

**Princeton Housing Board**  
Monthly Meeting  
October 14, 2014  
Monument Hall – East Meeting Room  
One Monument Drive, Princeton, NJ 08542

**Present:**

**Board Members:**

Lance Liverman  
Alvin McGowen, Chairman  
David Schroyer  
Ruth Thurmond Scott  
Mary Agnes Procaccino

**Staff:**

Gary DeBlasio  
Christy Peacock  
Ed Schmierer, Esq.  
V Bea Snowdon  
Arnaz Yousafzai, PCH

**Guests:**

Jenny Crumiller

**Absent:**

Carol Golden  
Omar Nishtar  
Merilyn Rovira  
Kate Warren

**I. Call To Order - Open Public Meeting Statement**

At 5:36PM, those in attendance introduced themselves. Chairman McGowen called the meeting of the Princeton Housing Board to order by reading: "This is a regular meeting of the Princeton Housing Board for October 14th. Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided as required by the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice was provided of the date, time, and location of this regular meeting by posting a copy of the adopted schedule of the regular meetings with the Clerk's office and by mailing copies to the Trenton Times and the Princeton Packet." Chairman McGowen then welcomed everyone.

**II. Public Comment**

There was no response to the Chairman's request for public comment.

**III. Princeton Community Housing (PCH) Report**

Ms. Yousafzai of PCH reported that 15 new applications have been received. Of those, 13 applications have been accepted. 266 applicants are now on the waitlist.

One efficiency is still available at COPPERWOOD. Mr. Liverman questioned finishes in these units, in response to reports that materials used may be substandard. He also shared continuing concerns about parking at COPPERWOOD. Ms. Yousafzai explained that upgrades are available, for additional charges. Additional monthly fees for pets and parking remain in place at COPEERWOOD, despite concerns expressed to COPPERWOOD management by PCH.

180 applications have been received for phase II of MERWICK STANWORTH. Spring 2016 is the projected completion time for this housing opportunity.

Mr. Liverman questioned the application process for anyone wishing to be an Administrative Agent for AVALON BAY. Ms. Peacock explained that anyone can apply. She also shared that a Municipal Housing Liason (MHL) may be required by COAH to monitor the Administrative Agent for that project.

## **IV. BUSINESS**

### **Group Home Discussion**

Ms. Peacock provided a handout detailing the clinical criteria of New Jersey's Division of Child Behavioral Health Services (NJ-DCBHS) for the definition of a group home and NJ-DCBHS housing placement criteria.

Mr. Schroyer detailed the history of the proposal from YOUTH CONSULTATION SERVICE (YCS), requesting that Princeton fund the purchase of a Group Home. He attended the HMFA meeting to discuss their possible participation in this project.

Should adequate funding be obtained from other sources by YCS, for the purchase and renovation costs, Mr. McGowen explained the Board's role and intention is to consider gap funding for a group home. A description of the existing group homes in Princeton and the Board's gap funding position were discussed further.

Ms. Peacock reports that Hopewell has an obligation to meet and (is actively seeking) to fulfill the COAH mandates for housing. The Township of Hopewell has the funds and is in the position to act more rapidly on housing proposals. Ms. Peacock has already shared this information with the family interested in an immediate local placement, along with the name of a contact in Hopewell who would shepherd the YCS proposal.

Ms. Peacock explained the current legislative process, COAH requirements, and the current action being supported in Princeton to define a ten-year housing plan. These are necessary elements in the process, to determine funding levels for future housing. A group home is not in the defined spending plan, making forward movement on the YCS proposal improbable in the short term. All present agreed that while there is interest in group home development in the future, funding without COAH approval and without Trust funds would place Princeton at risk.

Ms. Thurmond Scott explained the "holistic approach" the Board must take, to address all housing needs, as well as the compassion expressed by Board members for families desiring special needs housing.

Ms. Peacock explained the timeline and parameters applied to any proposal: a holistic assessment of needs, approval through the COAH process, and the availability of funding.

Participation in the new Affordable Housing Task Force was discussed.

### **Affordable Housing Status Report**

Ms. Crumiller questioned the rehabilitation process and Princeton's obligation to refurbish existing units. The current deck project at Griggs farm was discussed, in this light.

Ms. Peacock reports that a *Small Cities* grant was turned down, because the deck refurbishment project at Griggs Farm was not deemed an "innovative use" of funds. There are 70 owner occupied and 70 rented affordable units in Griggs farm. Ms. Peacock desires a decision on repairs, and forward movement, to best serve the tenants there.

PCH has already started deck repairs to rental units. These include: power washing, painting, and sealing decks. Mr. Schmierer explained that these repairs to owner occupied homes would clearly qualify for COAH rehab credits. He further explained that these repairs are allowable in the spending plan. The Board determined that use of the trust funds for currently available COAH credit was an

acceptable plan. All present moved to hire Spiezle Engineering firm, the current structural assessors, to assess the deck problem and suggest a permanent fix. Having already viewed the decks and suggested remedies to PCH, Spiezle is experienced in this matter.

The Board reviewed a down payment loan request, for a qualified purchaser, not to exceed \$5,000. Mr. Liverman's motion to approve the loan was seconded by Ms. Thurmond Scott. All present voted in favor of loan approval.

### **Board Chairman Report**

A report for the new Administrator is being created, to outline Affordable Housing programs and projects for the next 12 months. Learning COAHs response next week will be helpful, in defining forward motion. A needs based assessment was discussed, with Mr. Schraye explaining the importance of being proactive in this regard. The Board suggests sharing the mission statement with the Administrator, as well as inviting him to the November housing board meeting.

Ms. Proccacino inquired about notices regarding the tax freeze, to help Princeton's senior citizens. A workshop on credit was also discussed.

### **Legal**

HOA fees are accruing at 105HA, and the vacancy is a violation of the deed restriction. After eighteen months of trying to engage the owner, Board members agreed that a letter outlining the timeline to settle the fees or sell the property is now appropriate. Ms. Proccacino motioned to approve this action. Mr. Liverman seconded this action, with all voting in favor of this legal intervention.

Cooperation on 233 BH foreclosure was reported by Mr. Schmeirer. The Bank has agreed to keep the deed restrictions. Mr. Schraye questioned the cost of foreclosure and HOA fees. Ms. Thurmond Scott moved that the Board contact JP MORGAN CHASE, to determine the buy out and HOA fees for the property, and to approve purchase at a cost not to exceed \$79,000. Ms. Proccacino seconded the purchase, with all remaining Board members voting in favor of this action.

### **V. Minutes**

All voted in favor of Ms. Proccacino's motion and Ms. Scott's second, to accept the September 2014 minutes as submitted.

### **VI. Adjournment**

With many housing units under contract and successfully closed, Ms. Peacock's efforts were commended by all present. Ms. Proccacino's motion to adjourn was seconded by Mr. Schraye. There being no further business, all voted in favor of adjournment at 7:08PM

Respectfully submitted, V Bea Snowdon