

MINUTES

THRESHOLD

Lexington's Housing Commission
Wednesday, January 26, 2021 – 4:00 p.m.
Live Zoom E-meeting

Threshold:

Present: Fred Kirchner, Chair
Cristyl Vozzo, Vice-Chair
Marylin Alexander, Council Liaison
Nadine Craney
Vicki Turner

City Staff:

Arne Glaeser, Planning Director
Kate Beard, Administrative Assistant

Absent:

CALL TO ORDER:

F. Kirchner called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm.

AGENDA

The agenda was approved unanimously as presented. (5-0)

MINUTES:

V. Turner moved to approve the minutes from the September 22, 2021 and October 27, 2021 meetings as well as the notes from the November 17, 2021 joint educational session as presented. M. Alexander seconded and the motion passed unanimously. (5-0)

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Discussion of December 9, 2021 CDPC Roundtable and November 17, 2021 Joint Educational Session with Planning Commission –

A. Glaeser prefaced the conversation by requesting the Commission discuss take-aways from the roundtable and educational session and how they might inform the Commission's next steps.

F. Kirchner addressed Threshold's purpose statement, interrogating portions of its wording. He indicated he had some reservations about the Commission's ability to oversee a City-wide program in coordination with other local jurisdictions. V. Turner added that the Commission's lack of resources made it even more burdensome. C. Vozzo remarked that Threshold had received grant funding in the past. She added new grant cycles were open which could be sources of funding worth pursuing if Threshold could identify how it would use the funds. In response to a question from V. Turner, A. Glaeser said staff could provide support, whether it be with grant applications or coordinating additional educational sessions, but needed some direction from the Commission.

M. Alexander said a take-away from November 17th session was that now is a good time to engage in housing efforts as funding is available throughout the state. She reported the panelists advised taking the following steps: 1) coordinating a discussion with the Charlottesville area group mentioned by Mr. Famuliner, 2) working with representatives of Buena Vista and Rockbridge to encourage area housing, 3) opening conversations up to the public to determine what types of housing are wanted, 4) taking an inventory of assets, and 5) engaging with the business community to develop partnerships.

C. Vozzo commented that filling the vacancies on the Commission should be a priority. V. Turner suggested developing a press release and adding something to the City website encouraging applications. M. Alexander and C. Vozzo argued the Commission should decide on its direction before publicly asking for applications. V. Turner and F. Kirchner returned to the discussion of the purpose statement, suggesting it may be too ambitious. A. Glaeser pointed out that the purpose statement is in the City Code and amending it would require going through the public hearing process with City Council. He suggested the Commission simply focus on a portion of the purpose statement to determine its direction for the next year.

A. Glaeser asked if Threshold would like staff to research and provide a report on the Charlottesville area group mentioned during the November 17th event. He asked if there was interest in scheduling another educational session with a representative from Virginia Housing. There seemed to be general approval of both suggestions and Director Glaeser confirmed staff would work on both items.

B. Discussion of Threshold's Mission – No additional discussion.

OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Discussion of projects put on hold due to the pandemic – M. Alexander asked if interrupted rehab projects should be given attention and finished. V. Turner asked if there were available funds. A. Glaeser reported the \$2,000.00 received in 2020 was still available. He explained staff had acted as an intermediary, receiving rehab requests and making contact with Habitat, Mission Next Door, or occasionally TAP, to provide the work. He said he believed Habitat and Mission Next Door have started back up with rehab projects, though he could not report on the status of specific projects. There seemed to be general agreement that there be follow up with the individuals who responded to the survey. There seemed to be general agreement that the rehab project assistance be continued.

ADJOURN:

The meeting adjourned unanimously at 4:36 p.m.

Fred Kirchner, Chair
Threshold Housing Commission