



**HOUSING ELEMENT UPDATE 2006-2014
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

*Tuesday, September 22, 2009
10:00 a.m.*

*Mayor's Ceremonial Room, City Hall
3900 Main Street, Riverside CA 92522
Planning Division Office - 951-826-5371*

MISSION STATEMENT

The City of Riverside is committed to providing high quality municipal services to ensure a safe, inclusive, and livable community

Members Present: Baum, Benavidez, Mayes, Ruiz, Terando, Thompson, Van Doren

Members Absent: Berzansky, Ford, Holley, Singletary, Teer

Staff Present: Jenkins, Darnell, Bouska, Gutierrez, Gonzales, Smith

1. **Open Meeting**

Vice-Chair Francis Baum called the meeting to order, self-introductions followed.

2. **Oral communications from the audience.** This is the portion of the meeting specifically set aside to invite public comments on matters of interest to the Committee that are not included on the agenda. If there is no one from the audience wishing to speak, the Committee will move to the next item.

There was no one in the audience requesting to speak.

3. **Approval of Minutes.**

The minutes of May 27, 2009 were approved.

Motion: Mayes

2nd: Benavidez

Motion was approved with two abstentions: Thompson, Terando

4. **Overview/Recap of CAC Meetings & Progress Report**

Doug Darnell, Senior Planner, welcomed and thanked everyone for attending. He gave a brief summary of the previous advisory committee meetings and staff's progress to date. He introduced Mark Hoffman, consultant with The Planning Center.

5. **Power Point Presentation**

a. Progress Toward the RHNA

Mr. Hoffman reviewed the population growth projections for the City of Riverside and the City's progress toward meeting the 2006-2014, Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) numbers.

He noted that the City has almost met their goals and was short only 98 units in the very low and low income category.

He indicated that the Housing Plan should be an inclusive plan that provides residents with housing suitable to their needs.

b. Housing Objectives and Tools - Interactive Discussion

Objective 1 - Livable Neighborhoods: Livable neighborhoods of well maintained housing, ample public services, and open space which provide a high quality living environment and instill community pride.

Mr. Hoffman reviewed the existing programs: Code enforcement, SFR rehab loan/grant, multifamily acq/rehab, Crime free multi-housing, Lead paint mitigation, and Historic preservation.

He explained the new programs proposed for the element: Neighborhood stabilization program, Multi-family rehab loan program, Neighborhood improvement program, Neighborhood organizing, Keep Riverside Clean and Beautiful, Rebuilding Together Riverside and BIA Home Aid.

Diane Jenkins, Principal Planner, noted that the Neighborhood Improvement Programs were similar to the project at Chicago and Linden. This was an area in which the units were identified as needing work. The owners were encouraged to come together, similar to a business improvement district, to form an association to improve the area. This project did not get very far at that time but it is something to look into again.

Vice-Chair Baum asked what other funding, other than federal, could be used for the neighborhood stabilization programs.

Mr. Hoffman stated the funds for multifamily could come from Redevelopment, HOME and CDBG funds. He asked the members if they knew of any program that was not listed under Livable Neighborhoods that needed to be considered.

Mr. Thompson stated that due to the economic climate, there is currently an abundance of affordable housing throughout the City and asked if this was included in the Plan.

Mr. Hoffman replied that the conversion of foreclosed homes cannot be counted. State law is behind in this matter and there is a proposal to change this but it will not happen during the update of this Housing Element. The foreclosed homes do meet a need as far as housing assistance opportunities but cannot count as new housing.

Mr. Thompson stated that it was unbelievable that the City is only 98 units short. He noted that the City has done a good job in the past. He didn't know of any other City that has come close to meeting their RHNA numbers.

Vice-Chair Baum commented that the saving grace appeared to be the student housing.

Ms. Jenkins agreed but also noted that the City did promote the planned residential developments (PRD) which helped a lot to meet those numbers. Due to the housing decline, the pricing for these homes came down and helped meet the moderate income numbers. She also noted that not too many cities have 3 universities.

Mr. Hoffman added that in the past, cities could not count student housing but the legislation was changed in 2006.

