

City of Oxford Housing Advisory Commission  
Minutes of the June 17, 2019 Meeting  
Oxford Municipal Building – First Floor Conference Room

HAC members in attendance: Sherry Lind, Shana Rosenberg, Stephen Schnabl, and Glenn Ellerbe. Scott Straker and David Prytherch were excused. Guest attendees included Judith Kolbas and Brad Hoblitzell.

Staff members in attendance: Sam Perry and Zachary Moore.

Sherry called the meeting to order at 1:38 p.m.

Steve made a motion to approve the May 13, 2019 minutes without changes, Glenn seconded, and there was unanimous approval.

Zach updated the Commission that the June 17 guest speaker evening session had to be postponed due to an urgent matter with one of the scheduled speakers. Desmond Maaytah and Lorie DiStaola have been tentatively rescheduled to July 15 at 7:00 p.m. Zach will update the Commission and website once the location is set.

Zach and Sam updated the Commission on the status of the Housing Affordability Report. A draft from Community Development Professionals (CDP) is being reviewed by staff. Once the report is complete, staff will work with the HAC chair regarding when it will be presented and discussed, likely at the August meeting.

Discussion of Priorities & Next Steps – (a) HAC Review of Planning Cases; (b) Housing Trust Fund; and (c) Western Knolls Property RFP

Due to the rescheduling of the guest speakers the Commission decided to spend some time deciding where to put their energy on the longer term projects listed above.

Since items (a) and (c) had already been presented to the Commission during previous meetings, Zach gave an overview of item (b) concerning the Housing Trust Fund (HTF). Two resolutions from Council, one from 2007 endorsing the creation of a housing fund and one from 2008 approving the fund's creation, were reviewed. The 2007 resolution included a 6-page attachment outlining the purpose, administration, funding, and review criteria associated with the fund. Zach pointed out the three types of projects the fund was intended to support: (1) creation of new affordable units (new development projects); (2) conversion of rental units from market rate to affordable; and (3) preserving homeownership in the Mile Square. Zach also noted an apparent contradiction within the document, as it specified the Community Foundation (OCF) was to assist the HAC in managing the fund in an OCF account; however, current funds are in a City account. Finally, Zach noted that the present balance of the HTF is \$5,744, and that the only activity since the fund's creation and initial seed money of \$10,000 from the general fund was a \$5,000 grant to OCF to purchase a house on Locust Street for the purpose of retaining homeownership in the Mile Square. Sam mentioned that since there had not been activity

with the fund for a very long time, with no additional donations made, the City administration is considering eliminating the HTF line item in the budget. Sam also said that the HTF is in need of a separate revenue fund with an estimated year-end balance, which Zach likened to a “funnel” that can directly feed funds into the HTF. After a lengthy discussion, Glenn made a motion to recommend to maintain the existing HTF and create a new revenue fund in the 2020 budget for donations and charitable contributions for up to \$5,000. Shana seconded, and there was unanimous approval.

There was also discussion about following up with both City staff and the Oxford Community Foundation regarding the original purpose of the HTF. Steve volunteered to reach out to OCF and also draft a letter regarding fundraising efforts.

The discussion then returned to prioritization of the three items (a) thru (c). Shana suggested that because of the complicated nature of the HAC Review of Planning cases, she recommended that this item be tabled. Glenn made a motion to table the topic of HAC Review of Planning Commission cases until a new Law Director is appointed. Steve seconded, and there was unanimous approval.

Brad Hoblitzell reported that the Family Resource Center is continuing to assist families with temporary housing and a myriad of other needs. In 2018 they helped around 600 families with a variety of needs, including a total of 90 families with housing needs.

Sam reported that city staff recently helped a resident of the Miami Mobile Home Park with a utility leak issue that the management company had not addressed properly. Sam believes this could be an area of further assistance since it is already providing affordable housing options in the community.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 by a unanimous voice vote.