

Oak Bluffs CPC Meeting
12/7/09
Oak Bluffs Town Library Meeting Room

Members Present: Stephen Durkee, Chairman, Alison Shaw, James Westervelt, Joan Hughes, Harvey Beth, Nancy Phillips, Jevon Rego and Charles Rock and Cheryll Sashin.

Also Present: Adam Wilson, Zoning Administrator and Administrative Assistant to the CPC. Town Administrator Michael Dutton.

The meeting began at 4:30 pm

Stephen let Michael talk about the state match. He said the auditors think that it would be better not to use state match until it's clearly stated what will be in the account. He said he would have a specific dollar amount the committee could work with by the next meeting.

Harvey talked about the Community Preservation Coalition's determination of what is available from each of the 3 distributions. He said there is confusion as to what the match will be for the FY '10 budget and what it could be in FY '11. There was discussion about what is available to cover current expenditures and appropriations that have already been made vs. what could be projected into the next year.

Stephen said that if the Finance Director has given a directive not to use any match money then the committee should with looking at \$428,893 as the only money available. Stephen thanked Michael for his time and he then left the meeting.

-The minutes from 11/9 were reviewed. James had an amendment about Eastville Beach application not using "maintenance" in their application because the CPC can't consider it. Cheryll asked how many spare lanterns did the Parks Department have for the application requesting lantern replacement in Nashawena & Waban Park. Adam remembered Rich Combra saying there were 3.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as amended. The vote was 8 - 0 - 1.

-David Vigneault from DCRHA spoke 1st to the committee about the request for rental assistance program. He came in with a revised proposal asking for more money. It has gone up from 66K to 132K. The request is so that the program is fully funded through the CPA. Prior years had the program financially supported through preservation act money as well as funds from IAHF but the program can no longer count on financial support from the Housing Fund.

David talked about who is in the program and how it is run. He said there is natural attrition so that if there is full funding from the town, and some participants end up dropping out in the course of the year they will have an opportunity to get a few of the 29 OB residents on the waiting list into the program. He said it is an annualized program and most people average 3 years in it before moving on. The subsidies work for different people in different places regarding living on the island. He said there is a preponderance of single family homes with many children.

-David said the \$132K request is to cover all 22 rentals in OB. He said that the subsidy average across the island is 6K per household. The 132K request covers the current households + planning and management and the opportunity to place a few more that are waiting into the program. If the Committee went strictly by the average then the total cost for OB is \$126K.

-Prior year's requests were talked about. Other towns' commitments were stated. Harvey pointed out that the \$132K request still doesn't cover all 22 rentals in the town. The figure is closer to \$150K. Dave said attrition over the year will reduce the overall expense and that the subsidy average is high and DCRHA is working on a way to lower the 6K average for each household. Dave felt confident that \$132K will subsidize 22 households in the town.

-Nancy asked about the possibility of matching subsidies with a program that would bring a service to the town. There was talk of the criticism in the program being perceived as a handout and whether or not it's fair. David said the program doesn't want to pull pity strings - it's a program that is a practical response to the gap that exists between income and rent on the island. He said there are more year round rentals available but there is also not much work available. He said the market survey in October showed 50 year round rentals, most 3 bedroom at 1,400; 2 bedroom at 1,200 and 1 bedroom at 1,000 (all without utilities).

-Joan asked about the revised request and what would happen if the committee had to recommend significantly less. David said natural attrition with no refills will be the 1st thing to consider. He said an unspecified amount of rentals would have to end July 1st if other fundraising efforts could not cover the expected gap.

James asked how it is going with the current crises. David said alternative funding has found its way to help pay subsidies for the next few months. He also said that most landlords restructured their rents and took less in order to keep good tenants in their income homes.

David said there are no surprises with this program; people know how it is run and who runs it. Jevon asked what if IAHF came back to once again helping with the funding? David said that IAHF has already been in the game long enough and gave DCRHA a directive years ago that eventually the whole program, and it's funding, would be in the lap of DCRHA for fundraising as well as management. Alison asked if the DCRHA can fundraise. David said the IAHF does the fundraising

and not them.

-Next on the agenda was Selectman Ron DiOrio and chairman of the town's affordable housing committee. He briefly gave an update on the trust fund the committee wants to establish in April's town meeting. He said the fund, if approved by voters, will have the Board of Selectmen as well as the five members of the committee as members deciding how funds within the trust will be allocated for affordable housing projects.

