



APPROVED with clarification by CD Commission 11-24-09
MINUTES
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, September 22, 2009, City Council Chambers
400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801

Call to Order: Chairperson Cobb called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Connie Eldridge called the roll. A quorum was present.

Commission Members Present: Fred Cobb, Janice Bengtson, George Francis, Theresa Michelson, Jerry Moreland, Brad Roof, Anne Heinze Silvis, Dennis Vidoni

Commission Members Absent: Chris Diana

Others Present: John Schneider, Jennifer Gonzalez and Connie Eldridge, Community Development Services; Keihly Moore, Ecological Construction Laboratory (e-co lab).

Approval of Minutes: *Chairperson Cobb asked for approval or corrections to the June 30, 2009 Special Meeting minutes of the Community Development Commission (CD. Commissioner Michelson moved to approve the minutes, and Commissioner Silvis seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Petitions and Communications: None.

Staff Report: Mr. Schneider provided updates and distributed the following: a staff briefing memorandum dated September 22, 2009; a schedule for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2010-2014 Consolidated Plan and FY 2010-2011 Annual Action Plan; *Fall 2009 Neighborhood News*; flyer for Crystal View Townhomes; City of Urbana Quick Reference and Resource Guide; flyer for a museum display on Abraham Lincoln at the Champaign County Courthouse; United States Census 2010 card.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) monitored the Urbana HOME Consortium's HOME Program. Likely due to new federal programs, HUD's response has taken longer than normal. The City has received its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), CDBG-R, and HOME funding.

All Grants Management Division staff attended HUD's Consolidated Plan training. The City of Urbana is beginning to create the Consolidated Plan, which sets goals for the next five years. The Annual Action Plan is the annual budget, which accomplishes those goals.

Commissioner Vidoni asked what issues resulted from HUD's monitoring. Mr. Schneider responded that one finding resulted when a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) was not available to meet with the HUD representative. As a result, the City has written a procedure to notify CHDOs for future HUD monitoring. Also, the Urbana HOME Consortium has never had subrecipient agreements with the other member government entities

(City of Champaign and Champaign County). However, HUD has indicated that federal regulations are clear that a subrecipient agreement is required.

Staff is closing out projects in HUD's Integrated Disbursement Information System (IDIS).

Mr. Schneider discussed HUD's concern about timely commitment of HOME funds. The HOME Consortium has met the commitment deadline but is still on HUD's shortfall list. One reason was that the City of Champaign had lost and not filled two staff positions. Because the HOME Consortium met with the City of Champaign and created a process to address this, Mr. Schneider does not believe the Consortium will be on the shortfall list.

Referencing the purchase of 107 East Oregon, Commissioner Roof inquired whether the City inspected houses for asbestos. Mr. Schneider responded that after purchase, a licensed inspector will inspect the property as required by a commercial and public buildings law related to asbestos in publicly owned properties.

Jen Gonzalez mentioned the procedures for the last Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan. The City would like to increase participation by low-income persons, for example by hosting public hearings with the Housing Authority. She reviewed the tentative schedule for the upcoming Consolidated Plan process.

Commissioner Vidoni asked if the public hearing locations were new sites. Mr. Schneider replied that Census Tract 54 meetings alternate between Washington School Library and the Anita Purvis Nature Center. The other sites, which are traditional meeting places for the neighborhood, are the same. Staff will also work with focus groups to identify needs, services, and different ways to address those needs.

Old Business: None.

New Business: **An Ordinance to Repeal and Make Void Ordinance No. 2008-09-093, "An Ordinance Authorizing the Sale of Certain Real Estate to Ecological Construction Laboratory for Affordable Housing Development (901 North Division Avenue)"**

An Ordinance Authorizing the Sale of Certain Real Estate (1302 West Dublin Street to Ecological Construction Laboratory for Affordable Housing Development)

Mr. Schneider explained that both agenda items were connected. The first is to repeal the ordinance authorizing the sale of 901 North Division Avenue to e-co lab because there is no sewer connection for 901 North Division Avenue. Public Works will extend the new sewer line from Crystal View Townhomes to properties on North Division Avenue to accommodate future development. However, this will not be completed until late Spring 2010.

Because e-co lab wanted to move forward with construction of a new single family house, City staff discussed different options with e-co lab. The City recently purchased and cleared 1302 West Dublin Street. Habitat for Humanity was interested in this lot. However, since Habitat did not have a buyer, they agreed that e-co lab could have the lot.

Referencing neighborhood concerns with e-co lab's Fairview house, Commissioner Roof asked how e-co lab's house design would fit with other homes on Dublin Street. Keihly Moore, Assistant Director of e-co lab, noted the houses on Dublin Street are one story, while e-co lab's house would be two stories. Since the design is south-facing, it will be more friendly. Also, the design will be different since e-co lab will be using modular construction.

Commissioner Roof inquired if e-co lab had a buyer. Ms. Moore answered no; however, two have applied but have not been approved. Mr. Schneider added that City staff had discussed this concern with e-co lab. The most risk for the Urbana HOME Consortium is financing. E-co lab's modular house is the next generation; and if e-co lab can secure construction financing, the project will proceed. The City's agreement does not require e-co lab to have a buyer.

Commissioner Roof was concerned with e-co lab building a house that did not fit the neighborhood. Ms. Moore indicated there was a lot of interest and felt it was important to have a house already built. At this time she did not know the sales price. Mr. Schneider noted a modular format should reduce the cost significantly.

