

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMISSIONERS
OF RICHMOND REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY
HELD IN THE OFFICES OF RRHA
901 CHAMBERLAYNE PARKWAY, RICHMOND, VIRGINIA
ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2009

In Attendance:

Board of Commissioners

Elliott M. Harrigan, Chairman
Marilyn B. Olds, Vice Chairman
J. Russell Parker, III
Guenet M. N, Beshah, Esq.
Cindy A. Mims
James A. Sties

RRHA Staff

Anthony Scott, Executive Director

Chairman Elliott M. Harrigan called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with *General Counsel M. Maxine Cholmondeley, Esq.* serving as Legal Counsel.

Minutes

The Minutes from the *January 21, 2009 Regular Board Meeting* were presented for approval.

1 Motion: (Mims/Olds) Move to adopt the Minutes from the January 21, 2009 Regular Board Meeting.

Motion Carried - Harrigan Abstained

Citizens Information Period

Three citizens addressed the Board during the Citizens Information Period.

Ms. Lillie Estes, a resident of Gilpin Court, was the first to address the Board. Ms. Ceonna Johnson, who was also scheduled to participate, granted her three minutes of time to Ms. Estes. Thus, Ms. Estes was permitted to speak for six minutes.

- Ms. Estes feels that a lot of mixed signals are coming out of the revitalization process. She would like the Commissioners to “reflect on what they individually and collectively hope to accomplish with the various revitalization projects that are going on.” She doesn’t see how the process as far as the residents are concerned meets the continuity process for the redevelopment process for the resident. Ms. Estes is seeing that “the process is being presented like a six-month marketing project absent the human element.”
- Ms. Estes objects to the Capacity Building Office (CBO) staff being called Relocation Specialists because it then seems that staff’s only goal is to

relocate the residents, not capacity build them. She is concerned with the gaps in delivery of human services.

- Ms. Estes reiterated her dissatisfaction with the handling of a burglary at her apartment. She feels that rules and regulations, policies and procedures, were not followed since she has a notation on her account that says no one is allowed to enter her apartment unless someone who has a name on her lease is present. It happened before the burglary and again after Ms. Estes' contact with RRHA. In addition, an order was put into the system that was not closed out. She is also unhappy with the fact that a maintenance worker was dismissed and then allowed to return to work on vacant apartments.
- If the CBO is going to deal with building the capacity of the residents, items like the telephone, fax machine, copier, and internet service need to be available for the residents' use to look for work. The telephone has been taken out of the CBO building due to misuse. Ms. Estes feels that staff should be assigned to make sure that abuses don't occur.
- Notices are not getting to the tenants in a timely manner.
- The City has a huge polarization problem.

Ms. Cora Hayes, a resident of Hillside, was the next person to speak.

- Ms. Hayes thanked Executive Director Anthony Scott for his part in moving the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among RRHA, HOMEWARD and Richmond Behavioral Health Authority (RBHA) forward to the signing. The MOU allows RRHA to be able to collaborate with RBHA and Homeward to provide housing to homeless persons under the "Local Preferences" provision of RRHA's Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy. Based on the availability of rental units, RRHA agrees to make available up to 150 rental units during the term of this MOU.
- Ms. Hayes stated that she was not speaking as a resident of public housing but as a representative of a grass roots organization called "A Society Without A Name" (ASWAN) Millennium Future-Present that represents all the homeless citizens in the City of Richmond.
- A member of the society has a 10-year old special needs child. She had purchased a home through RRHA but has been laid off after 16 years on her job. She has exhausted all of her savings and 401-K plan.
- This member applied to RRHA for housing, having been sent to RRHA by CARITAS. The unit she was shown was not fit for human habitation and the employee showing the unit was not customer friendly. When the member asked if there were other units available comparable to her bedroom size, she was told "no." As a result of the member's refusal to take the unit, she was placed back on the bottom of the waiting list. This has resulted in her family becoming homeless.

