

**MINUTES  
CITY OF ST. CHARLES  
HOUSING COMMISSION  
THURSDAY, JUNE 29, 2023  
DENS A & B**

**Members Present:** Sean Baker, Louis Dries, Liz Eakins, Jeff Funke, John Glenn, Milupa King

**Members Absent:** Karrsten Goettel, David Pietryla

**Others Present:** Ellen Johnson, Planner

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**1. Call to Order**

Chair Funke called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**2. Roll Call**

Ms. Johnson called roll with six members present.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

**A motion was made by Mr. Dries and seconded by Ms. Eakins with a unanimous voice vote to approve the Agenda.**

**4. Approval of minutes from the January 5, 2023 meeting of the Housing Commission**

**A motion was made by Mr. Glenn and seconded by Mr. Dries with a unanimous voice vote to approve the January 5, 2023 meeting minutes.**

**5. Introduction of New Member**

Milupa King was introduced as a new Commissioner. Commissioners introduced themselves to Ms. King.

**6. Election of Officers**

- a. Chair**
- b. Vice-Chair**

Motion was made by Mr. Glenn to elect Jeff Funke as Chair and Sean Baker as Vice-Chair, seconded by Mr. Dries and unanimously passed by voice vote.

**7. Home Rehab Program Update**

Ms. Johnson reported that in April, she and Chair Funke and Ms. Eakins met with Kane County Office of Community Reinvestment staff to discuss the Commission's concerns about the Home Rehab Program and lack of St. Charles loan recipients. Community Contacts is the nonprofit that administers the program on behalf of the County. From County staff's perspective, the issue is not the program qualification being too stringent; it is more of a capacity issue for Community Contacts.

With a small staff, Community Contacts is only able to do a certain number of projects per year. They also have only 2-3 contractors that are certified in lead paint mitigation, which is required for these projects. They are the only organization of their kind in our area. County staff is in the process of collecting information from Community Contacts regarding St. Charles homeowner inquiries, wait lists, etc.

Mr. Glenn said it would be interesting to have County staff attend a meeting and gain a better understanding of how they attract interested homeowners. He mentioned Tri-City Health Partnership has a resource for identifying potential applicants.

Ms. Eakins said that even if we were to identify more St. Charles applicants, Community Contacts doesn't have the capacity to process additional applications.

Commissioners discussed that the Home Rehab Program application process is cumbersome and slow. It is not helpful for emergency repair situations.

Mr. Dries said contractors are very busy. They're not looking for new opportunities. Mr. Glenn added contractors are probably not interested in doing complicated projects that involve a lot of paperwork when there are easier jobs to do.

Ms. Eakins shared an idea. She suggested approaching a nonprofit that might want to purchase some properties, rehab them, and then administer them as their own affordable rental properties. Funding from the City would be a grant to purchase and/or rehab units that then would be used as affordable housing for those that qualify. It's a grant; it would be up to the nonprofit to take care of their properties and administer the units.

Ms. Johnson said with our current participation in the Kane County Affordable Housing Fund, a nonprofit could apply for our funds through that process to do something like that. If there's County funding, it probably couldn't be a grant. But if only City funds were used, we could define the parameters. In this way, we wouldn't need to create a new administrative process.

Ms. Eakins said it's an arduous process for nonprofits to apply for HUD funding and report to HUD. Could we do something like that through the County, but not have it need to meet HUD requirements? Ms. Johnson said if it were only City funding being granted, then the HUD requirements wouldn't need to apply to those funds.

Mr. Glenn wondered what nonprofit would want to take on that kind of project. Mr. Dries suggested Habitat for Humanity. Ms. Eakins suggested Lazarus House.

Mr. Baker said it would be helpful if County staff could provide a process map of all the steps involved in administering the program; the business processes. There may be ways to create efficiency in the process.

## **8. Project Updates**

Ms. Johnson reviewed that in January, the Housing Commission approved \$1.1 million from the Housing Trust Fund for the Anthony Place II senior affordable apartments, by GC Housing Development. The County also chipped in \$1.1 million. Two weeks ago, IHDA announced they did not approve Low Income Housing Tax Credits for the project. GC Housing Development is trying to get more information from IHDA to understand why they were not approved. Commissioners expressed disappointment. It is uncertain whether GC will try again next year.

## **9. Additional Business**

Ms. Johnson said Kane County has released this year's Affordable Housing Fund request for proposals. Proposals are due at the end of July. If any developers have requested use of City funds, the Commission will review that in the fall.

Ms. Johnson shared maps with the Commission showing City-owned parcels. She identified a few parcels that have potential for affordable housing. None are very large. A few parcels are already zoned for residential. There are six adjacent parcels between 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Aves., north of Chestnut Ave. This is the location where Project Finally Home was proposed a few years ago. There is also a residential parcel at the corner of Dean & 15<sup>th</sup> Streets. The City does not have a use for it, but it would be buildable for a smaller home. Staff will talk to the County about the opportunity and how it could be incorporated this year into funding requests by affordable housing developers.

Ms. Johnson provided another map showing vacant parcels, not City-owned, to identify potential locations for future affordable housing development. Most would require rezoning, which would be requested in connection with a development proposal for the property. The following locations were noted as having some potential: Fairgrounds property, land behind Meijer, Charlestowne Mall, 14<sup>th</sup> St/Bricher property, Pine Ridge Park (Woodward Dr.).

Chair Funke suggested inviting affordable housing developers to future meetings. Habitat for Humanity was suggested.

## **10. Future Meeting Dates**

- a. Thursday, July 13, 2023 at 7:00pm Dens A & B – To be cancelled
- b. Thursday, August 10, 2023 at 7:00pm Dens A & B
- c. Thursday, September 14, 2023 at 7:00pm Dens A & B

## **11. Public Comment- None**

## **12. Adjournment at 8:19pm**