Chairperson Cobb asked if e-co lab has communicated with the neighborhood. Ms. Moore answered no, but they will. There was discussion about the color, which the buyer will select. There is no fiscal impact to the City since the City already owns both lots.

Commissioner Roof inquired about additional costs to install the sewer line for Division Avenue. Mr. Schneider estimated the cost to be \$30,000 to extend the sewer. Because this issue would eventually affect surrounding houses in the neighborhood that are connected to a private sewer, this was a good discovery. 903 North Division can connect into the new main sewer line as needed.

Noting the difference in lots for Dublin Street and Division Avenue, Commissioner Michelson asked about e-co lab's house plans. Ms. Moore discussed lot size, orientation, redesign and noted the Dublin Street house would be slightly smaller to fit within setbacks. Although there are two setback requirements for the corner lot, Mr. Schneider noted the Dublin Street house would be within one foot of the size as the house planned for Division Avenue.

Mr. Schneider remarked that 1302 West Dublin Street previously had two structures, which the City cleared. In mid-block the City gave Habitat a half-lot, which has received variances for side-yard setback. As someone lives on the adjoining half lot, one option is to wait for the owner to sell.

In response to Commissioner Roof, Ms. Moore said e-co lab preferred the lot at 901 North Division; however, there are issues with site drainage, sewer, pond and many trees. Mr. Schneider believed the bioswales designed for Crystal View would relieve some of the water retention. The City's Engineering Division is looking at the drainage issue.

There was discussion about the timeline for construction, sale, and timeliness of funding. Mr. Schneider noted that e-co lab has worked with their modular home developer over the last 18 months. Connecting to the sewer line will add \$6,000 to the project cost for 901 North Division.

Although the two agenda items were related, Commissioner Vidoni noted the actions could be separated. Mr. Schneider agreed the CD Commission and City Council could act on the agenda items separately. However, staff believes these are connected since e-co lab had requested the City expedite provision of a lot. If the ordinance is not approved, e-co lab will not have a lot on which to build. Also, Habitat had relinquished its request for 1302 West Dublin in anticipation that 901 North Division would be available for development later. Mr. Schneider mentioned the City's commitment to provide lots to Habitat as well as providing lots to the two CHDOs.

Chairperson Cobb was concerned that the house should fit within the community and that there be no negative feedback. Commissioner Michelson asked why the City would stop an affordable housing project if it had not done so in the past. Noting the house was based on super energy efficient design, Commissioner Silvis questioned why the design should be changed. Commissioner Roof questioned why e-co lab was building a house without a buyer. He believed the process required a buyer before donating a lot.

Commissioner Vidoni mentioned community input for zoning changes and thought there may be precedent to get community input on housing style. In response to Commissioner Bengtson, Mr. Schneider said e-co lab must abide by zoning setbacks and does not need a change in zoning. He added the buyer at 1007 West Fairview was very happy with e-co lab's house and the neighborhood. Each CHDO has its own "personality" of house style. Chairperson Cobb commented that e-co lab's applicants indicate their house would sell. Mr. Schneider mentioned UPTV ads for marketing both e-co lab and Homestead houses. Remarking there is a difference between interest and a signed contract, Commissioner Roof stated he would only support this if e-co lab had a current buyer. *(11-24-09 Clarification of Minutes: Commissioner Roof clarified that his comment was based on e-co lab's current contract with the City. The contract indicated that e-co lab would pre-sell their homes. It had been conveyed to the CD Commission that e-co lab would move forward in a different manner to avoid the past issue on Fairview Avenue.)*

Commissioner Francis moved to forward to City Council approval of:

- (1) An Ordinance to Repeal and Make Void Ordinance No. 2008-09-093, "An Ordinance Authorizing the Sale of Certain Real Estate to Ecological Construction Laboratory for Affordable Housing Development (901 North Division Avenue)"*
- (2) An Ordinance Authorizing the Sale of Certain Real Estate (1302 West Dublin Street to Ecological Construction Laboratory for Affordable Housing Development).*

Commissioner Michelson seconded the motion. The motion carried with 7 ayes, 1 no.

Closed Session to Review Closed Session Minutes – *Commissioner Vidoni moved to recommend the CD Commission enter closed session for the purpose of reviewing closed session minutes. Commissioner Moreland seconded the motion. The motion to go into closed session was approved by a roll call vote:*

<i>Bengtson – yes</i>	<i>Francis - yes</i>	<i>Roof - yes</i>
<i>Cobb – yes</i>	<i>Moreland - yes</i>	<i>Silvis - yes</i>
<i>Diana - absent</i>	<i>Michelson - yes</i>	<i>Vidoni - yes</i>

Disposition: The motion to go into closed session was approved by a roll call vote (8-yes; 0- no; 1-absent). Chairperson voting. The CD Commission moved to closed session at 7:53 p.m.

The CD Commission resumed regular session at 8:17 p.m.

Commissioner Francis moved to correct the minutes from the CD Commission's closed session on March 24, 2009 as follows: Under New Business, second paragraph, replace "There was consensus..." with "A sense of the majority..." Commissioner Roof seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Silvis moved to (1) approve for release the corrected minutes from the CD Commission's closed session on March 24, 200 and (2) release the minutes from tonight's closed session. Commissioner Michelson seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment: *Commissioner Francis moved to adjourn the meeting, and Commissioner Vidoni seconded the motion. Chairperson Cobb adjourned the meeting at 8:19 p.m.*

Recorded by Connie Eldridge

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