



Community Housing, Neighborhood Development and Public Safety Committee

Chaired by Council Member Golden

Committee Members: Golden, Peters, Scarborough, and Williams

February 6, 2018 – 10:00 a.m.

3rd Floor Lobby Conference Room

Agenda

Present:

Chairman Jeffrey Golden, and Committee Members Monica Peters, Donald Scarborough, and Christopher Williams

Staff Present:

Randy McCaslin, Deputy City Manager; JoAnne Carlyle, City Attorney; Mike McNair, Community Development Director; Michelle McNair, Community Resource Manager; Toni Jackson, Housing Specialist; Lauren Atwell-Bass, Community Resource Specialist; Eric Olmedo, Budget & Administrative Director; Jeron Hollis, Director of Communications & Public Engagement; Lisa Vierling, City Clerk

News Media:

No News Media Present

Note: The "Update and Review of Activities" PowerPoint Presentation will be attached as a permanent part of these proceedings.

Community Development- Department Overview

Mike McNair, Director of Community Development & Housing, provided an overview and shared the Organizational Chart for his department, which consists of 18 employees. The Affordable Housing Manager position is currently vacant, as well as two Local Codes Enforcement Officer positions.

The goal of the Community Department is to strengthen neighborhoods by:

- Providing decent, affordable housing for low-to-moderate income families;
- Promoting neighborhood and economic development;
- Assisting with the provision of services for homeless populations; and
- Strategic code enforcement

Mr. McNair explained that High Point is an “Entitlement” city meaning the city gets an allocation from Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and all Entitlement cities/ participating jurisdictions are required by HUD to prepare:

- Annual Action plan (AAP) describing sources, uses, and beneficiaries (the AAP will be placed on the Council’s agenda in April for approval)
- Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)
- 5-yr Consolidated Plan
- Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing (3-5 years)

Mr. McNair proceeded to identify the Annual Funding Sources and described the activities associated with the funding sources. The Annual Funding Sources are: the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program; the HOME Program; and the Core City Redevelopment Fund. The 2017-2018 Annual Budget for the Community Development Department is \$4,371,332.

The **Annual Action Plan** (AAP) schedule will kick-off in February and requires citizen participation meetings, a public review and public comment period, public hearings before the Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) and the City Council. The AAP schedule will be on the City Council’s May 7th agenda for formal approval, and will be forwarded to HUD on May 15th.

Mr. McNair expounded on two recent studies that help guide the activities for the Department.

1. 2015 Housing Market Segmentation Study

This study was commissioned in July 2015 and included 15,000+ parcels with a focus on factors such as housing, economics, and population. This study identifies areas where housing markets are weak and is based on block groups, which are divided into five ratings based on data (Stable, Functioning, Constrained, Weak, and Extremely Weak). It is used to help guide the department on housing activities and to identify neighborhoods for things such as Operation Inasmuch (OIAM).

Mr. McNair pointed out that crime can be a factor in the weak housing markets and Deputy City Manager Randy McCaslin noted that the overlays for the Police and Fire Department calls for service are very similar to the Market Segmentation map.

2. 2016 Technical Assistance Scholarship (TASP)- Center for Community Progress

Mr. McNair advised that the Center for Community Progress invited the City of High Point to attend a training institute in March 2015 that was held in Boston. Six locals (including several staff members) attended the institute. The City of High Point applied and was granted a technical assistance scholarship and received 200 hours free technical time for consultants to work with the city in the following four focus areas:

- Data Management Systems & Practices
- Code Enforcement Systems
- Property Tax Enforcement Systems
- Community Partnerships and Programs

The stakeholders for the TASP included City Council, CHP staff, Guilford County Tax Office, Guilford County Schools, community members, and local nonprofits. The study can be located at <https://www.highpointnc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7023>.

The following actions have been implemented as a result of the TASP recommendations:

- Discussions are underway to have city pursue foreclosures for 2-4 year delinquencies;
- County already handles payment plans;
- County has agreed to include unpaid liens on tax bills (this started in 2017 resulting in \$120,000+ collected thus far);
- City has forwarded list of unpaid liens to county for inclusion on tax bills;
- City has established a Community Development Corporation (CDC) to receive property and manage land bank.

The TASP proved to be very beneficial as the city learned how to more effectively fight blight, vacant, abandoned, and dilapidated housing.

Housing Activities include:

- Core City Homebuyer Incentive Program
- Single family development (for infill housing)
 - ✓ Partnership with Pinnacle Bank
 - ✓ Community Housing Solutions
 - ✓ Housing Consultant Group
 - ✓ Habitat for Humanity
- Multi-family Development

Core City Homebuyer Incentive Program:

Mr. McNair reported this is a down payment/closing cost assistance program where eligible applicants can apply for \$7,500 in down payment/closing cost assistance when purchasing a home in the Core City if certain requirements are met. Eight-six total applications have been received since the inception of the program. Mr. McNair noted that staff would be asking in the Annual Action Plan that the amount be reduced from \$7,500 to \$5,000.

Partnership with Pinnacle (formerly Bank of NC):

Pinnacle Bank committed to investing \$5 million in affordable housing in High Point. Five single family homes have been built and sold so far and five additional homes are under construction.

