and input. The Commissioners discussed different outreach ideas and added a new item/bullet point under this goal/project/priority (part of Step 4, brainstorm goals, projects or priorities of the Commission). The new item/bullet point added was as follows: community dialogue about housing. For this third goal, the Commission recommended adding a box to the priority/significance chart of Step 5. The new box should say "on-going."

2. Housing Study Session for Council October 19, 2010

Housing Manager Frederick presented his staff report to the Commission and explained the purpose of the Housing Study Session. The Commission discussed the following issues that were identified in the staff report:

The Housing Element

Commissioner Moser asked that staff provide the Commission with a map of all City-owned property. She suggested that some City-owned property (and the air-space above

it) could be utilized for new housing. Housing Manager Frederick said that this would be part of the site identification process.

Habitat for Humanity

Commissioner Moser asked what will happen to the funds that SummerHill committed to Habitat for the Terminal Avenue project if the project doesn't happen. Housing Manager Frederick explained that this money is in the bank and designated for Habitat. If the Terminal Avenue project is abandoned, the money could be utilized by Habitat to develop another site in Menlo Park. Housing Manager Frederick concluded that staff recommends that the Terminal Avenue project be abandoned. The City could then purchase from Habitat the house that would have given access to the site. The house could then be turned into a BMR unit.

Hamilton Avenue

Chair Boyle asked if the site will require environmental clean-up. Housing Manager Frederick said the City is not aware of any required clean up at this time. Staff would still like to see the site developed with a higher density mixed-income project tied to the proposed nearby train station. The Commission discussed staff's recommendation that the non-housing side of the Redevelopment Fund repay the housing side for the cost of the site.

Neighborhood Stabilization Program

There was little discussion of this issue outside of the public comment.

Other Development Opportunities

Housing Manager Frederick said that staff would like for the City to be more aggressive about other affordable housing development opportunities. Chair Boyle inquired about the possibility of developing affordable rental housing and asked if the City would own and/or operate rental properties. Housing Manager Frederick replied no, the City would partner with a non-profit to develop and/or manage affordable rental housing. The Commission expressed a desire for affordable housing near transit.

Public Comment

Menlo Park resident Penelope Huang spoke on behalf of the Silicon Valley Association of REALTORS (SILVAR) and presented a letter from its Government Affairs Director, Adam Montgomery. Related to item B.2 of the agenda, Ms. Huang stated that SILVAR opposes the expansion of the City's Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP). She summarized and explained the letter from Mr. Montgomery, including SILVAR's reasons for opposing the expansion of the program. She said she commends the NSP and the City for using a Menlo Park realtor but opposes the program's imposition of deed restrictions on assisted homes, which she said forever removes housing from the market and effectively depletes existing housing stock. In conclusion she said that SILVAR feels the NSP and the issues it intends to address require further study prior to discussion with the City Council.

In conclusion, Chair Boyle said she will speak at the Housing Study Session.

3. Approval of the Commission Meeting Minutes from September 1, 2010

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

C. REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Beltramo's BMR Agreement – Designation of Units

Commissioner Moser asked how the lots (market rate and BMR) on the proposed site-map were chosen. Housing Manager Frederick explained that they were determined through staff and developer negotiation. There was no further discussion.

2. Business Cards for Commissioners

Commissioners submitted their business card order forms to Housing Manager Frederick.

3. Update on Housing Activity (Report from Staff)

Housing Manager Frederick reported that close of escrow had fallen through for the BMR resale located at 2160 Santa Cruz Avenue #9. Although the next eligible applicant on the list has expressed interest in purchasing the home, the City's deadline to sell the home is fast approaching and does not provide sufficient time for the new applicant to complete the mortgage application and approvals process and close escrow. To prevent the unit from being lost to the BMR Program, the City will have to purchase it directly and then re-sell it to an eligible applicant from the BMR waiting list. Staff will propose that the City purchase the unit at the City Council meeting on October 19th.

4. Monthly Report on Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program for August 2010

Housing Manager Frederick provided a brief update.

5. Report from the Chair

Chair Boyle reported on the upcoming Housing Leadership Day and distributed handouts on the event. She also provided a report on the ABAG regional planning committee meeting that she attended today.

6. Commission Member Reports

Commissioner Moser expressed regret for voting in favor of the Beltramo's BMR Agreement at last month's meeting. She said it sets a precedent for allowing developers to plead difficulties (known or unknown) and go back on their previous BMR Agreements.

D. INFORMATION ITEMS – None.

E. PUBLIC COMMENT #2 – None.

F. ADJOURNMENT – 6:50 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Megan Nee, Management Analyst