MEETING MINUTES
HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACT COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, October 15, 2013 7:30 P.M.
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, Room 2404


Members Absent: A. Hansen, J. Vlahogiannis

Staff Present: S. Flax

Presiding Member: Ald. Rainey, Chair

Declaration of Quorum
There being a quorum, Chairman Rainey called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM.

Approval of Meeting Minutes of July 16, September 5, 10, 18 and 24, 2013
Ald. Burrus moved approval of the minutes of the July 16, September 5, 10, 18 and 24, 2013 meetings; Ald. Wilson seconded the motion; the minutes were approved unanimously. Ald. Rainey noted for the record that the minutes totaled 47 pages and recognized Bobbie Newman, who took minutes for the four meetings in September.

Public Input on the draft 2014 Action Plan and the estimated 2014 CDBG Allocations
Ald. Rainey opened the floor for input on the draft Action Plan and invited Jordan Goldberg to speak. Mr. Goldberg declined comment on the plan. He explained that he was an Evanston resident and was interested in getting involved in civic affairs and was attending different committee meetings to find out about their work. He found the work of the committee to be interesting and important. Ald. Rainey outlined the responsibilities of the committee and staff offered to provide additional information about how to apply to serve on a committee or commission.

Committee consideration of the draft 2014 Action Plan and vote to recommend approval of that plan to City Council
Staff noted that 2014 CDBG planning was based on a grant of $1,500,000, which is approximately 10% less than received in 2013. HUD field office staff was furloughed in the partial government shutdown and there were no indications of when a 2014 budget would be passed. Staff noted that implementation of the new HOME Rule on July 24, 2013 resulted in pushing the application for HOOME funds into 2014; this required an amendment to the City’s 2013 Action Plan. The new HOME rule includes more rigorous capacity requirements for developers and CHDOs, additional compliance and revisions to HOME policies and procedures. If grant estimates differ from actuals by more than 10%, the City would be required to amend its plan, as was done in 2013 because ESG grant was about 24% less than estimated.
Ald. Wilson moved that the committee recommend approval of the draft 2014 Action Plan to City Council; Ms. Sanke seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

**Staff Reports**

Staff reported on a multi-family rehab of an 18-unit, three building rental property in the south NRSA that had been cited for code violations. The building was one of the biggest problems in the neighborhood but the current owners made substantial improvements and it is now a stable property with primarily very low and low income tenants, many with children. Rents are lower than the current Fair Market Rent to be affordable to households below 50% AMI. Correction of the code violations will include lead paint mitigation and asbestos removal, which adds significantly to the project cost. The project is being evaluated for a forgivable loan through CDBG Housing Rehab with affordability restrictions similar to the HOME program because operating revenues will not support additional debt. The housing rehab program has not been meeting its goals for multi-family rehab, in part because interest rates are low enough that property owners are unwilling to take on both the debt and the income restrictions under the current program. Experience with this project would be used to evaluate program structure going forward, including for the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan that would be developed in 2014. Committee members expressed support for, and requested updates on, the project.

Staff noted that landlord-tenant workshops that are part of the City’s ongoing education program working with Open Communities, would include information on the newly effective change to the Cook County human rights ordinance that prohibits discrimination based on source of income, making it illegal for a property owner to deny to rent to a household with a housing choice voucher. Ald. Rainey asked about outreach to property owners and requested that staff provide information about future trainings to committee members.

**Other**

Ald. Rainey informed the committee that Bob Roy, former executive director of the Evanston Community Defender (now Moran Center for Youth Advocacy), passed away today and recognized his tireless work on behalf of Evanston youth, including his many interactions with the committee relating to that work. Evanston had lost two of its best legal minds and strongest advocates for the needs of low income people that year, as Bill Kolen, an attorney with LAF who headed the Evanston office for many years, passed away in June.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah K. Flax
Housing & Grants Administrator, Community Development Department