

BARNSTABLE COUNTY HOME CONSORTIUM ADVISORY COUNCIL  
THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 2014  
CAPE COD COMMISSION OFFICE  
MEETING MINUTES

Members Present: Jill Douglass, Vicki Goldsmith, Bernie Kaplan, James Kyrimes, Elaine McIlroy.

Members Not Present: Lee Berger, Carl Brotman, Richard Carroll, Lorri Finton, Michelle Jarusiewicz, Cindi Maule, Marlene McCollem,

Staff Present: Paul Ruchinskis.

**Minutes-**

James made the Motion to approve the Minutes of March 13, 2014. 1 member in favor, 0 opposed, 3 abstained.

**HOME Staff Report-**

Paul reported on the HOME Consortium Membership status and the high amount of vacant seats. Cindi Maule will be coming back to the HOME Consortium as the representative for the town of Harwich. Paul met with Chatham Town Staff and they are having struggles with their housing committee in regards to membership. They said they will look for someone to represent the town either from the Housing Committee or Town Staff. The Town of Barnstable is looking to fill their seat. The Town of Orleans had a member from the Housing Committee interested but the timing of the meetings wasn't going to work for her. The Town of Sandwich has had a long time vacancy on the HOME Consortium, but they might have someone interested. The Town of Falmouth is going to be hiring an Affordable Housing Staff person and the intent is to have that person be the representative for the Town; thus, Marlene was not re-appointed.

The 2014 HOME allocations came out, and we will be receiving \$404,552, which is about a 4% increase from last year. HUD is using the latest Census data to determine the allocations. The fact that we have received an increase the last two years means that the Cape was relatively worse off than other HOME jurisdictions in the rest of the country for the years 2008-2012.. The funding for last year was a little bit higher than the year before. There was a \$15,000 increase from last year, which is modest but better than the allocation going down.

Paul reported that it's time to renew the Mutual Cooperation Agreement. In 1992/1993 all 15 towns signed onto the agreement that they would be members of the Consortium and that they County would be the lead agency and responsible for administering the program. Every three years it has to be renewed. The original Agreement required that renewal notices be sent to the Town Administrators/Selectman asking them to take a vote and get the notarized signatures back, which was a time consuming process. In 2005 we proposed an amendment that all Towns approved that the Agreement will automatically renew unless a town opts to withdraw. Early next month Paul will send a notice out to all the towns stating that it is time for the renewal process and if they want to stay in the Consortium, they do not need to take any action.

However, if a Town wants to get out of the Consortium, it will need to take a vote and notify Paul of this. HUD is requiring new language be inserted into the Agreement. Part of the Agreement states that the Town accepts any language change required by HUD. Paul will confirm with HUD, but he doesn't believe any action needs to be taken on the language changes. HUD only requires that the Towns have 15 days to respond; however, Paul felt that was not enough time and the Agreement provides for a 30 day period in which to respond. We will notify the Consortium Members when the letter goes out to the Towns so they can follow up.

Paul did an update of the projects we have on going:

- 20 Shore Street closed on April 11<sup>th</sup> and rehab is underway on the building, and TRI hopes to be done by July/August.
- Village Green received approval from NStar with the closing now expected to occur in May.
- Coady School & Stable Path submitted their request for additional funding.
- Village Green II also submitted for funding to DHCD.

Every year the National Low Income Housing Coalition does the "Out of Reach" study which calculates what a household needs to earn in order to afford a 2 bedroom apartment at FMR. The "housing wage" has gone down since last year, which was over \$24/hour, but is now \$22.62 per hour this year primarily because the 2 bedroom FMR went down. For a 1 bedroom apartment it's \$16/hour and change for a single person.

The Commission gets State funds every year/two years for District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) projects, and we are funding two for Affordable Housing this year. One is for the Town of Brewster and the Community Development Partnership which was awarded funds to hire a consultant to look at what the impediments are in the Lower Cape to create and manage small scale affordable rental developments. For example, the CDP has 70 apartments that they manage scattered over 18 sites from Provincetown to Harwich, while HECH has about 40 units scattered between Yarmouth and Harwich. The Town also wants the consultant to look at the management as far as support services that are really needed but not there and ways to fund these services. It's not just about maintaining the apartments but also the households living there.

Vicki responded that one of the situations Habitat is faced with is small ownership associations. They have recently contracted with First Property Management, which manages a lot of condo associations. They are trying to keep the contracts minimal to keep cost down. A property management entity with both rental experience and a specialty in social services that could work with groups and enhance good neighborhood relations would be a benefit in the region.

Jill reported that the 12 home condo Yankee Drive LIP project in Brewster is having issues with gathering the necessary funds from owners to paint etc. and is going to start falling into serious disarray without property management. It is difficult for neighbors to keep after other neighbors about association dues, etc.

Vicki reported that Habitat requires that Homeowners Association in their projects contract with a property management organizations to keep the books, etc. The fees are built into the Homeowner Association budget.

On the development challenges, when DHCD does their annual plan for the tax credits Paul typically sends a comment to them requesting they do a set-aside for 20 units or under rental developments. The response is usually “we do fund that during the course of funding”.

The second DLTA project is in Chatham, and they are also looking to hire a consultant. They have an affordable housing bylaw that was adopted 6-7 year ago has never been used. They want a consultant to take a look at the bylaw to figure out why it has not been used and what changes need to be made to get it to be used. One of the challenges is that they want the units to count on the SHI, which means they need to do the affirmative marketing and could be a lot for one person. The Regional Ready Renters program (being administered by the CCC) allows projects with 5 or less units to use the program, which in turn takes care of the affirmative marketing piece. The Town of Wellfleet has a similar bylaw but theirs does not require the unit to count on the SHI.

The second piece for the Town of Chatham is to look at the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and its structure, guidelines and how they fund projects. Chatham’s AHTF is set up that there are seven members, which includes the 5 Selectman and 2 At Large members. They have funded one development.

Both studies/reports should be complete by December and will be available for people to review.

#### **Federal and State Housing Voucher Program-**

Cindi Maule unexpectedly had jury duty today and was not able to make the meeting for the housing voucher presentation but we will reschedule.

#### **Announcements/Other Business-**

Elaine McIlroy spoke more about the property management issues. The Wellfleet Housing Authority gives projects over to developers who then contract with a property management company. The housing authority has been told by management that if a tenant comes to them and states they are having an issue, which the management company isn’t doing anything about, that the housing authority has no rights to step in and there is nothing they can do, which puts the housing authority in a tight position. They have tenants that are frustrated with the housing authority because of this.

Vicki commented that while legally the HA has no role that she hoped that the management company would be more responsive to these issues. Paul commented that there must be other public funders involved in the project and he suggested contacting them as they have an interest in whether properties are being managed correctly.

Meeting adjourned 9:10 a.m.

There were no enclosures.