

**EVANSTON HOUSING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
November 20, 2008**

**Present:** Susan Munro, Chair, Tim Angell, Carol Balkcom, Eric Beauchamp, Brooks Harding, Bruce Nelson, Joanne Zolomij  
**Absent:** Richard Mosley  
**Staff:** Donna Spicuzza, Housing Planner

**I. The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm with a quorum present. The Minutes of the October 16, 2008 meeting were approved 6– 0.**

**II. Communications**

- Members received an update of foreclosure information and activity that was sent to the Planning and Development Committee for November 24
- Members discussed information on Affordable Housing Month and plans for a Proclamation at the December 8 Council Meeting. The chair agreed to work with staff on a letter to the editor or a news release on affordable needs and activities. Other related City activities were discussed in conjunction with Agenda Item III
- Members reviewed the report on Affordable Housing Fund income and expenses and related 2009/10 budget material

**III. Consideration of Funding Needs of Affordable Ownership Projects**

Citizen's Lighthouse Community Land Trust – 2212 Washington  
Evanston Community Development Association – 736-738 Washington  
Reba Place Development Corporation – 602 Mulford  
Econ Development Corporation – 241 Callan

Members discussed a staff memo regarding HOME-assisted ownership developments with unsold units. Staff plans to meet with developers and their lenders to discuss project status, plans for the next six months and possible City involvement in loan modifications. Ms. Spicuzza reported that some type of interest subsidy is the most likely form of additional City assistance. She also noted staff is considering paying for display advertising tied in with Open Houses for all the developments, planning a Housing Fair in early 2009 and providing \$15,000 in downpayment assistance to purchasers if needed. Members discussed other ideas, including a bus tour of the available developments, and developers of the affected projects discussed the difficulties potential purchasers are facing in today's market.

Members were in favor of the City providing assistance and additional funding to help keep the projects afloat and acknowledged that time was critical since construction loans are coming due. Ms. Spicuzza said a recommendation would be presented to the Planning and Development Committee and City Council at the next meeting, December 8, which is the last meeting before the end of the year. Mr. Beauchamp also said he would continue to work with the developers on the MLS listings and on marketing strategies.

**IV. Discussion of Pending HOME Fund Request from Over the Rainbow Association for Rehab of Hill Arboretum, 2040 Brown**

Ms. Spicuzza said that the organization had applied for CDBG funds in the fall for kitchen and heating improvements but staff determined that HOME funds would be an eligible and more appropriate funding source. She said that the scope of rehab work expanded because all code violations and other short term rehab needs should be addressed in this application since additional HOME funding could not be used during the 5 year affordability period. She said the

HOME application was not completed yet, but she wanted to present it to the Commission so they could discuss the need for funding in the form of a grant rather than a loan.

Eric Huffman and Leo Kirwan from Over the Rainbow Association provided information on their organization and apartment building at 2040 Brown. Mr. Kirwan described the need for fully accessible and adaptable housing for people with disabilities so they can live as independently as possible. Mr. Huffman presented information on their proposed request and their operating budget. Additional funding would be requested for tuckpointing and an engineering study to analyze a soil settlement problem. The total request would be \$375,575. Members asked questions about the building and funding needs and indicated their support for their request to receive a HOME grant for the necessary repairs. The complete application will be presented to the Commission in December for a recommendation to the Planning and Development Committee.

**V. Discussion of Comprehensive Affordable Housing Plan Task Force**

Members discussed the Planning and Development Committee's opposition to the Commission's proposal to use affordable housing funds for a task force facilitator and consultant to help write the Comprehensive Affordable Housing Plan. Ms. Munro suggested that the Commission convene the Task Force with volunteer facilitation from one of the members. Members discussed this and other alternatives and agreed the Task Force should start meeting.

**VI. Public Comment**

Suzanne Carlson commented that when the City Council recently approved the Climate Action Plan they indicated their satisfaction with the fact that the Plan was prepared without using a consultant.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Spicuzza  
Housing Planner