

**AMMENDED
COMMUNITY HOUSING TASK FORCE
MEETING
March 25, 2003**

MEMBERS

Joe Udall
Carie Allen
Teresa Brice-Heames
Randy Jackson (Absent)
Jack Hannon
Jim Davidson (Excused)
Greg Holtz
Patricia Duarte
Sean Lake
John Poulsen
Linda Flick
Jeff Rogers
Marty Whalen
Stephanie Wright
Maynard Schneck

STAFF

Hershel Lipow, TONYA Inc.
Ben Patton, Neighborhood Services
Bryan Raines, Neighborhood Services
Kit Kelly, Community Revitalization
Ruth Anne Norris, Housing Services
Lisa Wilson, Neighborhood Services
Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo,
Neighborhood Outreach

OTHERS PRESENT

John Smith, Housing for Mesa
Janice Parker, Save the Family
Foundation
Napoleon Pisano, Mesa Association Of
Hispanic Citizens
Dan Taylor, Mesa Senior Services
Gary Finlinson, Finlinson Properties

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Joe Udall welcomed everyone to the meeting of the Community Housing Task Force (CHTF).

RECAP OF SESSIONS OBJECTIVES

This session's objective focused on the social issues related to housing. Hershel Lipow led the group into a discussion dealing with culture identity, the housing continuum, and the benefits of home ownership. The Community Housing Task Force will attempt to integrate housing and people with an emphasis on the housing continuum referred to as the market place, support services, amenities, and marketing strategies.

Teresa Brice-Heames cautioned the group to beware of their own personal and cultural biases when making introductory comments. What may stand true for one individual and culture may not be so for another. Mr. Lipow informed the group that they are to break out of their assumptions and to be open to other lifestyles of society.

PANEL PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION

Kathleen Kelly introduced the panel of presenters for the evening. Janice Parker is the Executive Director of Save the Family Foundation, Dan Taylor of Mesa Senior Services, Napoleon Pisano is the Treasurer of the Mesa Association of Hispanic Citizens, John Smith of Housing for Mesa, and Gary Finlinson of Finlinson Properties.

Janice Parker discussed her agency's mission and gave details regarding the many services that Save the Family offers.

The program's objective is to help families become economically self-sufficient. Most of the clients cannot afford housing because they are 30% below the median income.

A.R.M. (Affordable Rental Movement) assist families in the transitional program. They may have their job and better wages but are still not able to afford to pay fair market rent.

Dan Taylor discussed the objectives of his agency, Mesa Senior Services. The agency provides meals for seniors, outreach services, volunteer services, and transportation. Referrals to assisted living facilities are also provided.

The Section 8 Program was also discussed, which Kathleen Kelly explained as a federal program in which a person receives funding assistance to pay for rent. The head of the household pays only 30% of their income towards the rental.

Another program mentioned was Section 202 Housing. This is a HUD (U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development) project, which is a federal project in which the upfront cost to build the facility, is provided by the government. Units are rented to low-income individuals who pay 30% of their income. The property owner receives subsidies over time.

Mr. Taylor stated that there is enough senior housing in Mesa but most of it is not affordable. Some seniors will choose to live in mobile home parks or other types of housing but without the support services, which are vital to most seniors. He urged the Task Force members to consider the elderly of Mesa when making decisions on housing issues.

Napoleon Pisano discussed affordable housing and its impact from the Hispanic-Latino perspective. The Hispanic-Latino population is 20% in Mesa and is increasing with a replacement rate of 2.1%. The population of Hispanic Latinos in the state is approximately 25%. The rising population contributes to an already small supply of affordable housing.

Mr. Pisano spoke of "Generation Y", which is identified as a growing population within the Latino community that describes members of the population between the ages of 15-24 years old. They comprise 38% of the Latino population that are coming into the workforce. Eighty percent of the Latino population is employed and 41% of those jobs are in the service and labor industry. They are at or below minimum wage or entry-level positions. He asked that this be taken into account when considering affordable, quality homes. People at this income level cannot afford these types of homes.

The need to provide the education for a skilled workforce was stressed. This will provide individuals with income for an affordable home in a safe neighborhood with quality

schools, recreational opportunities, and opportunities for social and economic development.

John Smith's agency, Housing for Mesa, provides low-income, first-time homebuyers with the ability to purchase their first home in Mesa.

Mr. Smith spoke about how important it is to consider the quality of life that goes along with housing. The community needs the City of Mesa to deal with housing as a social development issue. He also emphasized that the community requires all types of housing because of the various individual income levels and that self-sufficiency, family stability, and new vitality in older neighborhoods are also important to the community.

Gary Finlinson of Finlinson Properties introduced the CHTF members to issues facing the Orange Grove area of Mesa. This area contains a large number of executive housing. The need for commercial development in this area was addressed. He emphasized that people want to have blends of multi-family and commercial developments. People want a community where there is pedestrian traffic and a multicultural experience. The group was urged not to think in terms of density as bad, "Quality regardless of density is always going to go into a level of high-end executive housing".

