

COUNCIL ON HOUSING
Public Session
Hulin Cove
Lewes, Delaware
September 13, 2017

Motions

- Approval of August 9, 2017 Minutes

Important Dates

- September 28, 2017: Housing Alliance DE Community Network, New Castle
- October 6, 2017: Housing Alliance Delaware Launch & Report Release event, Dover, The Green
- October 18, 2017: DE Continuum of Care Annual Meeting at Del Tech, Dover
- November 15, 2017: OMB Budget Hearing

Mr. Leahy, Chair, called to order the public session of the Council on Housing at 2:05 pm, September 13, 2017. In addition to Mr. Leahy, the following Council members were present:

Connie Harrington Robert Harra Francis Julian Ralph Peters
Ruth Sokolowski Norma Zumsteg

The following council members were absent and excused from the meeting:

Corrine Massey Donna Mitchell Vincent M. White

Also attending:

Shanná L. Alicea, Administrative Specialist III, DSHA
Susan Eliason, Director of Housing Development, DSHA
Marlena Gibson, Director of Policy and Planning, DSHA

Guests present:

Brandy Bennett Nauman, Housing Coordinator & Fair Housing Compliance Officer of Sussex County
Tina Showalter, Housing Alliance Delaware
Brad Whaley, Director of Sussex County Community Development

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Sokolowski moved and Ms. Zumsteg seconded that the Minutes of August 9, 2017 meeting be approved. There was discussion prompted by Mr. Peters' question about whether there was discussion at the August meeting about inviting community development partners to future meetings. Mr. Leahy asked that DSHA review the recording and make any necessary changes. Ms. Sokolowski motion was amended to state that the minutes be approved as written and potentially updated. Ms. Zumsteg's second stood. The amended motion was passed unanimously.

(Note: The recording for the August 2017 meeting was reviewed. There was no discussion regarding the discussion noted above. The minutes will not be updated.)

DSHA REPORT – Ms. Gibson and Ms. Eliason

- **Budget**
 - Real Estate Transfer Tax was increased by the General Assembly to balance the budget, increasing the State's portion by 1%. The State does not do a tax exemption for first time home buyers as most of the big local jurisdiction do. Legislators and partners are very concerned about this and are continually discussing how this will affect business and if anything can be done to better this position.
 - Governor signed two of the blight bills with a lot of leadership from Housing Alliance DE, New Castle County, the office of the Attorney General and a coalition of groups who have worked on these bills.
 - Housing Alliance DE a new organization launched in 2016 will be releasing their report on homelessness and housing affordability on October 6, 2017
 - DSHA is working on a revitalization tour with the governor sometime in late October. This tour will consist of doing a couple of site visits in one day and walking tours of some of the areas which have a lot of focus through the Downtown Development Districts, Strong Neighborhood and HDF.
 - Stakeholders meeting was held on August 22, 2017 at Dover Library. Approximately 50 people attended and discussed preliminary changes to the 2018 QAP. Developer fee still seems to be a big issue amongst the developers, who think their fees are too low.
 - Stakeholders were given to September 1st to submit any written comments and so far DSHA has received 10-12 sets of written comments. DSHA will review the comments and respond to comments at a later date.
 - The QAP, Work Product #2: The Minimum Construction Standards, The Underwriting Standards and the Exhibits which are included in the application will be given to the stakeholders and discussed at another stakeholder meeting. This is all in preparation for the public hearing that is required for the draft QAP which will probably be held in mid-December.

Council inquired about some of the details in this first work product. Ms. Eliason stated that included in the preliminary proposal QAP is an increase the percentages that are being used but to keep the \$1 million cap and to have a slightly higher developer fee for projects over 80 units. Council questioned how this worked with DSHA's goal of controlling costs. Ms. Eliason stated there are also other proposed items in the QAP which may encourage other things besides large project.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

COMMUNICATIONS: Ms. Zumsteg

- Annual Report - Ms. Zumsteg moved that the Annual Report to be accepted and Mr. Peters seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.
- Mr. Leahy stated the two additions to the report which were:
 - Federal programs look to be subjected to future cuts
 - The Real Estate tax increase

OPERATIONS: Mr. Harra

- Skills survey has been completed
 - Skills question of what would help Council be more involved:
 - Familiarity with local county organization and officials
 - Better understanding of State government in Finance Housing Model in other Jurisdiction to know what else is out there and what Council can learn from those organizations.
 - Better understanding of loans and mortgage underwriting
 - Better understanding of the tax credit restrictions and non-restriction uses in the State.

- Geography: Council is meeting its requirements to have two people from each county.
- Council has two open spots from the City of Wilmington

Mr. Leahy announced Ruth Sokolowski will be resigning from Council in December to open the door for others who may want to join.

HOUSING POLICY: Mr. Leahy

- Committee met on August 23rd and reviewed the Annual Report.
- Committee discussed bringing in partners who have shared interest in community development under a broader topic of understanding best practices, funding sources and councils, and promoting joint projects.

LOAN REVIEW

Nothing to report

OLD / NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Leahy

Mr. Whaley and Ms. Nauman, Sussex County reps talked about the functions of their agency and the key issues within Sussex County that are related to affordable housing. They also discussed briefly the County's new comprehensive plan.

Ms. Showalter of Housing Alliance Delaware talked about the function of her agency and their upcoming event regarding the merger of Delaware Housing Coalition and Homeless Planning Council which will be October 6, 2017 on The Green.

ADMINISTRATIVE: Mr. Leahy

- Two calendars are now included in the Council booklet.
 - Council's scheduled Timeline
 - Calendar of upcoming events.
 - Mr. Peters recommended the guest receive the event calendar which is included in the Council package.
 - This calendar will be emailed to them at a later date.

SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 11, 2017 at Luther Towers, Dover, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 pm.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shanná L. Alicea

Note: Copies of materials referenced as "attached" in these Minutes are available upon request.