- Even though the member was coming from another homeless organization, no effort was made to find out if there were any other vacant units comparable to her bedroom size.
- Ms. Hayes also requested that the member be given special consideration since she came from another homeless organization and she has a special needs child.
- In addition, Ms. Hayes asked if the Public Housing Admissions and Occupancy Policy could be changed. The policy used to state that the prospective tenant could turn down three (3) units before being placed back at the bottom of the waiting list. The Policy now states that if a prospective tenant refuses the first unit, they are placed on the bottom of the waiting list. She is asking that it be changed back to the previous policy.

Ms. Candice L. Streett, Deputy Director of Housing at Virginia Supportive Housing (VSH), was the last to speak. VSH owns and manages four of the five Single Room Occupancy (SRO) building in Virginia. They also own and manage five small apartment buildings for families. They house individuals with traumatic brain injuries, HIV/AIDS, and mental disabilities in their group homes. Last year, RRHA worked with VSH in converting Housing Choice Vouchers to Project Based Vouchers. The Project Based Vouchers allowed VSH to institute rent increases which stabilized their cash flow and permitted them to keep the facility open. The Point in Time count done by HOMEWARD in January 2009 indicated an increase of 7.2% in the total homeless population. The largest single increase was in homeless single adults -- 742 in the City of Richmond. VSH had put in a request to RRHA for an additional twenty-one (21) Project Based Vouchers for the South Richmond SRO. RRHA responded that shortly it will be advertising a Request For Proposals (RFP) for Project Based Vouchers. Ms. Streett declared that VSH would be applying. Ms. Streett stated that her reason for appearing before the Board was to “acknowledge the RFP and RRHA’s willingness to partner in crafting housing solutions for the Metro regions most vulnerable citizens.” VSH would like to work with RRHA on future projects as well.

Committee Reports

Commissioner Harrigan requested that Board Committee Reports be presented.

Acting Deputy Executive Director of Finance Stacey Fayson delivered the *Administration and Finance* report. She reported that the Administration and Finance Committee met on February 11. Information was presented relating to housing assistance payments. There was discussion about the protocol for contract terms. The Procurement Manager presented the final draft of the ratification directive. The primary discussion concerned the implementation of an accounting standard that impacts how RRHA books

the liability related to post-retirement health-care benefits. There were concerns regarding the funding of this liability and the potential impact to our financial statement in terms of expense. This information was presented by Robert Sanford from Sanford Actuarial and Benefits as well as Mike Stevens from Clifton and Gunderson.

Deputy Executive Director of Affordable Housing John Hill provided the *Affordable Housing Report*. The Committee met on February 3.

- The Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) inspection showed that every single housing development (with the exception of two scores which are still outstanding) passed. Several passed with even higher scores than last year. Of the two outstanding scores, one building is a high-performing site and the other is expected to pass with a score above the required 60%.
- A Resident Advisory Board (RAB) has been established. There are five (5) members of the RAB. Any officer of the Resident Tenant Organization (RTO) is automatically a member of the RAB. The RAB was looking for Section 8 participation and has received some but are still looking for more. They are in the process of developing Bylaws for the group.

Commissioner Beshah asked about the violent crime statistics. Hal Hazelton, Chief of the RRHA Police Department, explained that the overall crime rate (which includes violent crime, non-violent crime, property crime, etc.) is 11% lower than last year. However, violent crime is up compared to this time last year. Commissioner Beshah asked what was being done in light of the higher violent crime numbers. Chief Hazelton reported that a Housing Impact Team (HIT) has been formed. It is a four-member unit, consisting of just RRHA police officers, handling quality-of-life issues and violent crime. It has been in effect for only four to five weeks but the effect has been very, very positive. Numbers will be provided at the next meeting.

Executive Director Anthony Scott provided the *Real Estate Committee Report* in Rodney Forte's, Deputy Executive Director of Community Revitalization, absence. The committee met earlier in the day. The committee reviewed the five (5) resolutions being presented. The bond policy was also discussed to provide some clear direction. There was some healthy debate concerning the PPEA policy. Also, on Resolution #2, an appraisal that was left out of that proposal had subsequently been provided to everyone.

