



Housing Opportunities Commission Minutes
January 11, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.

Members Present: Rogers, Betzig-Lundberg, Chaput, Moseley, Theisen, Poser

Members Absent: Peterson, Ross, Werthmann, Filipczak

Staff Present: Allen, Hufford, Baumgartner, Zastoupil

1. Call to Order by Chairperson Moseley at 5:05 p.m.
2. Roll Call – Members and staff were present in Council Chambers.
3. Meeting minutes of December 14, 2022 were approved with the following corrections:
 - Under Point one (1) of questions and comments on the scoring criteria “wasn’t” was changed to “was.”
 - Point a. under Announcements was corrected to reflect that the Point in Time involved people going out and talking to people about homelessness to them going out to talk to the homeless.

Motion to approve by Commissioner Betzig-Lundberg, seconded by Commissioner Chaput, and passed unanimously.

4. Open Public Comment Period – No one from the public came forward to speak during the Open Public Comment Period.
5. Public Discussions
 - A. 2023 Work Plan

i. Regional Housing Study

- Ms. Hufford discussed the Regional Housing Study, noting that the consultant was announced at the previous meeting, that staff has had one meeting with them thus far, and that they will be in Eau Claire in person from January 22nd to the 24th. She further mentioned staff is working on putting together the steering committee, and that Chairman Moseley had volunteered to be on it and that Commissioner Rogers was volunteered to be on it.

Questions/Comments:

- Commissioner Rogers declined due to potential conflicts with his schedule in January and February.
- There was interest in seeing if partners were needed outside of Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC), such as representatives from local housing related organizations and the various under-represented communities in the area.
 - Staff stated that the level of outreach would be better for the outreach portion of the study and that the purpose of the steering committee was to guide the project and serve as a “sounding board” for findings and draft strategies. It was further explained that City of Eau Claire would have two representatives from HOC and one to two from the Plan Commission (PC).
- Commissioner Poser volunteered for the committee and noted that she had a commitment to be at on January 24th.

ii. Funding Affordable Housing

- Scoring Criteria Review and Update - Ms. Hufford asked if the committee would like to go through the scoring criteria one by one or if they had specific items that they wanted to go through. The HOC decided to go through them from the top and the questions, comments, and revisions were made:

Questions, Comments and Revisions:

1. Income Requirement

- Was there feedback from the organization that went through this process? The applicant didn't find it onerous, but they were able to transfer a lot of the data from their LIHTC application.
- In category 1.c., does the family/individual units have to have the ground floor private entrance, or the building in general? It was decided that this should be clarified and that staff would look into it.
- It was noted that this section was pulled from LIHTC criteria and that it has the highest percentage of points.

2. Location

- The committee had discussion on the .5-mile radius standard that was applied to the nearness of amenities and services under Location category. The discussion covered whether the radius should be increased or decreased, whether certain communities were excluded by having it be limited to .5 miles, whether or not the list of amenities and services associated with it was really what the HOC wanted, and if transit and walkability should be made its own sub-category under Location.
- It was determined that this category should be simplified and they should keep medical clinic/hospital, public transit and walkability under amenities, in-unit internet and onsite community room should be moved to the services category and the rest of the amenities category should be struck.
- Later-on in the meeting it was determined that the HOC should keep the same amount of points in the Location category and adjust how they are weighted, which should be revisited next meeting.

3. Financial Leverage

- No questions or comments.

4. Inclusive Design

- Do all units in a proposed development need to include the additional features from page 5, or just some of them? 25% of the units would need to have the basic features to get points and that having 50% or more of them have those features would get bonus points.
- It was felt that the HOC should be clear on what they want in this category and that they should ask for more.
- It was determined that the HOC would revisit this category next meeting.

5. Rehab/Neighborhood Stabilization

- Was this category LIHTC based? Yes
- Did the City write a letter for the last project? No, as the applicant was doing a new build, not a rehabilitation.
- If number 5 only applies to rehabilitations, is it not part of the total points possible. Ms. Hufford responded that it can apply to new construction only if buildings have been demolished and they are replacing it with like housing. She continued on by stating that the goal would be rehabilitation instead of demolition, however, the neighborhood that it's going into would also have an impact.
- Is this category included to help avoid gentrification? Yes.

6. Energy Efficiency and Sustainability
 - No questions or comments.
7. Development Team
 - Can you earn all of the points? You can earn up to 12 points.
 - Having a developer with housing tax credit might make a project more likely to succeed.
 - The commissioners were in favor of removing it from the general requirements and using it as a tie-breaker.
 - It was suggested that these standards could be simplified and staff was asked to assist. Ms. Hufford responded that she was not able to assist at this time but she would be able to come back with some next month. Hufford also suggested that if any of the commissioners had pertinent input that they should send it to her.

iii. 2023 Housing Conference

Questions and Concerns

- After some discussion it was determined that they would pencil Wednesday, November 1st as the day for the next Housing Conference.
- It was noted that there were 10 more HOC meetings before the next conference.
- It was proposed that the hybrid model of conference should continue.
- It was suggested that they should think of a topic for the conference at the next meeting.
- CVTC, the Pablo Center, and UWEC were all floated as potential venue locations, with CVTC having the best venue for a hybrid conference, and the Pablo Center having access to Zoom with the caveat that the conference would have to pay to use it.
- Financial matters, such as adjusting the ticket prices, soliciting vendors and sponsors, and having the conference break even were also discussed with concerns about keeping the conference affordable being kept in mind.

