

Interagency Council on Affordable Housing

Tuesday, December 11, 2012

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Lyceum

227 Lawrence Street

Hartford, Connecticut

Members Present: Anne Foley (Chair), Claudette Beaulieu (DSS) for Commissioner Roderick Bremby, Barbara Geller (DMHAS), Kim Somaroo-Rodriquez (DCF), Commissioner Catherine Smith (DECD), Howard Rifkin (Partnership for Strong Communities), Betsy Crum (Connecticut Housing Coalition), Lisa Sementilli for Carol Walter (Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness), Rebecca Fleming (DOC), Eric Chatman (Connecticut Housing Finance Authority), Joseph Martel (Council Appointee) and Sarah Ratchford (Council Appointee).

I. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair reported that Carol Walter was unable to attend the meeting due to illness and extended best wishes for a speedy recovery.

II. Approval of the November 13th Meeting Minutes

Betsy Crum moved and Eric Chatman seconded the motion to approve the November 13th meeting minutes. The motion was approved on a voice vote.

III. Approve Revised Vision, Mission and Roles

The Chair reviewed the revised vision, mission and roles of the Department of Housing. After a brief discussion, Eric Chatman's motion to approve the revisions was seconded by Commissioner Smith. The motion was approved on a voice vote with the following change: under the roles of the department, delete the last sentence in bullet 6 "The Commissioner will lead the Council's work in developing the state's Qualified Assistance Plan (QAP) for implementation by CHFA". The Council made additional recommendations regarding the development of the QAP which will be addressed under the recommendation section relating to prioritization of housing resources.

IV. Approve Programs to be Transferred to DOH

Council members reviewed the list of outstanding programs that required further discussion to determine if they should be recommended for transfer to the new department. After a brief discussion members made the following recommendations:

Programs to be Transferred to DOH

The following programs are added to the list of programs recommended for transfer to the new department:

DECD:

- Community Development Block Grant for Small Cities

DSS:

- Special Projects
- SSBG Independent Transitional Living Services (excluding domestic violence programs)

OPM:

- Tax Relief for Elderly Renter

DMHAS: (Rental Assistance Programs only)

- Enhancing Housing Opportunities
- Forensic Supportive Housing
- FUSE

Programs not to be transferred to DOH

The following programs will be transferred to the new department:

- DCF Supportive Housing for Families program
- DSS Shelters Victims-Household Abuse
- DSS Family Violence
- Congregate Housing Services, Eastern and Western

Commissioner Smith moved to approve programs recommended for transfer to the DOH as revised. The motion was seconded by Daisy Franklin. The motion was approved on a voice vote.

The Council agreed to review the recommended programs for transfer to identify inactive programs that should be removed from state statutes.

V. Discuss January 2013 Council Report

The Chair reviewed components of the First Annual Report of the Council which is due January 15th. The Council focused its discussion on the Recommendations for Implementation of the Department of Housing. The major points included:

- Timeline for Implementation: The Council agreed that the timeline for transfer of programs to the new department should take place as soon as possible.
- Changes to the State Housing Delivery System: Council members supported the proposed recommendations for improvements on the effectiveness of the state housing structure. Members made additional recommendations and modifications to this section including:
 - Add the following bullets
 - Incorporate strategies that further fair housing goals and objectives into the new Department's policies and programs and ensure that sufficient staff have expertise in this area
 - Implements a unified approach to state financing for affordable housing that brings together all housing resources in the state that could include, but not be limited to, CHFA, DECD, Office of Policy and Management, Departments of Social Services, Children and Families, Mental Health and Addiction Services, Banking, Education, Transportation, and Environmental Protection
 - Implement a true one-stop application process that enables projects to receive funding from a variety of appropriate resource "pots" rather than isolated programs
 - Transform staff from a regulatory mentality to a focus on development, program administration and production, with a clear focus on streamlined investment and incentives
 - Consideration shall be given to reducing the overall number of classes and making classes more generic and flexible; establishing meaningful career ladders; promoting flexibility in

work assignments; exploring new job designs that provide for better service delivery and increased job satisfaction. This list is not intended to limit the scope of the pilot, which would need to be come out of a joint labor-management agreement.

- Add a Fair Housing Director's position

Prioritization of Housing Resources: Council members supported the proposed recommendations. Members made recommendations for the following bullets to be added to this section:

- Develop linkages between workforce housing, economic development and affordable housing to encourage community growth and development
- Support the Governor's education initiatives
- Support fair housing and discrimination efforts
- Make affordable housing available to residents living outside of areas of high poverty
- Add youth and families under the second bullet
- Encourage community input on the decision making process
- Clarify the role of the Council in the development of the state's Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Qualified Allocation Plan
- Enhanced Coordination Across Housing Systems: Council members supported the proposed recommendations. Members agreed to add representation to the Council from the Departments of Education and Developmental Services, Court Support Services Division of Judicial, and CONN-NAHRO. Members also suggested deleting the Department of Transportation from the recommendation to add members because Commissioner Smith is the Chair of the Transit Oriented Development Board and will serve as the link to the Council for transportation issues.

Members made additional recommendations including:

- Determine how to better integrate the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program with other housing programs
- Determine how the department will work with the state's 169 communities relating to its zoning laws

V. **Next Steps:** The next meeting of the Council will be on January 3, 2013 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Lyceum.