



APPROVED with corrections by CD Commission 8-28-07
MINUTES
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Tuesday, July 24, 2007, City Council Chambers

Call to Order: Chairperson Cobb called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Roll Call: Connie Eldridge called the roll. A quorum was present. Chairperson Cobb welcomed George Francis as a new Community Development (CD) Commissioner. Commissioner Francis has been an Urbana resident for the last 35 years and is interested in city government.

Commission Members Present: Fred Cobb, George Francis, Brad Roof, Anne Heinze Silvis, Dennis Vidoni

Commission Members Absent: Chris Diana, Theresa Michelson

Others Present: John Schneider, Janel Gomez and Connie Eldridge, Community Development Services; Melissa Oglesby and Paul Zindars, Habitat for Humanity of Champaign County.

Approval of Minutes: *Chairperson Cobb asked for approval or corrections to the June 26, 2007 minutes. Commissioner Vidoni noted that page 4, fourth paragraph, first sentence should read: "In response to a question Commissioner Vidoni had about the term "infill,"... Commissioner Vidoni moved to approve the minutes as corrected, and Commissioner Silvis seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Petitions and Communications: None.

Staff Report: Mr. Schneider distributed a staff briefing memorandum and provided updates. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has released HOME Investment Partnership (HOME), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI) funds for the City of Urbana's Annual Action Plan Fiscal Year (FY) 2007-2008. The Urbana City Council approved resolutions certifying three Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) and also approved ordinances approving CHDO agreements. City Council also approved ordinances approving CDBG subrecipient agreements, Consolidated Social Service Funding (CSSF) agreements, and Supportive Housing Program (SHP) subrecipient agreements.

Mr. Schneider announced that John Sullivan was named interim Executive Director of Center for Women in Transition (CWIT) in place of Kathy Sims Ouellette.

Grants Management Division (GMD) staff is closing out the FY 2006-2007 Annual Action Plan (AAP) in preparation for the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). Staff is also processing and executing HOME, CDBG, CSSF, and SHP agreements;

processing ADDI loans; and setting up projects in the Integrated Disbursement Information System (IDIS) for FY 2007-2008. Because HUD requires files to be kept five to ten years beyond a program's end, staff is working on long term file storage and a reference library.

Referencing the *Monitoring HOME* training in Springfield, Commissioner Vidoni inquired if this was the same monitoring that Jim Rose from Homestead Corporation mentioned earlier. Mr. Schneider said HUD provides different levels of training for the HOME Program. This was monitoring, verifying, and documenting income of program participants when visiting CHDOs.

The State of Illinois Housing Development Agency (IHDA) has released information on a potential rental assistance program to reach households at or below 30% of Median Family Income. The targeted group is at or below 15% of MFI (almost homeless). The City of Urbana is working with the City of Champaign and the Village of Rantoul to consider an application.

The final Get the Lead Out (GLO) project contract has been executed. The City of Urbana has applied for new GLO funds from the State of Illinois in approximately twice the amount of the previous GLO grant. If approved, the City could assist eight households in the next few years. GMD staff is also processing rehabilitation projects (Emergency Grant, Senior Repair Service, Whole House Rehabilitation).

Mr. Schneider distributed the list of agencies receiving Consolidated Social Service Funding for FY 2007-2008.

Jeff Engstrom distributed and summarized a memorandum summarizing the Crystal Lake Area Plan Visioning Workshop, which was held June 12, 2007 at the Anita Purves Nature Center. The workshop was part of the planning process for the Crystal Lake Area Plan, which is for the area near Carle Hospital and Crystal Lake Park. The planning process is similar to that used for the 2005 City of Urbana Comprehensive Plan. It includes gathering input, sending out surveys, and interviewing key stakeholders. The draft plan will include goals and objectives on what property owners and residents would like.

Fifty residents attended the June 12th workshop, and they participated in a "Strengths, Weaknesses, and Opportunities Exercise." Residents, who sat at tables with a facilitator, placed red or green dots on maps to show things they liked or disliked. Each table then created a vision statement on what their community should be like. Later Kathleen Duffy compiled and categorized these responses and ideas. This information will be composed into goals and objectives that include implementation suggestions and strategies. The Crystal Lake Area Plan will be presented to the Plan Commission and then the City Council in September.

Referencing Commissioner Diana's earlier concern about data collection, Commissioner Roof asked if this was typical methodology. Mr. Engstrom answered that this was not strict statistical reporting, but was based on the Comprehensive Plan process. Staff included residents' responses in classical planning areas: environment, housing, transportation, etc. Mr. Schneider added the workshop was more like a public hearing than a scientific process. People were not limited to just one vote per item.

