

City of Mesa
Housing Advisory Board
Mesa City Council Chambers, Lower Level
57 East 1st Street
December 3rd, 2009
6:00PM
-Meeting Minutes-

Members

Ms. Diana Yazzie Devine (absent)
Mr. Christian Karas
Ms. Heather Kay
Ms. Siri Amrit Kaur Khalsa (absent)
Mr. Thomas Mace
Mr. David Ricks
Mr. Steve Schild (late)
Mr. Marv Turley
Mr. Jon Scott Williams

Staff

Ms. Carolyn Olson
Ms. Mary Brandon (absent)
Mr. Scott Clapp
Mr. Ray Thimesch (absent)

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Approval of Minutes from November 5, 2009, HAB Meeting

The Housing Advisory Board unanimously approved the Minutes from November 5, 2009, meeting by a vote of 6-0.

III. Items from Citizens Present

There were no items from citizens present.

IV. Action Items

a. Discuss and Take Action on the Start Time of CDBG/HOME/ESG Public Hearing #1 Scheduled on Thursday, March 4th, 2010.

- i.* Due to the potential volume of presenters at Public Hearing #1, the Board unanimously voted to start the Hearing at 5:00 p.m. instead of 6:00 p.m. Please note: Subsequently identified timing issues with the funding schedule have necessitated a change in date and location for this event. **The Hearing will now occur on Thursday, February 18th, 2010 in the upper-level council chambers.**

V. Discussion Items

a. Hear a Presentation and Discuss "The FY 2010-2014 Consolidated Plan Review and Update," Rich Crystal, Crystal & Company

- i.* The Plan is required by HUD every five years and incorporates needs, objectives and strategies as well as serving as an investment guide. The plan covers affordable housing, homelessness, special populations needing supportive housing, and Community Development needs (public facilities, infrastructure, slum and blight removal) and issues.
- ii.* Housing Affordability – With the decline in the current Housing Market, Housing Affordability has increased significantly in both Mesa and Maricopa County. In the under \$200,000 market, sales are brisk. 50% of sales are foreclosures.

Foreclosure rate in Mesa approximately 6 months ago was 5.6%, and this mirrors Maricopa County. Current trends regarding rentals include:

1. High Vacancy rates (15%).
 2. Downward pressure on rents.
 3. Limited construction – 8,000 building permits were issued in 2009 as compared to 12,500 in 2008 and 31,000 in 2007.
 4. Increasing incidence of doubling up – overcrowding.
 5. Investors purchasing lower priced single-family properties from owners and converting into rentals.
 6. Emigration of Mexican Nationals out of Arizona.
- iii. Internet Survey – To date, about twenty respondents from within the City have participated in an internet survey designed to solicit residents’ perspectives on priority homeowner, priority rental program, priority needs for homeless persons, and public services needs. Their responses can be found in the PowerPoint presentation provided by the consultant.
- iv. Commercial Vacancy Rates – the Board inquired about commercial vacancy rates and how they compare to residential rates. The consultant briefly touched upon this by stating that the commercial rates were much higher and the bottom was still to come. Commercial vacancy rates are at 25%. They were 19% in 2008 and 14% in 2007.

VI. Conduct a Public Hearing to Request Input on the City’s 2010-2014 5-Year Consolidated Plan. Identification of resources and input solicited relative the specific need, priorities, objectives an strategies to address affordable housing, homeless, supportive housing and community development issues over the ensuing five years from FY 2010-2014.

- a. Susan Brenton, Executive Director, Manufactured Housing Communities of Arizona, gave a presentation touting the benefits of Manufactured Communities as an affordable housing option within Mesa. Manufactured homes are very inexpensive compared to other types of housing and vacancy rates are much lower than traditional single family residences (6-7%). Many parks are owned by the tenants and are governed by a crime-free addendum.
- b. Some of the newer members of the Board requested clarification regarding the purpose of the hearing and their role in it. Staff reiterated that public input was being sought regarding the need, priorities, and strategies to address affordable housing, homelessness, supportive housing and community development issues. Input would be used to guide the creation of the Plan and may play a role in deciding what areas receive funding prioritization.
- c. The Public Hearing concluded with no additional public comments.

VII. Staff Reports/Announcements

- a. Housing Choice Voucher Program Update – The Housing Choice Voucher Program is fully leased at this time. This past week, the Housing Authority applied for 50 additional voucher under the Family Unification Program (FUP). If this application is approved, the Housing Authority would be working in conjunction with the Department of Economic Security.

- b. **Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) Status Update – Carolyn Olson, SP Development Project Coordinator** – Ray Thimesch could not attend the meeting, so Carolyn Olson gave the NSP report in his place. Earlier this morning, Council authorized the sale of some of the NSP acquired and rehabbed homes. There was some discussion on how the rehab of these homes has spurred other homeowners to rehab their properties as well.
- c. **Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP) Update**
Carolyn Olson gave an update on HPRP. This stimulus funded program to help families who have lost their jobs due to the economic downturn. Potential participants can go to either the Housing Services Division or to MesaCan for assistance. Participants must be U.S. citizens or legal residents.
- d. **Report on Meetings and Conferences – Attended and/or Upcoming**
Jon Scott Williams recently attended the National Aging Services Convention in Chicago and was amazed at the upcoming technology that's going to be available to help the elderly age gracefully in a place they call "home" without being prematurely institutionalized. Technology will allow people to age differently than we've ever aged before.

VIII. **ADJOURN**

Prior to adjourning the meeting, some of the Board members had additional questions regarding Public Hearing #1 and how it would be conducted. They are as follows: **Would the Board have an opportunity to comment on each applicant's proposal?** Yes. **How will the Board's input be given to Council?** The Board's input will be given to Council thru the minutes of the meeting and a separate Council Report. The Board wanted to have a rating tool for use in their evaluation of the applicant's proposals. Staff agreed to devise a tool and provide a copy at the next meeting in January.

With no other agenda items to be discussed, Chair Jon Scott Williams adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:41 p.m.

Approved and respectfully submitted,