B. 2023 Work Plan

- i. Ms. Hufford gave a presentation on the work plan, stating that it will look similar to last year's plan with a few additions. She noted that staff will be monitoring housing and that there will be a monthly report on it. Hufford also touched on the Zoning Code update, the Community for All Ages assessment through AARP, the Regional Housing Study, Funding Affordable Housing, the Regional Housing Conference, Promoting Home Ownership, and Public/Private Partnerships.

Questions and Comments.

- It was suggested that the Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC) and LGBTQ+ be added to the list of potential partners.
- There were questions regarding the housing navigation position, if that was included under the specific actions section of Public/Private Partnership, and if it should be explored further. Staff will be looking into further grant opportunities in conjunction with the City EDI coordinator.
- The committee was interested in receiving updates on this position.
- The document can be updated further into the year, but any changes would have to go to City Council for approval.
- There was a question on if "new housing paradigms" under the Ordinance and Policy Review section was what Councilmember Werthmann mentioned about new ordinances. It could, depending on what they were looking to do and how it interacts with state law.
- This could be looked at again after the completion of the housing study.

Motion to accept the 2023 Work Plan by Commissioner Poser, Second by Commissioner Betzig-Lundberg, and carried unanimously. Ms. Hufford noted that it could come back to them with changes from City Council.

6. Other Business Agenda Items

A. Staff Updates

- i. Affordable Housing projects update – Mr. Allen shared the below updates:
 1. LIHTC projects: The Current (Phase 2); Prairie Heights Residences
 - No updates, but The Current should be wrapping up its closure of Oxford this month; no expected date for opening it.
 - Prairie Heights has been delayed. Chairperson Moseley stated that there were issues with the boring test.
 2. Luther Lakeside Apartments
 - No update
 3. Block 7 (Phoenix Parkside II)
 - It is going through the permitting process right now.
 4. Transit Transfer Center Housing
 - Economic Development is working back and forth with them on various paperwork items, such as development agreements. There is progress, just not in the form of visible things.
 - There are discussions on parking opening temporarily in the summer until they start working on the residential.
 - Commissioner Chaput asked about a potential challenge related to housing. Director Allen responded that was part of the paperwork discussions with various developers/development team members.
 - Commissioner Chaput also asked if the target was to have it be workforce housing. Director Allen answered that it would be workforce housing.
 5. SCS Eau Claire
 - No new updates.
 6. Station 955
 - Allen noted that it received approvals in December, around the time of the previous HOC meeting.
 7. Others
 - Sunnyvale Acres was approved on 1/10, and it will consist of 68 units and is near the Town of Washington Town Hall. This will be a long-term project with seven buildings that will have affordable rents due to the owner's using their work crews for construction and that they would only be tackling two buildings a year.
 - Cypress Townhomes, a 36-townhome development on the corner of Cypress and Oakwood Hills Parkway, will be going before Plan Commission the week of the 16th for rezoning.
 - Mount Washington has an active offer on the table.
 - Eau Claire Academy has no offers at the moment, but the City is looking at other potential partners as users of the site.
 - a. Chairperson Moseley asked if the Redevelopment Authority was considering it. Director Allen responded that they discussed it, but it was not eagerly received.
 - The Regency – City Attorney provided an update at City Council, but there isn't much new with ongoing litigation in June. There are potential buyers interested.
 - a. Chairperson Moseley mentioned an additional lawsuit from employees

- Commissioner Rogers asked about the timeline for the Short-Term Rental Ordinance
 - a. Director Allen stated that he needed to speak with Mr. Zastoupil on where things are at with it. Staff is hoping to have the ordinance ready in draft form this spring.
 - b. Director Allen also mentioned that staff is working on the RFP for the zoning code rewrite and is hoping to have responses by the end of February.

7. Discussion and Direction

A. Future Agenda Items

- a. Commissioner Poser will give a presentation in February.
- b. Various items from the work plan will be revisited.
- c. There should be an update on whether City Council approved the 2023 Work Plan.
- d. Commissioner Betzig-Lundberg wanted to know more about the EDI coordinator for the next meeting. Ms. Hufford responded that she will need to check her schedule to see if she can attend the next meeting.
- e. Commissioner Rogers wanted to know the timeline on ARPA. Ms. Hufford responded there might be an update for that at the next meeting.

B. Announcements

- a. Commissioner Rogers reminded the HOC that Momentum West will be holding a conference at UW-Stout on the morning of January 25th.
- b. Mx. Morman introduced themselves. They will be working in the Manager's Office as a Data Analyst completing work for a Health Department Fellow grant.
- c. Commissioner Poser noted the Point in Time event was on the night of the 25-26.
- d. Commissioner Poser announced that vouchers being considered a legal source of income for rental tenants is being considered at the state level again and it will be touched on in Governor Evers' State of the State Address. Posers stand will keep the HOC posted on it.
 - i. Commissioner Rogers noted the State of the State Address will be on January 24th and the budget address is February 15th.

8. On a motion by Commissioner Poser and seconded by Commissioner Betzig-Lundberg the meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.