Mr. Van Doren stated that he worked with seniors and that by providing student housing, it frees up low income housing for the use of others.

Mr. Benavidez asked in regard to Mr. Hoffman's question about other programs, whether the CAC was aware of any programs like the RHDC's project at Cypress and ????, which provides low to moderate income housing that also includes child care on the site.

Mr. Hoffman explained that he referred to programs that would further housing production. Thinking of programs to improve and stabilize neighborhoods.

Mr. Benavidez suggested the Neighborhood Watch programs.

Mr. Terando said that there are many homes with HOA. He asked how an HOA can be used or what items can be included in HOA's to help meet any needs.

Mr. Hoffman asked if he referred to a possible HOA type organization that would talk about community issues.

Mr. Van Doren asked how mobile homes fit in the Housing Element. He said these were viable and affordable options. It should be planned so that they are not removed.

Mr. Hoffman replied that mobile homes do fit. He explained that if the City initiates the removal of a mobile home then there are requirements for replacement. But if the private owner removes the mobile home park, there are no requirements for replacement. He stated that mobile home parks are on the list under the stabilization of homes.

Objective 2 - Housing Diversity: Mr. Hoffman continued with the presentation and covered objective 2 - Housing Diversity, which is to accommodate housing needs of residents. The existing programs are: Downtown Specific Plan, University Avenue Specific Plan, Regulatory Incentives, Financial Incentives, and the Infill Incentive Program. The new programs proposed to be included are: Explore Eastside Infill Program, Graduated Density Program, Zoning Code Incentives Study, Magnolia Avenue Specific Plan and Marketplace Specific Plan.

Mr. Baum questioned visitability listed under the Zoning Code Incentives Study – Universal Design/Visitability?

Mr. Hoffman explained that visitability is intended to allow someone to exit and visit the home if they are disabled. Universal Design goes beyond visitability with regard to disabled access.

Mr. Thompson asked if this would be where to incorporate SB375?

Mr. Hoffman stated that it would be more of an expansion of the green program, not mandatory but an incentive.

Mr. Thompson commended the City of Riverside for including the Transit Oriented Development (TOD).

Ms. Jenkins said that with the University Avenue and Marketplace Specific Plans, this is where staff expects the TOD's to be. The question now is; how could the City develop interest for these projects at the density staff think needs to be there?

Mr. Hoffman stated that it is still unclear whether the state will allow all the student housing to be counted toward the City's RHNA. There is a distinction between dormitories and apartments. The State will count apartments but he was not sure of dormitories.

Mr. Baum asked if University owned apartments are counted.

Mr. Hoffman responded yes, regardless of occupants these apartments can count and hopefully dormitories as well. They will be pushing to count all of the housing, including faculty housing. He asked if there were any other tools the committee could think of.

Ms. Mayes commented that improvement programs had been identified for the Eastside. She suggested that there were other areas that also would benefit from improvement programs such as the Northside area which has a lot of older homes. She also suggested the area in the Downtown by Brockton be identified as well.

Don Smith, Development Department, suggested including the Fair Housing Council under this category as well.

Mr. Hoffman agreed.

Ms. Mayes suggested the Crime Free program.

Mr. Hoffman agreed and noted that it would be best under the livable neighborhood category.

Objective 3 - Housing Assistance: Mr. Hoffman reviewed Objective 3 - Housing Assistance to increase and improve opportunities for low and moderate income residents. Existing programs are: Housing Rent Vouchers, Downpayment Assistance, Riverside County MCC, Mobile Home Rent Stabilize, Preserve At-Risk Units, and Housing Partnerships. New programs to be included are the Homebuyer Preservation, and Neighborhood Stabilization. He asked if there were any suggestions for additional programs.

Mr. Terando suggested a program to assist with new home development which may include fee reductions.

Mr. Hoffman asked if this program would fit best under this category or Housing Diversity?

Mr. Terando stated that the cost for a new home in the City of Riverside was approximately \$60,000-\$70,000 of which was only for fees. The fees are equal to purchase amount of a home. He suggested that the City look into this and figure out where there could be fee reductions.