Commissioner Vidoni presumed that Commissioner Diana's concern would be what the City of Urbana would do with the data. The question is how definitive would the City consider this data in developing goals and directions. If it was used only for stimulus, then it probably would not be as problematic. Mr. Engstrom explained the tallies were not used to come up with goals and objectives. There will be resident and business surveys, and each response will be reviewed individually. Also, key stakeholders will be interviewed.

Chairperson Cobb asked if there would be a report in August. Mr. Engstrom said there would be a draft plan, probably in PowerPoint form. Staff will focus on actual goals and objectives when they present the information to the neighborhood.

Commissioner Silvis sympathized with the process of getting people to come up with something original versus gathering feedback. Staff has to count comments that really are not countable. Referencing a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis, she asked why threats were left off. Mr. Engstrom responded that during the Comprehensive Plan process Libby Tyler had suggested leaving threats off since many people do not understand that portion.

Old Business: None.

New Business: **An Ordinance Approving and Authorizing the Execution of an Urbana HOME Consortium Subrecipient Agreement – Habitat for Humanity of Champaign County – Homebuilder Blitz Program FY 2006-2007** – Mr. Schneider stated this project was approved in the FY 2006-2007 AAP. These funds (\$74,995) are from the City of Urbana's share of HOME funds.

The City of Urbana wanted to work with Habitat for Humanity on the Homebuilder Blitz Program. One requirement was that Urbana would provide five lots to Habitat. The City, which is working on procuring lots, has conveyed two lots to Habitat. The first house to be built will be at 1105 North Goodwin Avenue, Urbana. The City will need to acquire three more lots, and Mr. Schneider believed that some lots have been identified. Proposed completion of the project is July 2009, which is within the parameters of the HOME Program.

Habitat for Humanity has modified its approach for its Homebuilder Blitz. This slower approach will more effectively use its volunteers. Urbana HOME funds will be carried over to provide direct down payment assistance. Up to five new qualified homebuyers will receive \$14,999 in direct homebuyer assistance. A deferred loan will remain with the owner-occupants for a five year period.

Chairperson Cobb discussed his concerns about Habitat's program. Although he believes this program is good, he described problems with a former tenant of his property in Champaign. That tenant entered Habitat's homebuyer program, and Habitat staff did not check with him. Chairperson Cobb stated that Habitat should check into tenants' backgrounds because this may indicate how tenants may perform in the future.

Paul Zindars and Melissa Oglesby, from Habitat for Humanity, distributed the following: Frequently Asked Questions, Family Selection Process, and Application for Housing. Ms.

Oglesby explained Habitat's new process to select homeowners. Prospective homeowners must meet certain criteria before filling out the actual application. Habitat's Family Selection Committee determines whether or not to proceed, and then applications are verified. Chairperson Cobb was glad to hear that Habitat has changed its process.

Commission Roof asked if the \$15,000 was originally for site development in the initial proposal. Mr. Schneider answered that the funds were originally for site development; however, Habitat has had a change in approach since the original proposal felt that a more efficient strategy was for Habitat to finance the construction of the homes and the City of Urbana would provide \$14,999 for homebuyer down payment assistance at closing.

Commissioner Vidoni asked what had changed in Habitat's family selection process. Ms. Oglesby answered that the whole process has changed. In the past staff was not involved in the family selection process. Mr. Zindars said that Habitat's Family Selection Committee, which is made up of community members rather than staff, select the future homeowners. Also, in the past applicants attended group meetings, submitted paperwork, and waited for notification. Now applicants find out right away whether or not they may qualify for Habitat's program. Commissioner Vidoni commented this seemed to be a more individual approach to the selection process. Chairperson Cobb added that things have changed at Habitat; for example, Habitat staff have returned his phone calls.

Because he volunteers at Habitat for Humanity and also serves on some committees, Commissioner Vidoni recused himself. Commissioner Roof moved to recommend to City Council approval of an Ordinance Approving and Authorizing the Execution of an Urbana HOME Consortium Subrecipient Agreement (Habitat for Humanity of Champaign County – Homebuilder Blitz Program FY 2006-2007). Chairperson Silvis seconded the motion, and the motion carried with 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 abstention.

Adjournment: Chairperson Cobb adjourned the meeting at 7:47 p.m.

Recorded by Connie Eldridge

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