

Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA)
Resident Advisory Council

NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FCHRA RESIDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

Thursday, November 4, 2004

On November 4, 2004, the members of the FCRHA Resident Advisory Council met at 8350 Richmond Highway, Alexandria, VA at 7:00 p.m. Lacking a quorum the Council did not conduct official business.

PRESENT: Cynthia Thompson, Nancy Vaughn, Sandie Simpson, Calvin Nokes, Jennifer Waitt, John Croley, and Gulshan Khan.

ABSENT: Khadijah Baltrop, Paulette Whiteside, Lisa Bathen, Donna Dye, Vasantha Mba, Charlen Kyle, Jersuaem Tegbaru, and Pam Cave.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Vaughn called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Council held off on approving minutes due to a lack of quorum.

Council held off on re-electing a secretary due to a lack of quorum.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mike Finkle discussed the new payment standards to go into effect starting December 1, 2004

These changes are in effort to compensate for HUD budget cuts as well as increased HCD costs. We are going to HUD to ask for a waiver to get the payment standards implemented sooner than the 2nd recertification. We are going to go to landlords and ask them to refrain from raising tenant rents. We are trying to avoid situations where we would have to start shrinking the program, by pulling back vouchers or through not giving out vouchers when we have people who leave the program.

Kay continued the review process of the 5 year plan. The council picked up the discussion where the council left off at the October meeting. The next step is that when there is a quorum to recommend or not recommend the 5 year plan to go to the FCHRA to go out for public comment.

On page 22 on the right hand side change Section 8 to Housing Choice
Need clarification on page 23 "System was changed to use preference-like priorities; will continue to "give Priority....

Kay finished the 5 year plan process by going over that the Next meeting will be November 18 and we will start the annual plan process.

Kay moved on to a discussion of the consolidated plan. The council is one group of 6 that have input into the final product. The council would like to see the final product.

1. What makes your community a good place to live? What is helpful to you and your neighbors?
 - Fitness pool, exercise room, community picnics, resident yard sale or bake sale: brings community together. Managers participate in community.

- Organizations within communities (e.g., nonprofits, faith organizations) take responsibility to help the community.
 - Communication is important. Flyers, notices, announcements are helpful.
 - Belleview has association newsletters and they are helpful to explain community rules.
 - Homework hotspots good. Parents need to volunteer more.
 - Having different organizations and activities by outsiders can be negative or positive. Residents become dependent and lose a sense of community. Residents need to be empowered to organize and carryout activities for themselves and for each other. Residents need to participate in their community, and this helps them move toward self-sufficiency.
 - Community watch is good. Neighbors report strangers and strange activities. Traditional Neighborhood Watch is perceived as dangerous; now use "Window Watch."
 - Share-op babysitting works well and the resulting relationships help lend sense of community.
 - At Colchester, County had initiative to look at community problems such as loitering, high delinquency, graffiti, and "bankrupt nature of the community in general."
2. What things need to be done to help you, your family, or other families in your community to lead a better life?
- Sometimes people loiter and trespass, sit on steps of apartment buildings, and obstruct passageways. Need more security to deter loiterers.
 - Need more emphasis on enforcement of laws relating to nuisance behaviors.
 - Need positive alternative activities or places to go for the people who hang out and annoy others.
 - Harder to help in communities with individual owners and lack of centralized management.
 - Resolving neighbor to neighbor problems is difficult. Instances where outside intervention could have helped and was available but not used.
 - When neighbors complain about neighbors, government should first suggest that neighbors work it out, depending on circumstances and safety.
 - For landlord disputes, the landlord should be involved rather than be circumvented by tenant going directly to County with a complaint.
3. What do you think are the biggest needs that have not been met in your community? What could help your community to meet those needs?
- In communities with a mix of rental and owned units, residents do not always associate with each other positively. Relationships are sometimes adversarial.
 - Concept similar to "adopt a neighborhood" for local institutions (houses of worship, fire stations, boy/girl scout troops, etc.) to provide continuity of oversight and involvement in their local neighborhoods.
 - Need more procedural accommodations for persons with disabilities, especially cognitive disabilities.
 - Need to evaluate customer service with surveys and objective evaluations (for ADA accommodations and assisted housing services.)
 - In north Barros, kids play games like football in the street and damage parked vehicles. There is not enough space for kids to play. Need better on-site amenities for elementary kids.
 - Better transportation options are needed. Would improve access to community parks and recreation facilities.
 - Need more satellite court centers and better access to court services to help resolve disputes. Services at South County Center are not enough.

ADJOURNMENT: Chairperson Vaughn adjourned the meeting at 9:05 p.m.