Ms. Jenkins pointed out that the TUMF fee have been lowered temporarily due to the economic climate.

Mr. Terando asked if there was a program for designated housing that qualifies for a fee reduction.

Mr. Hoffman wanted clarification and asked whether what was being suggested was a fee waiver program for new homes.

Ms. Jenkins asked if this program was just for this economic climate or was Mr. Terando suggesting starting a waiver for very low and low income homes. Such a program could incentivize very low and low housing.

Ken Gutierrez, Planning Director, noted that there is a precedent for Mr. Terando's suggestion, such as senior housing. He wanted to clarify whether Mr. Terando was referring to mitigation fees because waiver of mitigation fees is beyond the City's control.

Mr. Terando said he understood that but would like the City to talk to these agencies?

Mr. Gutierrez said that the City only has control of traffic, park, and plan check fees.

Mr. Hoffman added that other ways to incentivize would be a graduated density program. Perhaps permitting more units is, in a sense, an incentive. He asked if there were other options?

Ms. Mayes suggested a home buyer preservation program for homeowners that may be in trouble. To include an educational program with counseling for homeowners who may have fallen behind on their mortgages.

Mr. Hoffman re-titled the program "home ownership preservation and education/foreclosure counseling."

Objective 4 - Special needs: Mr. Hoffman reviewed Objective 4 - Special needs, to provide adequate housing and supportive services for residents with special needs. Existing programs identified are: Homeless Services, Senior Housing, Student Housing, Fair Housing, Housing for People with Disabilities, and Family housing. New programs proposed were: Zoning Code Changes for transitional housing (by right), Supportive Housing (by right) and Emergency Shelter (by right).

This section would direct staff to work with the Zoning Code to see that it is updated to current state law.

Mr. Van Doren stated that with regard to special needs, the City of Riverside, through the Riverside Housing Development Corporation (RHDC), does have programs which provide grants for home modifications. These programs will assist renters as well. As far as he knows, Riverside is the only City that does this. This is a good benefit in Riverside and it would be nice if other cities would offer this as well.

Mr. Hoffman indicated that he had never seen it apply to renters, very rare.

Ms. Jenkins stated that staff would look into this.

Mr. Van Doren said that it was offered under their home repair program.

Mr. Smith stated that the grant funds would still go to the owner of the property not the renter.

Mr. Terando suggested some assistance for developers for potential conflicts between ADA and the Building Code. He recounted an experience where they were unable to provide accessible homes due to such a conflict. The issue had to do with slider doors and the threshold height. Building Code called for something but ADA required something lower. If the developer went with the lower they were in violation of the Building Code and due to the location now had issues with water intrusion which added a future liability to the developer. Perhaps there could be development waivers between Building Code and ADA. Would there be a way to have the homeowner sign waivers that they understand these conflicts and waive the issues?

Mr. Hoffman asked staff if there was an existing committee that looked into Building Code issues.

Ms. Jenkins said that the process for accessibility appeals already exists and is heard by the Planning Commission.

Mr. Terando said he was looking for things that could be done. His main concern was with strict liability laws and working with those issues.

Mr. Hoffman replied that under the accessibility appeals process, reasonable accommodation standards could be looked at.

Ms. Jenkins added that the Building Division currently does have an ADA expert.

Ms. Mayes inquired if the City has thought about applying for lead based paint/mold/mildew removal grant funds.

Ms. Jenkins explained that currently, the County administers the City's program under an agreement.

7. Conclusion - wrap-up

Mr. Darnell reviewed how the Citizen's Advisory Committee's comments would be used. All recommendations provided today will be reflected in the draft Housing Element. He expects the draft to be completed within the next few months. The draft plan will be reviewed by the state Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

Once the HCD review process has been completed, the Housing Element will be reviewed by the Planning Commission and City Council at public hearings. He stated that for those who wish to track the progress of the Housing Element, it will be posted on the City's webpage. The draft plan will also be posted on the web page. If anyone has any questions regarding the process, they can contact him or Diane Jenkins.

He announced that this was final Citizen's Advisory Committee meeting. He thanked everyone for their participation.

8. Adjournment

Vice-Chair Baum adjourned the meeting.