Chairman's Remarks

Chairman Harrigan thanked the Commissioners for attending one or more of the public Master Plan meetings.

Executive Director's Comments

Mr. Anthony Scott stated that an Executive Summary had been included in the Board packet highlighting the activities for the past month. He also reported on the following items:

- The turnout at the public meetings for North Jackson Ward and Dove Court were good – approximately 100 for North Jackson Ward and 60 to 80 for Dove Court. The Mayor of Richmond and several Councilpersons attended the Dove Court meeting. Though a newspaper article made it seem like one of the Council members had a huge concern, the Councilperson's remarks lasted only about two minutes. RRHA will be able to address those issues with the community.
- An updated message regarding efforts to increase revenue and reduce expenses in reference to the budget had been sent to RRHA employees. The Board was provided with a copy.
- After meeting with Chairman Harrigan, it was decided to have the following work sessions:
 - o In March, there will be a presentation on the North Jackson Ward and Dove developments that have been submitted to the public
 - o In April, there will be a presentation on the annual Agency Plan
- Staff has been working on the Eminent Domain issue making sure the State legislators are educated in terms of how the pending constitutional amendment to Eminent Domain could impact the City of Richmond negatively. It was reported on February 18, 2009 that the amendment did fail in the Senate which means it will not pass this year.
- Six Students from the Martin Luther King Middle School came to RRHA for a Job Shadowing Day. One or two students followed staff members from Public Safety, Finance, Human Resources, Community Revitalization, or Section 8. It went well, with the students asking some insightful questions.

Commissioner Mims spoke about the signing of the MOU with RRHA, RBHA, and HOMEWARD. She related how wonderful and moving an experience it was to see five families, with a total of 18 children among them, get the keys to their new homes.

Chairman Harrigan spoke about providing revenue for other investments and how that relates to the opening of the Miller and Rhoades building.

RESOLUTIONS

Note: Resolutions 1 through 5 were handled as a block. The Real Estate Committee recommended approval of all five.

Agenda Item No. 1 –Resolution of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority Approving the Redevelopment Plan for the 25th Street/Nine Mile Road Redevelopment and Conservation Area.

(09-05) WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Richmond approved a budget authorizing the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) to prepare a blight study and redevelopment plan for the 25th Street/Nine Mile Road Redevelopment and Conservation Area; and

WHEREAS, RRHA has identified a portion of the 25th Street/Nine Mile Road Redevelopment and Conservation Area that is blighted and qualifies for designation as a redevelopment area; and

WHEREAS, RRHA has prepared a Redevelopment Plan for the 25th Street/Nine Mile Road Redevelopment and Conservation Area, setting forth a program of acquisition, clearance, and disposition for redevelopment in accordance with the land use recommendations of the City Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary in accordance with provisions of law that the Commissioners of RRHA consent to and approve said Redevelopment Plan;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Commissioners of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, that having duly reviewed and considered said Redevelopment Plan for the 25th Street/Nine Mile Road Redevelopment and Conservation Area dated February 2009, a copy of which is attached to and made a part of the minutes of this meeting, RRHA does hereby consent to and approve said Redevelopment Plan, and the Executive Director is hereby authorized and directed to submit said Redevelopment Plan for approval by City Council.

Agenda Item No. 2 – Resolution of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority Authorizing Acquisition Price for One (1) Parcel in the Jackson Place Redevelopment Area – 21 West Jackson Street.

(09-06) BE IT RESOLVED by the Commissioners of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority that based on full and careful appraisal of the property that the price recommended by the Executive Director for the acquisition of one (1) parcel in the Jackson Place Redevelopment Area be and hereby is accepted as the fully established and approved price for the acquisition of such parcel; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Executive Director, acting on behalf of RRHA, be and hereby is authorized to purchase 21 West Jackson Street, Block N-104, Parcel 11, at the said price.

