



Housing/Community Development/Social Services Committee - Board of Representatives

Elaine Mitchell, Chair

Lila Wallace, Vice Chair

Report of Meeting

Date: Tuesday September 23, 2014
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Place: Democratic Caucus Room 4th Floor, Government Center, 888
Washington Boulevard

The Housing/Community Development/Social Services Committee met at the above time and place. In attendance were Chair Mitchell, Vice Chair Wallace, and Committee Member Reps. McNeil, Moore, Watkins and Giordano. Absent or excused was Rep. Mahoney. Also present were Tim Beeble and Eric Larson, Stamford Community Development office; Attorney Dana Lee; Anahaita Kotval, Inspirica; Sharona Cowan, Social Services Division; Keith Cryan, Mutual Housing; Vin Tufo, Charter Oaks; and Ross Burkhardt, New Neighborhoods.

Chair Mitchell called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

| Item No. | Description | Committee Action |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| ¹ 1. HCD29.17 | REVIEW; Procedures (Current and Proposed) for Social Services Relocation. 05/23/14 – Submitted by Anne Fountain 06/17/14 – Held in Committee 07/22/14 – Held in Committee 08/19/14 – Report Made & Held in Committee | Held in Committee 6-0-0 |

Attorney Dana Lee discussed the proposed Social Services Relocation plan. This plan is for tenants who are displaced because of code enforcement violations. This plan was revised to make it more easily understood. The City must provide a place to live for displaced tenants. Stamford has a unique situation because the City does not own a building in which to place tenants and has limited affordable units. For this reason the Stamford Social Services department places many tenants in hotels temporarily. Chair Mitchell asked how much the City spends on hotel stays and Ms. Cowan said roughly \$750.00 to \$800.00 a week and they are customarily in a hotel for up to 3 weeks. Representative Watkins asked how much was spent in the past fiscal year. Ms. Cowan said she did seek an additional appropriation for \$80,000 last fiscal year.

Attorney Dana Lee discussed the changes in the proposed plan as follows:

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- Minor Grammar changes
- Slight changes in the order of Sections
- Page 1 Section II, Administrative Structure Paragraph C is new information.
- Page 2, Emergency Housing is new information
- All benefits are set by State Statute (Attorney Lee clarified the exact benefits that will be received by revamping Section V, Relocation Assistance)
- Page 5 Sub-Section A, Financial Assistance, first bullet point is new language
- Page 7 Sub-Section 3, Liability of Landlord to Reimburse City, is necessary for Stamford
- Page 9 Section 5, Placement in Emergency Housing and Use of Emergency Storage, Section (b). The Committee discussed changing Section (b) from Thirty-five Percent (35%) to Thirty Percent (30%) (**A motion to change from Thirty-five Percent (35%) to Thirty Percent (30%) was made seconded and approved by a vote of 6-0-0. (Reps. Mitchell, Wallace, Giordano, McNeil, Moore, and Watkins in favor)**)
- Page 9 Section VI Sub-Section A, Obligation to Seek Permanent Housing, first paragraph. The Committee would like to change the second sentence to read as follows: "Said displaced person or families shall look for **up to four (4)** bona fide housing prospects each day and shall list such contacts on the "Housing Search Verification Form" (attached hereto as Exhibit F)."
- Page 10 Section C, Eviction for Cause, is a new provision from Federal Law
- Page 10 Section D. Plan Does Not Provide Displacement As A Result Of Fire Or Other Casualty/Exception, Is a new provision.
- Page 10 Section E. Payments To Displaced Persons Not Considered Income or Resources, is a new provision law in the State Statute and part of the Connecticut Relocation Act.
- Page 11 Section H. Relocation Plan To Be Filed With State of Connecticut Department of Housing, is new language and will make them eligible for State funding for relocation.
- The Committee discussed undocumented tenants getting assistance; Attorney Lee will look into this and get the answer to the Committee.

