

MINUTES

Housing and Human Services Advisory Board
Tuesday, March 11, 2008 6:00 – 8:00 PM
110 N. 4th Avenue, 1st Floor Conference Room

Members Present: David Blanchard, Barbara Eichmuller, Robyn Konkel, Kristine Martin, Teresa Myers, Stephen Pontoni, Anthony Ramirez, Stephen Rapundalo, Margie Teall, Laurie Wechter

Members Absent: Soni Mithani, Ned Staebler

Staff Present: Candace Cadena, Jennifer Hall, Mary Jo Callan

Guests: Lindsey Bishop, Chuck Kieffer, Dave Lutton, Dick Soble, Julie Steiner, Ellen Schulmeister, & Carol McCabe, Washtenaw Housing Alliance; Ray Detter, Downtown Area CAC; Wendy Carty-Saxon, Avalon Housing; Otto Willis & Alex-Michael Skott, Delonis Center; Alan Pickett, Project Outreach Team (WC CSTS); Mary Browning, Jim Mogensen, RAAH; Betsy Lindsley, Ann Arbor Housing Commission

I. Convene Meeting

D. Blanchard called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm.

II. Public Comment

- A. Otto Willis requested a timeframe for the former YMCA site development. He is not necessarily advocating the 100 units be put on this site because it is surrounded by dense traffic and air and noise pollution. He suggested a site at First and Kingsley for consideration because of its proximity to St. Andrew's, the Delonis Center, and the Link bus route. He urged green design in the building and that the site offer vocational training opportunities and a community garden to increase resident quality of life.
- B. Alex-Michael Skott commented that if the project will be financed with money from banks, consider the harmful effect of recent inflation.
- C. Jim Mogensen commented that if the site is to be located east of US-23, consider that the bus service out there could deteriorate because the City of Ypsilanti cannot pay for it. Also, it takes a long time to get there on the bus.

III. Approval of the Agenda

S. Pontoni moved to approve the agenda with items V.A.i. and V.A.ii. reversed in order; B. Eichmuller seconded. Motion Approved, 8-0 (Eichmuller, Konkel, Martin, Myers, Pontoni, Ramirez, Blanchard, Wechter Aye, 0 Nay).

IV. Approval of the Minutes

S. Pontoni moved to accept the minutes from February 19, 2008 with addition of a note that the HHSAB decided not to re-hold the 2/12/08 public hearing because

there is another public hearing scheduled before the recommendations are presented to Council; B. Eichmuller seconded. Motion Approved, 8-0 (Eichmuller, Konkell, Martin, Myers, Pontoni, Ramirez, Blanchard, Wechter Aye, 0 Nay).

V. Discussion Items

A. Replacement of Units at Former Y Site.

- i. Guest Speaker: Betsy Lindsley, Ann Arbor Housing Commission. B. Lindsley from the Ann Arbor Housing Commission discussed project-based Section 8, one type of housing subsidy. The AAHC allocates 1333 vouchers, 1050 of which are currently leased up. The vouchers are tenant-based, meaning they are portable and the person awarded the voucher can take it to any landlord accepting Section 8. The AAHC is willing to convert some of these vouchers to be converted to project-based vouchers (as allowed by HUD), which attaches them to a specific site, but cannot commit to doing that now. Reluctance to convert them is based on (1) 20 vouchers were just committed to Avalon's Pear Street project, and (2) the HUD appropriation fluctuates. The AAHC is definitely interested and supportive of including some project-based vouchers on the site and if given enough lead time, the AAHC could reserve some vouchers to convert. B. Lindsley suggested 20 units. She also noted that in the past, some YMCA residents wouldn't make it in public housing because of the strict guidelines, so using these vouchers would preclude such people from living in the vouchered units because the AAHC would screen them out.
- ii. Guest Speakers: Washtenaw Housing Alliance (WHA). Chuck Kieffer, E. Schulmeister, Dick Soble, and David Lutton discussed the WHA's recommendations on replacing the 100 units of affordable housing in line with the Blueprint to End Homelessness: (1) A process should be created to identify viable sites for the housing and a timeline should be established; (2) Replacement units should provide supportive housing services based on best practice principles; and (3) The former YMCA site should not be released to other development until another site for the housing is secured. The WHA recommends targeting all 100 replacement units to extremely low-income adults (at or below 15% AMI), homeless single adults, and persons hardest to house due to mental illness, disabilities, criminal histories, substance abuse, etc. Supportive housing providers exist, but the currently unmet need is for a model that includes: front desk security, constant accessible linkage to community supports, and site-based case management and supportive housing services. A high concentration of units (min. 60-80) is required to support feasibility and economies of scale for these three services. Washtenaw County CSTS is willing to provide site-based care, but this is based on having this higher number of units on site. The types of services needed by people who are marginally housed are provided at the Delonis Center and thus the site should be nearby. Services include healthcare, meals, AA and NA meetings, for examples.

J. Hall clarified that many of the former Y residents would be included in the group the WHA is proposing to serve but a number were not former shelter residents or under 15% AMI. E. Schulmeister explained that people under 15% AMI typically stay at the Delonis Center for 90 days and then go to stay with family or friends or nowhere if they have no family or friends to take them. A. Pickett of PORT commented that there were a dozen individuals he worked with who were stabilized by having housing at the YMCA.

The WHA will be invited back to answer further questions at a later meeting. J. Hall will collect questions from Board members for the WHA to answer.

- iii. **Discussion of Background Material.** B. Eichmuller moved to **postpone agenda item V.A.iii. to the next meeting in the interest of time; K. Martin seconded. Motion Approved Motion Approved, 8-0 (Eichmuller, Konkel, Martin, Myers, Pontoni, Ramirez, Blanchard, Wechter Aye, 0 Nay).**
- iv. Potential Acquisition/Rehab Projects. J. Hall and other staff and board members visited several potential alternative sites for the project. J. Hall explained that this process shows that there are possible alternative sites. She is creating a table with relevant information to compare the possible options identified. She encouraged board members to keep all options open until the board has discussed all of the issues, including finances and capacity.
- v. Future Guest Speakers. MSHDA will be a future guest speaker. March 13 at noon at the DDA office downtown will be a meeting with the DDA. March 26 at noon at the DDA office will be a meeting with AATA.
- vi. Future Steps. The next HHSAB meeting will be March 25, 2008.

VI. Consent Agenda
None

VII. Adjournment
D. Blanchard moved to adjourn the meeting; B. Eichmuller seconded. D. Blanchard adjourned the meeting at 8:20 pm.