



Minutes City Council's Housing Committee August 18, 2009

Minutes of the meeting of the City Council's Housing Committee held on Tuesday, August 18, 2009, 3:00 p.m., in the 3rd Floor Conference Room, Tempe City Hall, and 31 E. 5th Street, Tempe, Arizona.

Committee Members Present:

Councilmember Corey Woods, Chair
Vice Mayor Shana Ellis

City Staff Present:

Carlos de Leon, Dep Public Wrks Mgr
Jan Hort, City Clerk
Tom Ryff, PD
Charles Cobbs

Craig Hittie, Comm Dev
Theresa James, Comm Dev
Chris Salomone, Comm Dev Mgr
Liz Chavez

Guests Present:

Jayson Matthews, TCC
John Donovan

Councilmember Woods called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.

Agenda Item 1 – Public Comment

John Donovan stated that he is the owner of a small apartment community that is facing potential foreclosure. This property is comprised of 11 separate parcels. If the property were to be sold, there could conceivably be 11 different property owners. Mr. Donovan asked the Committee for staff assistance to ensure that if the property located at 2227 South McClintock Drive goes into foreclosure that it is protected from becoming a blighted multi-housing issue. Chris Salomone and Tom Ryff indicated that they would be in contact with Mr. Donovan to follow up on this matter.

Agenda Item 2 – Mill Avenue Update

Corey Woods stated that the purpose of this agenda item was to discuss the recent media attention given to Police Department (PD) enforcement of aggressive panhandling on Mill Avenue. Downtown merchants have voiced their support of the PD enforcement efforts.

Tom Ryff stated that what prompted the PD to focus on Mill Avenue for increased patrols is the increasing number of calls for service, trespassing, drugs and an increase in felony crimes. From January 1 to June, 2009, there have been 3,509 calls for service along Mill Avenue and out of that 401 arrests were made. There have also been an increased number of assaults on police officers on Mill Avenue. The light rail has brought an influx of transients on Mill Avenue. A claim has been made that transients are given light rail passes from other communities, so that they will relocate themselves. PD bike officers have been passing out brochures to individuals that frequent Mill Avenue to advertise what types of social service resources Tempe offers.

Mr. Ryff stressed the fact that law enforcement focuses resources on individuals that are in violation of the law and that these efforts are not influenced by an individual's economic or homeless status. The two day sting operation along Mill Avenue netted a total of 25 arrests. The criminal history of these individuals ranged from homicide to sexual assaults, which is of considerable concern to law enforcement officials. A subsequent sting operation on Mill Avenue resulted in only two arrests.

PD staff is currently participating with an interdepartmental team, as well as working with the Downtown Tempe Community, Tempe Community Council and the faith based community to brainstorm creative ways to approach problem individuals that are attracted to Mill Avenue. The Human Relations Commission has been given PD staff updates on this issue as well.

Theresa James commended the PD bike officers for their in depth community contact and publicizing the resources available to this population. Ms. James asked Mr. Ryff if he could identify the source of who is giving the light rail passes to the transient population so that she is able to follow up on this issue. Mr. Ryff agreed to pursue that information. Jayson Matthews commented that the light rail transportation amenity does have some unintended consequences that require community wide attention.

Agenda Item 3 – Housing Trust Fund Advisory Board Update

Monday, 6:30 pm at Hatton Hall is the new meeting time and location for this board. Work force and senior housing needs are scheduled for more in depth study.

Agenda Item 4 – Workshop – Affordable/Transitional Housing

On November 2, there will be a workshop for affordable/transitional housing.

Councilmember Woods excused himself from the remainder of the meeting. Vice-Mayor Ellis resumed as Chair of this meeting.

Agenda Item 5 – 2009/2010 Annual CDBG Action Plan - Draft

Craig Hittie stated that staff will be meeting with the Purchasing staff to draft an RFP to issue as soon as the grant funding has been received.

Agenda Item 6 – Permanent, supportive housing for the chronically homeless in Tempe Pilot Project Update

Theresa James stated that the HUD funding for the chronically homeless Tempe Pilot Project is \$661,147. There have been five responses to the RFP from local faith based and social services agencies. A selection committee scored the responses and a few of the respondents were interviewed for clarification on their bid proposals. Providing innovative services by focusing on organizational capacity is the focus of the selection committee, keeping in mind the HUD funding perimeters. Nearly half of the funding will be targeted towards the Tumbleweed Program because of their proven track record in providing housing resources to youth. The balance of the funding will go towards the Valley of the Sun United Way valley-wide Affordable Housing Program. Staff is continuing to work with United Way official to determine how this program will be administered. Staff will be prepared to make a presentation to Council on the Pilot Program on September 10.

Agenda Item 7 – September Housing Committee Meeting Date Change

Tuesday, September 22, at 2 pm will be the next meeting date/time.

Agenda Item 8 – Future Agenda Items

Issues impacting resources i.e. Police Department, Code Enforcement, foreclosures, crime
Technology vs. issues impacting resources
Permanent supportive housing
Update on American Sign Project
Year end accomplishments

Meeting adjourned at 3:44 p.m.

Prepared by: Kay Savard
Reviewed by: Liz Chavez

Jan Hort
City Clerk