Southside Housing:

Mr. McNair shared the Master Plan for the Southside Subdivision, as well as some photos of homes under construction in this area. Eleven homes are planned for Phase I with 10 of the 11 homes

currently in various stages of completion. Construction of the 11th home is anticipated to begin in Spring 2018.

Mr. McNair shared a map of the Southside area identifying lots where homes have been completed, homes under construction by Community Housing Solutions, properties under construction by Housing Consultant Group; as well as properties in this area that are owned by the city. Thirteen homes have been built and sold in this area, and construction is currently underway for seven additional properties.

He also shared a map of housing activities in the **Graves Avenue** area, which is adjacent to Washington Terrace Park. The city has entered into a partnership with Habitat for Humanity to build homes in this area. Thirty-one homes have been completed and sold with six additional homes under construction, and three properties in queue.

Leveraging Resources- Multi-Family Housing:

- Admiral Pointe (54 apartments for the elderly) (completed in 2012)
- Addington Ridge (58 multi-family units) (completed in 2015)
- Kirkwood Crossing (84 multi-family units) (completed in July 2017)
- Hartley Ridge (84 multi-family units) (construction expected to begin summer 2017)
- Avondale Trace-proposed (96 multi-family apartments) (to be included in the 2018 Action Plan)

Operation Inasmuch

Operation Inasmuch is a one-day event hosted in communities by the City of High Point, local nonprofits, faith, business, and civic groups to provide home repairs at no cost to eligible homeowners where community volunteers work alongside skilled professionals to perform the repairs. These events are held in neighborhoods with weakest markets.

- ✓ Southside (May 5, 2016)
- ✓ Burns Hill (November 5, 2016)
- ✓ Highland Mills (May 7, 2017)
- ✓ Macedonia/Pershing Street (October 2017)
- ✓ Washington Street area (will be held May 19, 2018)

These events are made possible through partnerships with the City of High Point, Community Housing Solutions, Housing Consultants Group, churches, and volunteers in the community. The neighborhoods are selected by the City of High Point in areas deemed to have the most pressing needs, and the city also provides funding for the event. The home repairs are coordinated by Community Housing Solutions and Housing Consultants Group provides the community outreach. The events have proved to be extremely successful thanks to these partnerships and the many churches and volunteers who donate their time and labor.

Operation Inasmuch Stats					
Neighborhood	# of homes Rehabilitated	# of Volunteers			
Southside	11	150			
East Central	12	161			
Highland Mills	21	191			
Macedonia/Pershing	16	147			

Community and Neighborhood Development Activities

- ✓ **Top 10% of Crime and Disorder Properties.** This would be an additional tool available to the city to address crimes and issues associated with rental properties. It would allow for inspection of the property, fines associated with any violations, and a registration/permitting procedure. The Legal Department will prepare an ordinance for Council action. If the ordinance is adopted, then it is suggested that it would be phased in similar to the tethering ordinance spanning a 1.5-year period. Staff is recommending a \$500 fine be levied after the ordinance goes into full effect.
- ✓ **Community Enhancement Project.** Mr. McNair provided information on the Southside Pedestrian Bridge. The bridge improves community connectivity and installation was completed in November 2017. The next steps are to construct a greenway from Taylor to Vail; install lighting for the bridge; and coordinate a ceremony with the community.
- ✓ **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA).** The VITA program has been on-going since 2007 and has resulted in over \$8 million in returns for residents. The services are free for anyone with a household income of \$55,000 or less.
- ✓ **Neighborhood Leaders Council.** The Neighborhood Leaders Council started in 2006 to help neighborhoods come together to improve their communities. There are ten neighborhood associations that come together and hold monthly meetings:
 1. Burns Hill
 2. Highland Mills
 3. Five Points (in the process of re-organizing)
 4. Macedonia
 5. Oakview
 6. Pershing Street
 7. Southside
 8. Washington Terrace
 9. Washington Street
 10. West end
- ✓ **CDBG Public Services Grant Awards.** For the 2017-2018 Budget year, there were ten grants totaling \$60,175 awarded to organizations/entities in the community.

- ✓ **Community Gardens.** The city has an inventory of vacant city-owned property that can be used for community gardens
- ✓ **Traffic Calming.** Washington Terrace neighborhood speed reduction. The first installation of speed cushions was in the Washington Terrace neighborhood. Traffic exceeded speed limits and to help alleviate the speeding problems, the High Point Police Department recommended traffic calming measures. These were funded by Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) program income.

Outdoor Shelter for Animals

Chairman Golden asked when discussion on the outdoor shelter for animals would take place. City Attorney JoAnne Carlyle advised that she has pulled the existing Animal Control Ordinance for comparison purposes. Committee Member Peters encouraged discussion and action as soon as possible due to the cold weather. Ms. Carlyle stated she could provide Council and staff with something in writing, along with a copy of the existing ordinance in the next few days.

Committee Member Peters praised and gave staff accolades for the work that they are doing in the Southside community.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m. upon motion duly made and seconded.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa B. Vierling, MMC
City Clerk

Jeffrey Golden, Chairman