



**APPROVED**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

### **HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACT COMMITTEE**

Tuesday, March 21, 2017

7:00 P.M.

Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, Room 2402

Members Present: Ald. Rainey, Ald. Braithwaite, Ald. Holmes, Ald. Wilson, C. Goddard, G. Mackey, M. Miro, S. Jones, J. Sanke

Members Absent: Ald. Miller

Presiding Member: Ald. Rainey, Committee Chair

Staff: S. Flax

#### **Call to Order / Declaration of Quorum**

Chair Rainey declared a quorum of the Housing and Community Development Act Committee and called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

#### **Approval of Meeting Minutes for November 15, 2016**

Ald. Wilson moved approval of the minutes as presented, Ald. Holmes seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

#### **Public Input on the Draft 2016 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)**

Chair Rainey opened the floor for input on the draft 2016 CAPER and asked if any of the people in attendance wished to comment. None wished to comment on the CAPER, but did want to comment on a development project proposed for the corner of Dempster and Pitner. Ald. Rainey requested that comments unrelated to the CAPER be held until agenda item VI. Other Public Comment and asked staff to summarize any comments received in writing on the CAPER for the committee.

Staff distributed copies of input received from Judy Malik in two emails on March 16 and 17, 2017. Ms. Malik claimed that African-Americans are not receiving assistance to enable them to continue to live in Evanston while immigrants and refugees are being welcomed. It was surmised that this is based on the City's Welcome City Ordinance 156-O-16, which states that the City welcomes diversity and believes all individuals living in or visiting Evanston should be treated fairly and with respect and dignity and the Refugee Task Force, made up of staff from the City, federal resettlement agencies, Evanston's school districts, Northwestern University and other non-profits that was convened by the City to coordinate efforts to assist approximately 70 families that have been placed in Evanston through the federal refugee program. It was noted that the City lacks the resources to address all needs, but continues to strive to address the needs of low and moderate income Black/African-American residents, as can be seen in section CR-10 – Racial and Ethnic composition of families assisted, of the CAPER.

Black/African-American residents comprise 59% of people assisted with CDBG, 60% of people assisted with HOME, and 65% of people assisted with ESG. Ms. Malik's email included a comment that Alderman Wilson did not file a case against Hirsch Management on her behalf. Alderman Wilson responded to this, informing the committee that at the request of a resident of his ward who is a friend of Ms. Malik's, he worked with Open Communities, with whom the City contracts for Landlord-Tenant services, to get her full security deposit refunded by Hirsch Management in addition to interest that had been refunded. He did not offer to file a case on her behalf and there were no grounds for any case. Ald. Rainey commended Ald. Wilson for resolving this issue on behalf of Ms. Malik and noted that no additional action was needed.

Chair Rainey again asked the people present if they wished to provide input on the CAPER and hearing none, closed the public comment period.

**Vote to recommend Approval of CAPER by City Council at March 27, 2017 Meeting**

Ald. Holmes moved that the committee recommend approval of the draft 2016 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report to City Council at the March 27 meeting, Ald. Braithwaite seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

**Request for Housing Opportunity Development Corporation for Housing Rehab Assistance for 743 Brummel Street, a 13-unit Affordable Rental Project**

Ald. Rainey asked staff for a summary of the project request. Staff described Housing Opportunity Development Corporation's (HODC) need to replace the roof of its 13-unit affordable rental building at the corner of Brummel Street and Elmwood Avenue and recommended a \$50,000 rehab loan from the City's Housing Rehab program. In addition to the roof, HODC wants to install security cameras to enhance the safety and security of residents and the neighborhood. The request is similar to Over the Rainbow's request for help to replace their failed sewer lateral in 2016, as it is an important repair to maintain the structural integrity of the building but does not fit comprehensive rehab requirements for HOME funding. Because all units are rented at affordable rates to households with incomes  $\leq$  80% of the area median (AMI), a deferred loan, payable in full if the property is sold or ceases to be maintained as affordable housing, is recommended because the building's cash flow cannot support additional debt service when all units are affordable  $\leq$  80% of AMI. This property is an important affordable housing project acquired and rehabbed in part with City HOME funds in 1998. HODC has maintained it as affordable housing beyond the requirements of that funding and intends to maintain all units for households  $\leq$  80% of AMI. HODC would be required to follow Davis-Bacon prevailing wages because the building has more than eight units and HODC has the experience to handle this and other federal requirements. Rose Russo, Asset Management Director at HODC, was introduced to answer any questions from the committee.

Questions included the rationale for security cameras; Ms. Russo cited the benefits of the security cameras at their facility at 319 Dempster and explained that two recent cases of fly dumping at 743 Brummel that could have been resolved with security

cameras, which can be monitored remotely by staff. Ald. Rainey and Mr. Mackey asked if HODC had plans for ongoing maintenance including sprucing up the interior hallways and installing new mailboxes and door buzzers. Ms. Russo responded that following roof replacement, they planned to paint apartments, install new front doors, mailboxes and door buzzers. Ald. Rainey thanked her for that information and noted that HODC was very responsible in maintaining the property overall.

