

City and County Supportive Housing Commission  
10 am Tuesday, July 28, 2009  
Cherry Court Apartments

**Attending**

*Commissioners:* Paul Williams (representing Tony Perez), Ken Schmidt, Jim Marks, Joan Lawrence, Jim Tarantino, Paula John, Suzanne Breier, Kenyatta Yamel (chair), Rochell Williams, Anne McDevitt, Bob Berlan, Lynn DeBruin

*Staff:* Jim Hill, Jim Mathy, Martha Brown, Jessica Shriver, Michael Maierle

Kenyatta Yamel called the meeting to order.

***Review and Approval of the April 28, 2009 Meeting Minutes:*** Commissioner Tarantino moved that the minutes be approved as distributed. Commissioner Lawrence seconded the motion. Motion approved.

***Appointment of Bob Berlan:*** Bob Berlan was introduced as a new member of the Commission, replacing Martha Rasmus, who resigned upon her retirement from Mental Health America Wisconsin. Commissioner Berlan recently retired from the local office of the US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, and was appointed to the commission by Mayor Tom Barrett.

***Supportive Housing Project Updates:*** Martha Brown gave an update on the Supportive Housing Projects:

**Johnston Center Residences – 1230 W. Grant St.**

- 91 units in a renovated building (former Johnston Community Health Clinic) and a new addition.
- Support services to be provided by Hope House.
- Ground broken May 28, 2009.
- Expected occupancy: 2011

**Washington Park Apartments – 39<sup>th</sup>/Lisbon**

- 24 units in a new building, including 10 units for families in which a parent is struggling with mental illness.
- Support services provided by United Methodist Children's Services.
- Construction ongoing.
- Expected occupancy: Early 2010

**Empowerment Village (1525 W. National Avenue)**

- 34 units in renovated building with addition (W. National Ave.) plus office and program space for Our Space, Inc.
- Developer has a letter of commitment for Low Income Housing Tax Credits, and is seeking additional funds from Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority and Milwaukee Housing Trust Fund.
- Anticipate fall 2009 groundbreaking.

**Veterans Manor (35<sup>th</sup>/Wisconsin Avenue)**

- 52 units in new building.

- Developer has a letter of commitment for Low Income Housing Tax Credits, and is seeking additional funds from Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority.
- Both City and County have asked the US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development to allow stimulus funds to be used to support development; notification from HUD is expected in August.
- There are some questions regarding the environmental status of the site. Developer and City environmental staff are meeting with the Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources later this week on this matter.

**Autumn West**

- Dept. of City Development continues to work with Community Advocates to identify a new site.

**United House -- 2500 W. Center St.**

**Prairie Apartments – 1218 W. Highland Ave.**

- United House celebrates its one-year anniversary in August 2009.
- Both projects received higher property tax assessments than expected. Have met with City Assessor to discuss the cost structure of supportive housing developments. The assessor agreed to review the assessments.

***Update on proposed Milwaukee County Budget:*** Jim Hill discussed the 2010 budget request that has been submitted to the Milwaukee County Executive by the County housing division. He indicated that the budget recommends cuts in homeless and other housing services, including supportive housing for individuals at risk of homelessness because of mental illness. He explained the budget process and how this submittal is a preliminary step in the budget process. He noted that the proposed cuts were required in order to meet the department's budget allocation target. Mr. Hill also explained the different streams of funding and how this influences the allocation process. He again emphasized that this is early in the budget process and the decisions were very difficult to make.

Commissioner Schmidt moved that the Commission go on record as rejecting the proposed cuts to housing services, and that the Commission put its sentiments in the form of a letter to County Executive Scott Walker. Commissioner Breier seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Chair Yamel distributed a draft letter. Discussion centered mostly about the tone of the letter. Chair Yamel asked the following individuals to help re-write the letter: Commissioner DeBruin, Commissioner Schmidt, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Marks, Commissioner John, Joe Volk. The revised letter will be sent to County Executive Walker.

***Supportive Housing Siting Plan:*** Mike Maierle, a planner with the City of Milwaukee, discussed a planning project underway at the Department of City Development to identify sites and site criteria for future supportive housing developments. Jim Mathy of Milwaukee County and representatives of the Community Advocates Public Policy Institute are serving on the planning team. It is the intention of DCD to propose that the supportive housing siting plan be adopted by the Milwaukee Common Council as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

**10 Year Plan to End Homelessness:** Jim Mathy presented on the progress of the group developing a 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. He stated that the unmet need of the community was calculated and the number of needed permanent supportive housing units was identified. The plan also looked at zoning changes and NIMBY issues that need to be addressed in order to ensure an adequate supply of supportive housing in metro Milwaukee. The Ten Year Plan is in the final stages of development.

Jessica Shriver, who also is working on development of the Plan, explained that there were three other workgroups of the Plan: emergency services and prevention, behavioral health and supportive services, and economic supports. The behavioral health group is addressing the increase need for supportive Services.

**Milwaukee County Housing Division:** At the request of Commissioner Schmidt, Joe Volk of Community Advocates was given the floor to express his concern about a practice of the Milwaukee County Housing Division, involving the provision of 30-day room and board vouchers to individuals released following treatment at the Mental Health Complex. He said he has reports that the quality of housing purchased with these vouchers is poor, and he asked what occurs when the 30-day voucher period expires. Mr. Volk offered the assistance of the Community Advocates Public Policy Institute to research this issue and other matters related to the Commission on Supportive Housing.

Jim Mathy stated that consumers are placed in apartments for a one-month period only if they are refusing services or are not eligible for services. He stated the program annually serves around 300 Behavioral Health Division clients. Most are coming out of the Mental Health Complex, but are refusing additional services or do not meet the eligibility requirement to receive case management services. Jim Mathy stated that he will provide more outcome information about the population. Commissioner DeBruin volunteered to meet with Housing Division staff to obtain more information.

**Next Meeting Date:** The next meeting of the Supportive Housing Commission will be October 15, 2009 at Cherry Court Apartments, 1525 N. 24<sup>th</sup> St.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Jessica Shriver and Martha Brown