

Watertown Housing Partnership
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 16, 2014
3rd Floor Planning Office

Attendees

Fred Reynolds, Chair
David Leon, Member
Brian Costello, Member, Director, Watertown
Housing Authority

Steve Magoon, Director, DCDP/Assistant Town
Manager
Andrea Adams, DCDP Senior Planner

Absent: Anita Shismanian, Clifford Cook, Torey Dean, Paul Fahey, Paul Menton, and Jennifer Van Campen

I. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Minutes from August 19, 1014: Tabled to the next meeting.

II. Discussion of Draft Needs Assessment and Market Analysis/2016-2020 Consolidated Plan

Ms. Adams reviewed the draft document with the Members. It will become part of the larger five-year WestMetro HOME Consortium's Consolidated Plan for 2016-2020. Watertown's piece is due to the Consortium by the end of September. Will hold an advertised public meeting on the draft Needs Assessment/Market Analysis at the October 21, 2014 Partnership meeting to get additional public input. Intent to send draft, if endorsed by the Partnership, to Consortium after today's meeting, and then forward the final draft after the public meeting in October.

Members discussed the draft. Mr. Costello noted a correction on page 11. Organization described as Wellspring should be Springwell. Additions were made to question 19. Add need for units capable of accommodating people with developmental disabilities to item #3. Add need for lead-free units to item #5. Ms. Adams noted she would reach out to MassHousing to update the status of the Arsenal Apartments which is discussed in question 17.

Members directed staff to transmit the draft Needs Assessment/Market Analysis to the Consortium, with the understanding that a final draft would be forthcoming after the Partnership's October 2104 meeting.

III. Affordable Housing Development Fund Balance and FY2015 Consortium Allocation

Ms. Adams distributed a handout showing the Affordable Housing Development Fund Balance as of July 2014 and the FY2015 Consortium allocation to Watertown. She noted that any unclaimed/unused program funds would revert to the Consortium, and member communities could then submit competitive proposals to fund unfinished projects.

Partnership members discussed use of funds for monitoring. Mr. Magoon noted that Metro West Collaborative Development (MWCD) had submitted a proposal to conduct monitoring on many of the affordable units in Watertown. He described the proposed monitoring and the estimated cost of approximately \$1800. He noted that to implement the proposal, staff would set up an agreement with MWCD.

Members discussed the monitoring proposal, and Mr. Costello moved to approve in concept the monitoring proposal submitted by MWCD and to authorize the expenditure of funds, either from the Consortium or from the Affordable Housing Development Fund. Mr. Leon seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Costello brought a project to the attention of the Members with respect to Housing Authority property at McSherry Gardens on Waverly Avenue. He said the balconies are in need of repair and stabilization. He said the proposals have been drawn up, and the estimated cost for the repairs is approximately \$50,000. He said the Housing Authority has sought to have the project funded through normal channels, but would like to get the project done sooner.

Mr. Magoon suggested that the Town had monies left over from a now-defunct CDBG program. He suggested this project might be an appropriate use of the funds. He noted that DCDP staff had attempted to determine what the remaining CDBG funds could be used for.

Mr. Costello suggested he would work with Ms. Adams to determine if the CDBG funds could be used for this purpose.

Ms. Adams asked for guidance from the Members with respect to the proposed Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program, noting that approximately \$79,000 had been put in Watertown's 2015 Consortium allocation for that purpose.

The Members discussed the proposal, noting that if an individual is having difficulty finding housing in Watertown, it is not likely for lack of a security deposit. Noting the relatively small amount of money allocated for the program, that other surrounding Towns are contemplating more monies for such a program, and that unprogrammed funds revert to the Consortium, the Members decided to allow the monies for the Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program to revert to the Consortium.

IV. Inclusionary Zoning Text Amendment

Ms. Adams noted that the Planning Board held a public hearing on September 8, 2014, and recommended approval of the proposed Text Amendment to the Town Council.

Mr. Magoon noted that the proposed Text Amendment was scheduled to go before the Town Council on October 14, 2014 for a public hearing.

V. Development Projects

Ms. Adams noted that the two cases before the Planning Board on September 8, 2014 (and to go before the Zoning Board of Appeals on 9/17/14) were a request for a Home Occupation at 85 Garfield Street and a request for a Variance to legalize a garage/carport at 68 Piermont Street that had been constructed on the property line without permits.

She said there were two new projects on the Planning Board's October calendar. One was a Variance request to construct front-yard parking on Olcott Street. The other was a request to construct a new CVS at the corner of Mount Auburn Street and Arlington Street. Ms. Adams said that DCDP staff had received word from the Petitioner's Attorney that the Olcott Street Variance request would likely be withdrawn.

VI. Funding Request from CNAHS

Ms. Adams noted that at the August meeting, the Partnership had discussed a request from the Cambridge Neighborhood Apartment Housing Services (CNAHS) for renewed funding. She noted that CNAHS had submitted additional data on 9/11/14 by Email noting that there were seven (7) open Watertown clients.

Mr. Reynolds said that the Partnership had sent a response to CNAHS 2013 that there would be reduced funding.

Ms. Adams said she would look for any correspondence to CNAHS and seek clarification from them as to the cost to complete the seven open Watertown cases.

Adjourn

Mr. Reynolds asked for any other business. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Leon moved to adjourn the meeting, and Mr. Costello seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.