Ald. Holmes moved approval of HODC's request for a \$50,000 loan, Ald. Wilson seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

### **Other Public Comment**

Ald. Rainey opened the floor for public comment on items not on the meeting agenda, noting the importance of community forums for topics that impact neighborhoods. Jared Davis, 2303 Dempster Street, read a prepared statement about his and other neighbors' support for the City's good intentions to be a social change leader but voiced concerns with a 16-unit affordable housing project located at the corner of Dempster Street and Pitner Avenue proposed by the City. These include the size of the project, growing residential congestion in the area, safety concerns because Dempster Street is a major truck route and there are blind corners, parking issues, and strain that would be placed on trash and recycling services. Neighbors were made aware of this plan at the 2nd Ward meeting on March 9 and wanted opportunity to voice these concerns. The written statement is appended.

Ald. Rainey responded that this is not a City of Evanston project and asked staff to provide background. Staff explained that Housing Opportunities for Women (HOW) a non-profit that provides supportive housing and services primarily to low income women with children, has applied to the Illinois Housing Development Authority for funding for this project to address growing referrals of residents with children in Evanston schools who are homeless or couch surfing because they are unable to afford housing for their families. The project was submitted for zoning review and is compliant with the site's R-4 zoning, so can be built there, pending receipt of funding. Ald. Braithwaite explained that a meeting about the project was held for neighbors at Erie Health Center on February 23 and another meeting is scheduled for April 25 to provide more information and to respond to questions and concerns raised at the first meeting. An announcement was made at the March 9 ward meeting to make more residents aware of the April 25 meeting.

Discussion about the site's zoning and the deteriorated condition of the single family house on the property followed. In response to a question if HOW owns the site, staff responded that the City does not have that information, however, applications for funding to IHDA require the developer have site control in order to be considered. Often developers have a contract or option to purchase contingent upon funding. Ald. Rainey suggested that Mr. Davis contact HOW directly to get information in advance of the April 25 meeting.

**Staff Reports**

Staff informed the committee that there is no information on the status of the 2017 federal budget. The government is operating under a continuing resolution (CR) that expires on April 28. If a budget is not approved by that date, a partial shut-down of the federal government would result. More attention was being given to the President's 2018 budget, which includes dramatic cuts to domestic spending, including elimination of the CDBG and HOME programs. Historically, CDBG especially has had strong bipartisan support and CDBG and HOME were at level funding in both the Senate and House's bills under consideration by the respective appropriations committees or subcommittees. Staff will continue to monitor information on both the 2017 and 2018 budgets and would provide updates to the committee.

Staff provided the 2017 meeting schedule to committee members, noting that additional meetings may be cancelled if no agenda items require action by the committee and pending information about 2017 funding

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Rainey called for a motion to adjourn. Ald. Braithwaite moved adjournment, J. Sanke seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah K. Flax  
Housing and Grants Administrator

**NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH**  
**Block P.A.R.T.Y.**

Friday, March 10, 2017

To: The City of Evanston Housing and Community Development Act Committee

From: The residents of the immediate area impacted by the recent "Affordable Housing" planned for 1305 Dempster St., powered in part by CDBG funding.

My name is Jared Davis, I live at 2303 Dempster St. (corner of Dempster & Pitner).

During last week's 2nd ward meeting, the City revealed its plans to construct a sixteen (16) unit, affordable housing complex at the (northeast) corner of Dempster and Pitner.

We applaud this project by the City and its very good intentions and we fully support and will contribute to the City and its efforts to become that social change leader in our state and our country!

However, we do not fully support the decision the City has made to pursue this particular project in our neighborhood.

Some of the obvious reasons we oppose this project;

- The overall growing residential congestion of our block and streets.
- Dempster St. being a major truck and tourist (mainly NU) way-finding route, in and out of the city, adds to the residential traffic congestion and the pollution (air pollution / noise pollution) that our block is already burdened with.
- The West End Industrial district (rightfully so) has its "gateway" at the doors to our block.
- The already overcrowded or at capacity on-street parking problems on our block.
- The existing need for better traffic control at the adjacent, accident prone intersections, (Dempster / Pitner & Dempster / Hartrey by the car wash).
- This project will certainly bring more vehicular and foot traffic to a dense & dangerous area where even some of our own aldermen have experienced the 1st hand dangers of the sometimes blind intersection.
- Sixteen more **families**, not just residents, worth of garbage and recycling added to our block with still only one day of trash and recycling pick up.
- traffic congestion from our high school, two elementary schools and 1 middle school.
- two major employers (Districts 65 & 202).
- a major health center.
- ...just to name a few issues this project faces and presents to our block.

We kindly ask that you consider a different location for this seemingly admirable venture.

Best Regards,

Jared Davis  
2303 Dempster St.  
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