



APPROVED
MEETING MINUTES

AFFORDABLE HOUSING STEERING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, October 16, 2019, 7:00 P.M.
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, Room G300

Present: Chair Michael Roane, Corina Boeckeler, Stephanie Gerberding, Stephanie Murray, Uri Pachter, Christopher Rothwell

Absent: Ald. Eleanor Revelle, Ellen Cushing, Sarah Delgado, Rodney Orr, Timothy Stroh

Staff: Sarah Flax, Housing and Grants Manager, Marion Johnson, Housing Intern, Quentin Crane, VISTA Housing Associate

Guest speakers: Tom Lenz and Wendy Siegel, Millennia Consulting

Call to Order

Chair Roane called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM with a quorum present. He welcomed Stephanie Gerberding to the committee, and asked her to tell the committee about herself.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: September 18, 2019

Stephanie Murray moved approval of the minutes as presented, Chris Rothwell seconded the motion; minutes were approved unanimously.

Community Outreach & Engagement Planning

Chair Roane opened by asking each committee member to commit to completing one interview before the next committee meeting so any additional refinements could be made at the next meeting.

Tom Lentz, Millennia Consulting recapped the community engagement goals agreed to at the September meeting, the people/groups targeted by the outreach, and the strategies that would be used to engage them in discussion about affordable housing needs and potential ways to address them.

Mr Lentz reviewed the discussion guides and noted that Ellen Cushing was unable to be at the meeting, but had suggested that the second question be reframed as a two-part question, asking if the individual being interviewed had experienced any issues finding housing that met their needs, followed by asking if they know anyone who had difficulty finding housing. Following discussion, the committee agreed to this change. Millennia will update both the individual and small group discussion guides to reflect this.

Staff explained the changes to the Housing Affordability Discussion openers and how each was tailored for a different audience (e.g. housing stakeholders, people not

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involved in housing issues, renters, owners). Staff noted that the average rent numbers were from MLS data of actual rentals over the last two years that were provided by Tim Stroh. Mr. Stroh was not able to attend the meeting, but had noted that when interviewing people familiar with Evanston's housing market, such as realtors and property managers, it was important to provide the source of the rent and sale price information, as they would likely question any number if the source were not provided. Mr. Pachter noted that having different ways of framing the affordable housing need was useful and recommended that the "statistic-free version" be put at the top of the page. The committee agreed that the discussion openers would be useful tools for one-on-one interviews and small group discussions. Mr. Lenz and Mr. Pachter role played setting up a meeting with an interviewee. Mr. Lenz noted important details that Mr. Pachter provided, like giving the prospect a time commitment.

The committee reviewed the draft Housing Solutions documents developed by Ms. Boeckeler, Mr. Rothwell and Ms. Johnson. The benefits of the simpler 8.5 x 11 version vs. the more comprehensive 11 x 17 version were discussed. The committee agreed on having an 8.5 x 11 double-sided piece with the additional solutions from the 11 x 17 draft on the back side of the 8.5 x 11 single-sided document. The committee also reviewed and discussed two flyers with additional information that could be used. Mr. Roane provided a piece that his company had used in meetings with the public in Grand Rapids to explain the relationship between housing costs, household size and incomes. Ms. Johnson explained the piece that she was working on that provided some of the same information in a different format. The committee felt as two-sided flyer would be a useful tool to explain this complex information.

Staff will finalize both documents for the committee. Additional details include identifying the Affordable Housing Steering Committee on the flyers and providing the website where people could find more information.

Ms. Siegel demonstrated how to use the Survey Monkey tools to report on individual interviews and small group discussions. The list of potential housing solutions will be revised to match the Housing Solutions handout. Ms. Gerberding suggested that demographics be included in the reporting. The committee discussed the pros and cons of asking for this information to ensure that input from all segments of the community is obtained via the outreach. Following discussion, it was agreed that this could be accomplished by identifying demographic information in the list of prospects where possible, and prioritizing people interviewed in this phase to ensure a representative cross section of Evanston residents and stakeholders.

Mr. Lenz asked committee members to review the list of prospects and identify people or groups that each is willing to interview. Staff compiled their responses and will update the spreadsheet, and also put columns to identify the race/ethnicity and geography/ward for individuals and groups for review by the committee at the next meeting, when interview assignments will be finalized.

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Public Comment

Sue Loellbach from Connections for the Homeless reiterated the importance of reaching all segments of the community and that capturing information on the race/ethnicity of people being interviewed in addition to what part of Evanston they are from should be captured in the interviews to ensure all segments of Evanston residents and stakeholders are reached.

New/Old Business

November 13 at 7 PM was confirmed as the next meeting date.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, Mr. Pachter moved to adjourn at 8:55 PM, Ms. Murray seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah K. Flax, Housing and Grants Manager