



MEMORANDUM

Date: February 24, 2009
To: SWRPA Housing Committee
From: Benjamin Henson
Re: Housing Committee Meeting Summary – Thursday, February 12, 2009

This is a summary of the February 12, 2009 Housing Committee meeting. Mr. Benjamin Henson called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. Present were: co-Chair Ms. Anna Duleep, Mr. Bud Boucher, Mr. Tom Failla, Mr. Dudley Williams and Dr. Margaret Wirtenberg. Floyd Lapp and Benjamin Henson of SWRPA were also present. Co-Chair Paul Settelmeyer attended via teleconference.

Mr. Benjamin Henson welcomed the Committee's newest member, Bud Boucher, Wilton and discussed the preliminary agenda for the April 14 housing event. The event is being called the *2009 SWRPA Housing Summit: Supporting Affordable & Workforce Housing in Connecticut's Small and Medium Sized Towns*. Representative Jim Himes will be extended an official invitation to keynote the event at the next MPO meeting. It was agreed that Tim Bannon, the new President/Executive Director of the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) should be pursued as a potential back-up keynoter. Darien First Selectwoman Evonne Klein and Westport First Selectman Gordon Joseloff will speak to their current municipal efforts to encourage and create affordable/workforce housing in their respective Towns. Stuart Adelberg, United Way of Greenwich will present his Workforce Housing Report which explains the correlation between housing location and impacts on quality of life and the environment. Tim Hollister, Shipman and Goodwin will discuss his work tracking C.G.S. 8-30g affordable housing appeals cases and attempt to debunk the myths associated with this controversial legislation. Seila Mosquera, NeighborWorks New Horizons will present case studies of affordable/workforce housing developments that her organization has completed in comparable small/medium Connecticut towns. Chris Bruhl, Business Council of Fairfield County will moderate the panel. The panel shall remain focused on the topic of supporting affordable and workforce housing in Connecticut's *small and medium sized* towns. An 11:30-12:00 question, answer and comment session has been added to the preliminary agenda.

Mr. Settelmeyer added that NeighborWorks New Horizons is an affiliate of the national organization NeighborWorks America. Mutual Housing of Southwestern Connecticut, located in Stamford is also an affiliate. Why are we having a group from New Haven present and not our local group?

Mr. Henson explained that Mutual Housing works almost exclusively in Stamford and Norwalk, our Region's two largest cities. Larry Kleutsch, Executive Director presented at the 2008 summit which focused on financing mechanisms and developments. It makes more sense this year to bring in examples of developments which have been successful in smaller municipalities. Perhaps such a

presentation will encourage our smaller towns to build a relationship with Mutual Housing and vice versa.

Mr. Settelmeyer noted that Neighborworks New Horizons appears to be a very active organization with \$32 million in proposed projects. He also reminded Mr. Henson to work to keep each speaker on topic this year.

Mr. Henson explained that he discussed a format with Ms. Mosquera that included a PowerPoint presentation of case studies of completed and planned developments with images. The focus is on the developments and how they got done, but not on NeighborWorks New Horizon's mission or portfolio.

Mr. Lapp stated that all speakers at this point have committed to attending with the exception of Representative Himes who will be receiving an invitation shortly.

Mr. Henson clarified that Seila committed and that if she has a future conflict, she will still send a qualified participant on her behalf.

Mr. Lapp explained that First Selectwoman Klein's presentation will include her efforts with three 8-30g appeals cases, two proposed affordable housing developments and the Darien Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (DAHAC) which laid the groundwork for the recently drafted *Darien Affordable Housing Plan*. He also said that First Selectman Joseloff will present Westport's work on two affordable housing projects: Baron's South and Hale's Court, both of which have received considerable community support and opposition. He added that he was recently impressed by Chris Bruhl's performance as a moderator of another panel.

Mr. Williams agreed.

Mr. Settelmeyer noted the Business Council of Fairfield County's study on affordable housing a few years ago.

Mr. Failla asked if anyone remembered the group that was responsible for all the affordable housing in Stamford.

Mr. Henson and Mr. Williams mentioned Mutual Housing, New Neighborhoods and the Stamford Housing Authority. Mr. Henson added that the City of Stamford funds its own affordable housing fund which allows the Housing Authority to develop affordable housing.

Mr. Failla remembered a Dr. Appleby who founded a company to develop low income housing in partnership with private financiers and recommended looking into whether he and/or this company is still operating.

Mr. Settelmeyer asked about the status of SWRPA's new website and the housing clearinghouse project. Both need to be ready and advertised along with the Summit.

Mr. Henson thinks the new website will be ready to launch at the end of February, but will have to double check with Patty [Payne]. He asked if anyone had any further suggestions for reaching out and expanding the list of invitees to the Summit.

Dr. Wirtenberg said that it would be okay to email the League of Women Voters on her behalf.

Ms. Duleep said that the housing group in South Norwalk would like to be invited to the Summit and that she should be able to get contact info for the Norwalk Fire Chief, N.E.O.N. and C.T.E.

Everyone agreed that officials with the Stamford, Norwalk and Greenwich hospitals should be invited.

Mr. Failla has contact information for S.H.R.M. He added that Perter Powell, Interfaith should be invited as well as the CT Development Authority. Other groups mentioned included the Stamford Enterprise Zone and the Workforce Investment Board.

Ms. Duleep asked if there is going to be a charge for the Summit this year.

Mr. Henson said that he has been directed to charge a nominal \$10 registration fee to help cover costs and add value to the event.

The date and time of the next committee meeting was discussed. Tentatively, the next meeting will occur on Thursday, March 26, 2008 at 4:00 PM at the SWRPA offices.

Ms. Duleep adjourned the meeting at 4:56 PM.