Agenda Item No. 3 – Resolution of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority Authorizing Acquisition Price for One (1) Parcel in the North Jackson Ward Area – 11 East Charity Street.

(09-07) BE IT RESOLVED by the Commissioners of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) that based on full and careful appraisals of the property that the price recommended by the Executive Director for the acquisition of one (1) parcel in the North Jackson Ward Area be and hereby is accepted as the fully established and approved price for the acquisition of such parcel; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Executive Director, acting on behalf of RRHA, be and hereby is authorized to accept the signed option to purchase 11 East Charity Street, Block N-83, Parcel 6, at the said price.

Agenda Item No. 4 – Resolution of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority Authorizing Approval to File for Condemnation for Three (3) Parcels in the Carver/Newtowne-West Neighborhoods in Bloom Area – 1203-1205 Catherine Street, 1207-1209 Catherine Street and 1211 Catherine Street.

(09-08) BE IT RESOLVED by the Commissioners of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) that the Executive Director and counsel are hereby authorized and directed to institute condemnation proceedings for the acquisition of one three-unit occupied apartment building, one occupied detached apartment building and one vacant parcel located at 1203-1205 Catherine Street, Block N-517; Parcel 6, 1207-1209 Catherine Street, Block N-517; Parcel 5 and 1211 Catherine Street, Block N-517; Parcel 4 in the Carver/Newtowne-West Neighborhoods In Bloom (NIB) Revitalization Area and the Carver Redevelopment Area.

<u>Block/Parcel</u>	<u>Name of Owner/ Address of Property</u>
N-517/6	1203-1205 Catherine Street Leigh Rentals LLC
N-517/5	1207-1209 Catherine Street Leigh Rentals LLC
N-517/4	1211 Catherine Street Alfred J. Szumski Jr.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that prior to instituting eminent domain proceedings, staff is directed to avoid such proceedings if possible.

Agenda Item No. 5 – Resolution of the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority Authorizing Approval to Revise the PPEA Guidelines.

(09-09) WHEREAS, on January 16, 2008, the Board of Commissioners of Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (“RRHA”) adopted Guidelines in order to comply with the requirements of the Public Private Education Facilities and Infrastructure Act (“PPEA”); and

WHEREAS, the Code of Virginia requires that an entity using the PPEA must publish a notice (the “Notice”) announcing that the entity has accepted an unsolicited proposal for conceptual-phase review, and that the entity will, for the next 45 days, accept competing proposals; and

WHEREAS, the Guidelines adopted by RRHA require RRHA to publish the Notice once a week for 4 successive weeks in a local newspaper of general circulation in addition to the 45-day period required by the Code of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, RRHA desires to bring its Guidelines regarding the Notice in closer conformity with the Code of Virginia,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Commissioners of the

Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority that:

The Section III of the PPEA Guidelines is hereby amended so that publication of the Notice beyond the 45-day requirement of the Code of Virginia is not required.

Discussion

As concerns Resolution #1, Commissioner Beshah asked if it was still supported by the Church Hill Community. Anthony Scott responded, “yes.”

Commissioner Sties had two questions/concerns.

- *Concerning Resolution #5, can RRHA change the PPEA guidelines that are imposed on RRHA?* Mr. Scott responded that RRHA had a very specific guideline that was adopted for RRHA so that, in effect, RRHA is changing RRHA’s PPEA guidelines.
- *Concerning Resolution #4, Commissioner Sties supports the revitalization of the Carver neighborhood but would like to ensure that the condemning and demolishing of the houses be done with consideration for the people living there.* Denise Vice responded that RRHA is required to relocate any current tenants in the properties RRHA is looking to demolish. There are Federal guidelines that must be followed.

2 Motion: (Mims/Sties) Move to adopt Resolutions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Motion Carried – Harrigan Abstained

3 Motion: (Beshah/Mims) Move to adjourn.

Motion Carried Unanimously

There being no further business and upon unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

Chairman

Executive Director/Secretary-Treasurer