

HOUSING ADVISORY COMMISSION
SYNOPSIS OF MEETING AT 5:30 PM

February 9, 2006

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Fink, Vice Chair Moreno, Commissioners Bock, Colacicco, Roberson, Talivaa

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner Ordonez (excused)

CITY STAFF: L. Krutko, E. Moran, R. Chaudhry, K. Clements, A. Herrera, R. VanderVeen

GUESTS: Ron Anderson, Brian Boxall, John W. Bracken, LoDonna Brae, Suzanne Cagle, Sibby Coxhead, Sherry Durkee, Mary Gilliam, Nuemi Guzman, Bob Hansen, Sharon Hansen, Monica Kessler, Tom Seccombe, and Phyllis Ward.

LOCATION: 200 E. Santa Clara Street, W-118, San José CA 95113

MEETING

1. Call to Order/Orders of the Day

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

2. Introductions

Commissioners, staff, and guests introduced themselves.

A. New Commissioner, David Roberson

The Chair welcomed new Commissioner David Roberson.

3. Announcements

The Chair explained how the public address system works in the room.

4. Approval of Synopsis from the January 12, 2006 meeting

The motion was made from Vice Chair Moreno to approve the January meeting synopsis and seconded by Commissioner Talivaa. The motion passed 6-0.

5. Action Items

A. Recommendation regarding the Closure of the Agnews Development Center and possible future use of the site for housing (Leslye Krutko, Director of Housing)

Leslye Krutko, Housing Director, explained that on November 15, the City Council asked the Housing Department to look at the feasibility of assisting Keeping Our Families Together (KOFT) and to report back on their findings. The Housing Director gave an overview of the memo that was sent to Council on February 3, 2006. The Housing Director explained that because of a purchase agreement that Cisco has with the State, Cisco has the first right of refusal on the remaining property and they are interested in purchasing the land for industrial use. Commissioner Roberson asked if there is anything that would prevent Cisco from turning around and selling the property. The Housing Director explained that although there is nothing in the contract to prevent Cisco from taking this action, the land is currently zoned for industrial use. Commissioner Bock asked about the City's role in this process. The Director explained that the City has a role in deciding the zoning of land. Commissioner Bock asked if the company has plans to develop in Coyote Valley. The Director explained that Cisco is no longer pursuing the Coyote Valley site and they are now looking at expanding on the Agnews site.

Steve Johnson, Executive Director of KOFT, indicated that they hope to continue discussions with Cisco and that the company seems to have the interests of the family at heart.

Commissioner Bock expressed concern about how this land could be used for ELI housing and the benefits that Cisco has received from the community. The Chair clarified the role of the Housing Advisory Commission as providing guidance on housing policy issues. The Housing Director explained that the City's position is that this land is not appropriate for housing. Commissioner Bock asked about the State law which requires cities to provide housing for all workers. The Housing Director explained that this is the "Housing Element Law," which requires that local governments plan to meet the projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community.

Brian Boxall, President of the Association for the Mentally Retarded, commented that the state's interest in closing Agnews is in conflict with the City's plan, since it will have an effect on the City's 911 services. He also

explained that he represents a community that cannot speak for themselves and that the families should be involved in the process of deciding where they will be re-located. Mr. Johnson stated that the families at Agnews do not want to stand in the way of jobs that would be developed and they want to play a role in the selection of their new homes.

The Chair commented that he has deep empathy for people who are trying to keep the families together. He commented that it is unlikely that the effort to change the land use designation of this site will get any traction. He hopes that KOFT will continue to work with Housing Department staff and recommends that the Commission continue to keep abreast of the issue. Mr. Boxall commented that group homes provide a balance of residential and job opportunities, since they serve as a home for the people who live there and a place of employment for caregivers.

B. Creation of New Task Force related to Extremely Low-Income Housing (Chair)

The Chair explained that there is a need for a task force designated for ELI housing. He explained that Commissioner Bock and Vice Chair Moreno would like to name it the ELI and Inclusionary Zoning Task Force. The Chair made a motion to create a task force that would try to find land for ELI housing and continue to research inclusionary zoning. The Housing Director explained that the work in Coyote Valley included a financial review of inclusionary zoning and ELI housing. The Director also explained that next week, a report will be issued on sources of funds for low-income housing by Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC). Vice Chair Moreno commented that funds for ELI housing are so limited that inclusionary zoning appears to be the best option they have for creating housing. The Chair stated that Commissioner Bock and Vice Chair Moreno will be on the task force and they will keep abreast of this issue. The Housing Director recommended that Kristen Clements, Housing staff, also join the group. The Chair commented that there is still one opening on the task force.

6. Public Hearing

A. Consolidated Annual Action Plan 2006-2007 – Hearing on Housing Needs of the Community

Ron Anderson commented that the City needs to address the issue of senior housing. He asked the Housing Director about the non-profit that provides funding for low-income housing. Ms. Clements indicated that LISC is an intermediary organization that provides pre-development funds for projects.

Mary Gilliam, Housing Administrator for Northern California Presbyterian Homes and Services, introduced herself to the Commission and explained that their organization is interested in doing more in the field of ELI housing. Commissioner Bock stated that they will invite Ms. Gilliam to the ELI Task Force.

Tom Seccombe, Affordable Housing Network, commented that over the last 19 years, community organizations have campaigned to create 6,000 units of housing, but this only meets the need of a small portion of the neediest people. He stated that the current Con Plan would only meet 5% of the demand and at this rate it would take 100 years to meet the current need. Mr. Seccombe indicated that there is a need to ask property developers to provide substantial funding for ELI housing (letter submitted for the record).

Monica Kessler commented that she is a former software engineer who has recently become homeless. She asked why the City is not doing more to help the homeless find jobs. Commissioners and staff shared information with Ms. Kessler on resources that are available.

Commissioner Bock read a letter which described numerous stories of people who visit the Low-Income Self-Help Center and needed assistance with housing (letter submitted for the record). Ms. Gilliam addressed concerns raised in Commissioner Bock's letter and shared information with the Commission regarding the services available with Northern California Presbyterian Homes and Services.

Sherry Durkee stated that her organization also works in the area of senior housing and that 100% of their units are federally subsidized. She commented that they are disheartened that the current federal administration is proposing to cut Section 202 funding by 25%. She commented that we need more senior housing.

Mr. Seccombe stated that the Section 8 waiting list will be opening soon and that people on the waiting list should not move so that the Housing Authority has their current information.

7. Standing Reports

A. Chair's Report

The Chair explained that the affordable housing part of the Coyote Valley Task Force has been deferred.

B. Director's Report

None

C. City Council Meeting Report for January 17 – February 7, 2006 (Moreno).

None

D. Task Force Reports

(1) Coyote Valley Task Force

Commissioner Colacicco indicated that he has done research on Coyote Valley. He found that landowners that live south of Palm Avenue are discontent and that the state is requiring that more land be allocated for the development of schools. He found that there are a lot of issues that still need to be resolved.

(2) Secondary Units Task Force

None

8. Future Agenda Items

The Chair asked for suggestions on future agenda items. Commissioner Colacicco commented that he is disturbed by a memo he read which indicates that Councilmembers are not required to attend commission meetings. He commented that he wants someone from Councilmember Cortese's office to attend the meetings on a regular basis. The Chair explained that there is usually someone in attendance from the Council member's office. Ms. VanderVeen suggested the following agenda items for future meetings: the Housing Department's budget, April retreat, and noted that in April, there will be hearings for the Con Plan.

9. Public Comments

None

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:29 p.m.