

**CITY OF
ASHLAND**
ASHLAND HOUSING COMMISSION
MINUTES
JULY 26, 2007

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Carol Voisin called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. at the Community Development and Engineering Services Building, 51 Winburn Way, Ashland, OR 97520.

Commissioners Present:	SOU Liaison: Sunny Lindley, Absent
Carol Voisin, Vice Chair	
Steve Hauck	Council Liaison: Alice Hardesty, Absent
Regina Ayars	
Bill Smith	Staff Present::
Aaron Benjamin	Brandon Goldman, Housing Specialist
Absent Members:	Sue Yates, Executive Secretary
Richard Billin	
Bill Street	

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Hauck/Benjamin m/s to approve the minutes of the June 28, 2007 meeting. Voice Vote: Approved

PUBLIC FORUM

No one came forth to speak.

Ayars said she talked with Eva Cooley, a citizen, who had some ideas about accessory residential units in Quiet Village in conjunction with weatherization. She thought it would increase the value of the homes and bring in additional revenue for families trying to buy homes.

REPORTS AND UPDATES

Subcommittee Report

Education – No meeting/no report

Finance – See Housing Trust Fund Development below.

Land Use – They discussed:

- 1) Faith Street Tabernacle project and how it first came forward with multi-family units and then eventually came back with nine single family units.
- 2) Upgrading existing SOU owned homes for faculty members to purchase.
- 3) Clay Street Park Acquisition – Decided to go out for Request for Qualification to affordable housing providers.

Liaison Reports

Council Goals – Goldman said he forwarded the Housing Commission’s priority goals along with a letter he wrote to the Council. Those goals included:

- 1) Establishment of a housing trust fund.
- 2) Looking at City owned property for employer-assisted housing for City employees.
- 3) Review changes to the annexation ordinance.

The final Council goal list is included in this month’s packet.

Parks – No report.

Schools – No report.

Planning – No report.

Tripartite – No report.

HOUSING TRUST FUND DEVELOPMENT

Goldman said the Finance subcommittee has taken the lead on developing the housing trust fund. There is a memo from Goldman to the Housing Commission in the packet outlining the work the Finance subcommittee has done. They are looking at a 20 month timeline to establish a housing trust fund. The mission has been defined.

Goldman reviewed each section of the memo with the Commission. He said the “Purpose” statement is broad and can be revised at a later date. The “Eligible Applicants” is meant to be broadly inclusive.

Benjamin wondered if the “Eligible Applicants” section is responsive or proactive. With this generic framework, we’ll have to wait for non-profits to come to us for funding. Or, are we going to go to them? He is inclined to keep the plan as flexible as possible. He would like, in anticipation of establishing the housing trust fund, to start asking the non-profits to start thinking about the projects they could do and what their needs will be in the next 18 months, before casting the housing trust fund in concrete. Ask them for a budget. Try to have two to three organizations in mind. Hauck agreed we need to invite the non-profits and ask them to participate and explain their funding needs in the near future perhaps in the format of a work session a public hearing. Goldman said we have a list of 20 individuals that are interested (from the survey).

Guidelines

It’s possible these could be prioritized. Goldman said the timeline now is defining the uses. The next section is establishing an award process and further down the list is the selection criteria where a point value could be given to projects.

The Commissioners discussed the item under Guidelines: “Developments that include affordable units for the disabled and the homeless.” Smith felt this was an awfully broad statement and if we are trying to accomplish creation of affordable housing and workforce housing, this seems outside the scope of the housing trust fund and more like a social service. Benjamin is concerned the Guidelines attempt to do all things for all people. Voisin would like to keep the Guidelines broad and open and leave the statement in the Guidelines. Hauck believes housing is for the citizens of Ashland, whoever they are, though he would like to have priorities. He doesn’t want to take something off the list only to find it is needed. Benjamin would like the Guidelines initially to be void of anything that would create political opposition.

Eligible Activities

What is capacity building? Hauck explained it is where an organization doesn’t have the expertise available to do a specific part of the project. For example, someone might be needed with expertise in financing.