Attorney Dana Lee will revise the plan and send to the Board of Representatives office for distribution.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to hold this item 6-0-0. (Reps. Mitchell, Wallace, Giordano, McNeil, Moore, and Watkins in favor)

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| 2. HCD29.18 | REVIEW; CDBG Process 08/05/14 – Submitted by Rep. Mitchell 08/19/14 – Report Made & Held in Committee | Held in Committee 5-0-0 |
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Chair Mitchell would like the Mayor or his representative to come to the meeting next month to discuss.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to hold this item 5-0-0. (Reps. Mitchell, Wallace, Giordano, Moore, and Watkins in favor)

- ²3. HCD29.19 REVIEW; One for One Housing Replacement Ordinance. **Held in Committee 6-0-0**
08/05/14 – Submitted by Rep. Mitchell
08/19/14 – Report Made & Held in Committee

Attorney Lee discussed the basics of the Ordinance -- if an owner of subsidized housing units decides to demolish these units he must replace these units for the displaced tenants. The landlord must provide temporary dwellings until new units are available.

Chair Mitchell asked if 50 units are demolished, should 50 units be replaced onsite or in the area? Attorney Lee stated yes as long as they are subsidized, but not necessarily in the same area, that is a preference. The units have to be replaced before the units are demolished unless the reason for demolition is not self-created.

Attorney Lee will look into: exact definition of self-created, specific hardship as outlined in the ordinance, the Housing Replacement Review Board involvement and if the Director of Public Safety and Health is aware of his involvement with the One for One housing ordinance.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to hold this item 6-0-0. (Reps. Mitchell, Wallace, Giordano, McNeill, Moore, and Watkins in favor)

- ³4. HCD29.21 APPROVAL; Increase the maximum loan under the HOME Program to \$40,000 per unit for new construction of housing restricted to be affordable to low and very low income people or rehabilitation of housing for extremely low income people at 30% of Area Median Income. **Held in Committee 4-0-0**
08/05/14 – Submitted by Tim Beeble
08/19/14 – Report Made & Held in Committee

Mr. Beeble gave a brief history of the HOME program. He stated the HOME program initially gave \$15,000 per unit and eventually was changed to \$20,000 per unit. He expressed that the \$20,000 per unit is not much of an incentive for builders. He passed out a worksheet of the proposed HOME program in regard to the \$40,000 per unit that will reach the extremely low income population. ([Spreadsheet](#); Low income is 65% AMI; Very Low is 50% AMI) He is concerned about the people in between 30% to 50% of the Area Median Income level. Another incentive is to have the \$40,000 loan be forgivable. The following organizations that utilize the HOME program were invited to give their opinions on the increased loan amount. (Jonathan Rose Companies could not attend, but did send an [email](#))

Mr. Vin Tufo, Charter Oaks, stated that there are a number of buildings already utilizing the tax credits and building the 25% AMI units. He feels that the 25% units that are created should be subsidized and the additional \$20,000 will help with that. His concerns are the \$6,000 to \$10,000 in loss of revenue per unit which is important to the developer. This will be \$80,000 in debt over time. He feels they should find other

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incentives for developers who were not going to apply for tax credits or use section 8 vouchers. He stated they need to go to those developers and ask them what it will take to make that 50% AMI unit a 25% to 30% AMI unit. He stated they will most likely say someone needs to make up the difference in the money. Some things to look at are Zoning densities (more units); tax abatements; WPCA abatements; and Building Permits fees.

Mr. Keith Cryan, Mutual Housing, stated they do utilize the HOME program and most of their units start at the 25% AMI.

Ms. Anahaita Kotval, Inspirica, stated they are exclusive to very low income so it is critical to have 30% to 25% AMI rental units available with the 10 year forgivable loan.

Mr. Ross Burkhardt, New Neighborhoods supports the objective that there is a need for very low income units. Mr. Burkhardt agrees it needs to be subsidized in some way when creating the 25% AMI units.

Chair Mitchell stated there needs to be a Housing Taskforce to help low income citizens in Stamford.

A motion was made, seconded and approved to hold this item 4-0-0. (Reps. Mitchell, Wallace, Giordano, and Watkins in favor)

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by,

Elaine Mitchell, Chair

This meeting is on [Video](#).