

**Planning & Development Committee Meeting
Minutes of February 28, 2011
City Council Chambers – 7:15 p.m.
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center**

ALDERMEN PRESENT: (J. Grover), D. Holmes, L. Jean-Baptiste, A. Rainey,
D. Wilson, M. Wynne

STAFF PRESENT: W. Bobkiewicz, G. Farrar, S. Flax, S. Griffin, M. Lyons,
D. Marino, B. Newman, M. Poole,

PRESIDING OFFICIAL: Ald. Jean-Baptiste

DECLARATION OF QUORUM

A quorum being present, Chair Jean-Baptiste called the meeting to order at 7:55 p.m.

APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 14, 2011 MEETING MINUTES

Ald. Holmes moved approval, seconded by Ald. Wilson.

The minutes of the February 14, 2011 meeting were approved unanimously, 5-0.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

(P1) Approval of Interfaith Housing Center of the Northern Suburbs Grant Renewal for \$25,000 for Continuation of the Evanston Foreclosure Prevention Program

Staff in the Community and Economic Development Department recommend renewal of the grant to the Interfaith Housing Center of the Northern Suburbs of \$25,000 to provide continuation of the Evanston Foreclosure Prevention Program. The renewed grant will run from Feb. 1, 2011 through Jan. 31, 2012. The source for funding is the Affordable Housing Fund.

For Action

Ald. Holmes moved approval, seconded by Ald. Wilson.

Ald. Rainey requested an update of the number of clients and results of their cases.

Ms. Flax, Housing and Grants Administrator for the City of Evanston, introduced Jasmine Brewer, Director of the Evanston Foreclosure Prevention Program, who reported that the counseling program has served 39 households in the past year, just under its goal of 45. She reported that 15 cases have been successfully resolved, 10-12 are still open, and 12 have been unsuccessful due to factors such as the clients were too late in the foreclosure process, they did not submit the necessary documents in time to receive modification or refinancing, or they simply cannot afford their homes. Ald. Holmes acknowledged that outreach is difficult because many people do not want to come to the Civic Center with their problem nor do they want to discuss it in a group or community workshop, or they may not trust the organization, as there are many

dishonest organizations claiming to help people on the verge of foreclosure. She added that the organizations must continue to educate the public about their options.

Ms. Brewer noted that even though the number of successful cases is small, these options were not available a few years ago: she has had 24 loan modifications in the past year whereas in prior years she would have waited months just to hear whether a loan modification was feasible for a client. She agreed that there is a need for more education.

The Committee voted unanimously 5-0 to recommend approval of the \$25,000 grant to continue the Evanston Foreclosure Prevention Program.

(P2) Approval of Homeless Management Information System Funding (HMIS)

The Housing Commission and staff recommend approval of the renewal for the federally required Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) grant in the amount of \$11,000.00. The grant period is January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011. HMIS is used to track clients of programs that assist the homeless and prevent homelessness. Connections for the Homeless manages the HMIS. The source for funding is the Affordable Housing Fund. The City has provided this matching grant from the Affordable Housing Fund for the last four years totaling \$43,070. The \$11,000 grant from the City's Affordable Housing Fund leverages significant federal funds for needed services in our community.

For Action

Ald. Rainey moved approval, seconded by Ald. Wynne.

Ald. Rainey requested a report on the prevention of homelessness to gauge the success of the program.

Ms. Flax said she would get the statistics of clients served by the HPRP program, which is a preventative program which assists rental residents with rent and utilities payments. She explained that the HMIS program places clients in permanent supportive housing.

Mr. Paul Selden, Executive Director of Connections for the Homeless, the organization which manages HMIS, said he will re-send the report which shows that they have helped approximately 100 clients: 55-60 in the homelessness prevention program (HMIS) and 35-40 in the rapid re-housing program for the homeless (HPRP), adding that the report breaks down the clients by ward.

The Committee voted unanimously 5-0 to recommend approval of the \$11,000 grant.

(P3) Ordinance 23-O-11: Removal of Pawnbroker as an Allowable Use in the C1 Commercial District

Plan Commission and staff recommend approval of a zoning text amendment that would remove Pawnbroker as an allowable use in the C1 Commercial District, and thus as an allowed use in the City of Evanston.

For Introduction

Ald. Rainey moved approval, seconded by Ald. Wynne.

Ald. Holmes asked how the error in reporting of one pawnbroker affects the proposed ordinance, to which Mr. Griffin, the Director of the Community & Economic Development Department replied that since it is in existence at the time the ordinance would be passed, it is recognized as a legal non-conforming permitted use, but would not be permitted to expand.

On the advice of Mr. Farrar, Corporation Counsel for the City of Evanston, Ald. Rainey moved to amend Ordinance 23-O-11 to reduce the number of existing pawnbroker licenses from two to one, seconded by Ald. Wynne.

Ald. Rainey noted that the existing pawnshop has not caused problems for its adjacent residential neighbors.

Ald. Rainey moved to approve the Ordinance as amended, seconded by Ald. Holmes.

The Committee voted unanimously 5-0 to recommend approval of Ordinance 23-O-11 as amended.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

There were no items for discussion.

COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Bobbie Newman