Voisin said the Finance Committee wanted to prioritize everything that is directly related to increasing affordable housing, but including the others, just in case.

Ayars thought that “Transitional and Emergency Housing” should add at the end of the sentence, “through an established program to move people toward self-sufficiency.

Ayars asked if “Conservation of Energy” was a stretch. Goldman said the intention is that if it is an affordable housing development that contains green technologies, that it would have a preference over one that did not. Conservation should be encouraged because it will lower the residents housing costs.

The Finance subcommittee wanted the full commission to evaluate the work done so far on the housing trust fund and make a recommendation as to whether or not a special study session would be in order. The Commissioners were satisfied with the language with the few changes as noted above. Goldman will look at a time in early September for a special study session.

CLAY STREET PARK AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

Goldman reported the City property acquired a 2.3 acre parcel in 2006 with Parks funds. Of that, 14,000 square feet was peeled off (map in packet) that could be used for Work Force Housing. One hundred twenty five thousand dollars was put toward the purchase of that area from the future proceeds of Strawberry Lane. The property has not yet been subdivided. The housing provider will have to go through a subdivision process to create five lots for each of the units and one lot for their open space. The City is looking for a developer. The Land Use subcommittee talked about sending out a Request for Qualifications. Staff is recommending the Housing Commission direct them to write up the RFQ, to form an ad hoc review committee and appoint a Housing Commission member to the committee. Goldman has contacted the Parks Dept. about appointing a Parks Commissioner to the ad hoc review committee. The Parks Commission will review it and get back to Goldman. The Housing Commission would be the final decision-maker to make a recommendation to the Council.

Hauck/Smith m/s to direct Staff to develop an RFQ to send to affordable housing providers and initiate the formation of the ad hoc review committee. Voice Vote: Everyone favored the motion and it carried unanimously. Ayars and Hauck expressed an interest in serving on the ad hoc review committee.

RENTAL NEEDS ANALYSIS REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

At the last meeting the Housing Commission indicated they wanted an analysis of the Rental Needs Analysis. Questions have been raised by Planning Commissioners over the validity, strengths and weaknesses of the report, so the Housing Commission wanted an opportunity to talk about it in more detail. Goldman said the Rental Needs Analysis can be viewed as a factual

based document and the facts are limited because there is no comprehensive rental data collection entity in the Rogue Valley. That is not necessarily a failing of the Rental Needs Analysis, but a failing we are in a market that is not large enough to support a data collection service. Goldman summarized his memo dated July 26, 2007 regarding Rental Needs Analysis Review.

Discussion Points

- Medford has a rental registry (voluntary). There is a charge for it. The Fire Department would see a value because each unit would be delineated.
- Cell phone research – Recent research is showing only eight percent of the population has only a cell phone. The single largest group owning only a cell phone is the Baby Boomers.
- The analysis could have been improved by better integrating the Buildable Lands Inventory information.
- If the analysis has value, we need to be proactive about talking to the key people we want to influence.
- This is the only data and survey information we have for the whole area. At least this is something on paper—more than a “gut” feeling.
- Goldman’s analysis answers some of the concerns that have been expressed.
- Can it be tied to the condo conversion that this is a memo they should refer to before deciding on the condo conversion?

The memo will be forwarded to the Council in advance of the condo conversion hearing with a memo expressing the soundness in the Rental Needs Analysis and reaffirming the Housing Commission’s support of the condo conversion. **Hauck/Voisin m/s to reiterate their support for the condo conversion ordinance as written. Voice Vote: Unanimously approved.**

The condo conversion is scheduled for August 21st at the Council. Voisin, Smith, Ayars, Hauck and Benjamin all plan to attend the meeting. Street will not be there.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

August Meeting – Housing Commission Goals

Land Use Ordinance Changes – Hope to bring to Land Use subcommittee – there are a couple of components that relate to housing. The Planning Commission public hearing is scheduled for September 11th.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

Regular meeting – August 30th

Special Study Session in September – Housing trust fund discussion

Fair Housing Training geared to property owners and tenants – August 22nd, live on RVTV from the Medford Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by,
Susan Yates, Executive Secretary*