Mr. Finlinson asked the task force to allow commercial development in the appropriate areas.

Task force members asked questions of the panel.

Marty Whalen stated that the Citrus Sub Area Plan would be discussed before Planning and Zoning this week.

Mr. Hannon asked about the demographics of the people being served by Save the Family. Ms. Parker informed the group that the clients are 59% Anglo, 21% Black, 16% Hispanic, 3% Native American, and 1% Asian and the average age is 19-35 years.

Sean Lake asked that the task force consider the housing in between affordable and the executive type housing.

WORKSHOP LOGISTICS

Ben Patton explained that the purpose of the guest panel was to educate and provide a catalyst for CHTF members to use as they break into their discussion groups.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Members of the task force broke into 3 groups and discussed social issues. The groups then gathered to discuss the issues together.

CHTF REPORT OUT

3 questions were addressed during the breakout sessions. Below are the results:

A. What factors are currently affecting Mesa's social development?

- Lack of jobs - per capita ratio and adequate wages.
- Changing face of the community – Latino/immigrant growth; larger younger families.

- Education – more focus on getting higher graduation rates, people with good skills that allow them to earn living wage.
- Anti-immigrant attitude – anti-illegal immigrant attitude.
- Struggle with image – everyone must have a single family home with fenced yard, pool, etc. Not ready for neo-traditional movement.
- Growth patterns that result in segregation by economic class.
- Aging population - not stakeholders but hold influence as voters.
- Lifestyle preferences – single individual households.
- Disappearing middle class – middle-aged households disconnected and isolated.
- Increasing expectations and desires for housing.

B. What significant impacts are these factors having on Mesa's housing?

- East side/west side disparities.
- Potential for slowed homeowner rate – doubling up, overcrowding.
- Potential for economic/job opportunities.
- Housing stock becoming obsolete – mobile home parks.
- Emphasis on new development – takes attention away from older area revitalization and incentives for redevelopment, infill.
- Builders build houses that reflect what people want – market driven.
- Established communities are resistant to having immigrants, low-income people move into their areas. Fear of the unknown.
- Community not ready for “urbanism.” Identity/image of Mesa not ready to embrace new ideas. We are still struggling with small town background vs. reality of having become a big city.
- Fences, walls, neighborhoods separated by income levels create barriers to building stronger sense of community – segregated communities aging in place. Zoning codes foster these segregated communities. Mixed-use environments could change face of community.

C. What social factors are likely to impact Mesa's housing in the next five to ten years?

How are they similar/different from those occurring today?

- Life cycle issues of neighborhoods – residents get older, houses age. Will young families be able to buy in and revitalize neighborhoods?
- Will senior developments survive – Like Leisure World or Sun City? Retired boomers may prefer to move to downtown Phoenix or Tempe for urban lifestyle.
- Younger people will want to get into housing market and then move up. Will they be able to afford to buy?
- Need variety of all types of housing products. Historic districts can attract people who want an older home in a mature neighborhood.
- People move here from other cultures, parts of the U.S. May change attitudes.
- Interest rates may drive ability to buy a house.
- Lack of water.
- Unrealistic buildout rates.
- How to convince higher income to include others. If disparities continue, east and west will be affected. Schools, housing quality, etc.
- Growth of surrounding areas.
- The impact of children and the pressures on community facilities.
- The continuing decline of trailer homes and communities.

D. How can positive trends be enhanced and negative ones averted?

- Remove stigma of “affordable” housing and look at mixed-income, dispersion of income and housing stock/styles. Reduce fluctuations in real estate values. Start to value and embrace diversity.
- Develop a sense of community; resources: financing, property tax, G.O. Bonds, housing trust fund, community land trust.
- Image enhancements – incentives for high end housing downtown, jobs tied to housing, strengthened education; historic designations and design guidelines (setbacks, landscaping).

- Smaller homes with shared amenities may become more attractive to empty nesters.
- Investment in rehabilitation of older housing stock – older neighborhoods may become more attractive due to location.
- Avoid sprawl – encourage mixed-use developments.
- Strong leadership; education of citizens.

CITIZEN COMMENT

There were no citizen comments made at the meeting.

WRAP-UP

Ben Patton mentioned the results of last session's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Members were encouraged to review the handout and advise Mr. Patton of any suggestions or changes to be made to the document.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Affordable Housing Conference will be held at the Tucson Convention Center, downtown Tucson, Arizona on March 27-28, 2003.

Teresa-Brice Heames announced that the Arizona Department of Housing would hold "Housing Day at the Capital" on April 16, 2003.

The next meeting will be April 22, 2003 at 6pm in the Lower Level Council Chambers. The meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ben Patton, Neighborhood Services