-Ron gave an progress report on the Old Library conversion project. He said that when done, the 3 rental units in the building + the commercial space will start giving the town income which could possibly go towards getting other residents off the rental assistance waiting list and into the program. Ron said that the AHC would use the 400K it's requested to plan for a town owned housing rental program. He said by establishing this kind of program for the town, there can be matching dollars from state lending and grant resources. Ron said the town would own properties for rent but rely on the DCRHA to manage those rentals and property upkeep.

-Joan asked if the town trust will allow leverage for other housing dollars that has to be target specific. Ron said it's an assignment of dollars based on housing units. He said that units on MV are looked at costing more than elsewhere in the state. Joan and Ron talked about matching money and the inability to hire local contractors.

-Committee members talked about different scenarios at town meeting getting approval to establish the fund and putting money into it. Charles asked about accountability with the CPC losing recommendation power over money going to another committee. Stephen asked about the CPA monies going to a committee that could possibly x-out the voters' voice as to how CPA money is spent. Ron said that the trust will have both the AHC + BOS as members and plenty of public meetings for town input. Harvey pointed out that he and James are already on the AHC so there would be a lot of transparency as to what the AHC was doing with CPA funds.

Ron said that with other towns having a trust in place, there was an immediate addressing of the rental crises right away. He talked about the TRI program and how it had available funds that could help with the DCRHA but had to go through several hoops in order to get the money to the rental assistance program and its sudden budget shortfall.

-Cheryll asked if there will be anymore requests for money from the CPC for the old library project. Ron said they have enough funds to meet the low bidder. He said that the trust request will not have any of its dollars going towards the Old Library (The Noyes Building Project).

-Next on the agenda was Ewell Hopkins from IAHF and their request for 400K in historic preservation funds for the Denniston Building at Bradley Square. He handed out his report covering the 3 buildings' costs on the property. Bradley Square was going to cost 5.3 million to construct. It will be constructed with CPC monies and private donations + the sale of commercial space on the property. The gap between the sale of all the units and the total cost of the project will be covered by a loan from the bank. He said that what ever the CPC decides to recommend towards the request for funding will determine what the IAHF will decide about the historic aspect of the Bradley Square project. Charles asked about the gap in building and what the units will eventually sell for. Ewell said it's over a million dollars. When asked what funds have currently been raised, Ewell said there is 300K currently available + the 400K from the CPA for the project. Phillippe Jordi, from the Island Housing Trust, said they are thinking of a phased approach looking to build the buildings at different times. Charles said it's a huge gap between what funds are available now and the total cost. The total amount available for the CPC to work with this year was discussed as well as the projected sale of the units. Ewell said his application is very time sensitive and that his group would probably have to rethink priorities if they don't receive the requested funds. He said if the community is not behind Bradley Square then they make have to go into a different direction with the property.

When Steve asked about the possibility of the committee not being able to grant the money this year. Ewell said that if there is no consideration for the Denniston building as being historic, they would relook at the building's status in relation to the other components of the affordable housing project. The money will drive what the project will end up being.

-Joan asked Ewell if the committee could only allocate 10% of the historic preservation funds to Bradley square would that be enough? He said it would. Steve said the approved 400K allocation did go to the voters with an understanding that there was affordable housing but also a component that preservation of the 1st island African American church would occur as well. There was brief talk of the historical commission writing to say that the artifacts in the structure should be preserved.

-James said the 400K in place for community housing at Bradley Square did include the affordable unit in the Denniston building as well. Ewell said the project is a big project for the town. IAHF has a wide specter of home ownership, rentals and so forth. He talked about the CPC delivering a mandate for Bradley Square to go forward. Harvey asked what kind of private support is out there. Ewell said it's there but waiting to see how the community will rally before he goes to private donators. Ewell said the project is not cast in stone because he does not have the funding to complete it. Cheryll asked if the committee was his last resort. He said no.

-Steve asked Ron where the town was on the project. He said that if there were a number of donors for Bradley Square he would be heartened but he doesn't know how much support there is. Joan looked at the lack of available funds and just how

much of a mandate the CPC could give for such a large project. Jevon said is the support more for community housing or historic preservation.

-Candy Nichols, a property owner near the Bradley property says she supports the rental program for the present time. She said the crisis in home rentals speaks to it. She read a letter that said the DOR has criteria about preservation of buildings that are registered. She talked about churches getting money. She questioned the use of the building and lack of public access getting preservation funds. She said the building was never a church; the church was in different locations. She said it lacks the identity of being what the proposed preservation will be.

-Don Muckerheide, a neighbor said that the economy today is the way it is because of the housing situation. He said any extra money should go to rental assistance. It is the only way to keep the island going. He's in favor of rental tax for the transient use of residential properties.

The meeting adjourned @ 7:00 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for December 14th @ 4:30 pm.