



THRESHOLD
Lexington's Housing Commission
Wednesday, January 24, 2024 - 4:00 P.M
Second Floor Conference Room, City Hall
300 E. Washington Street, Lexington, VA

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Approval of Agenda**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
 - A. Approval of November 29, 2023 minutes*
- 4. New Business**
 - A. Continued discussion of options for people experiencing homelessness in the community.
- 5. Other Business**
 - A. Updates from staff – Mission Next Door donation and windshield housing assessment
- 6. Adjournment**

*indicates attachment

MINUTES

THRESHOLD

Lexington's Housing Commission
Wednesday, November 29, 2023 – 4:00 p.m.
Second Floor Conference Room, City Hall

Threshold:

Present: Shadrey Sands, Chair
Marisa Charley
Nadine Craney
Fred Kirchner, Vice-Chair
Marylin Alexander, Council Liaison
Nicholas Betts, Council Liaison

City Staff:

Arne Glaeser, Planning Director
Kate Beard, Administrative Assistant

CALL TO ORDER:

S. Sands called the meeting to order opened the discussion at 4:00 p.m.

AGENDA

A. Glaeser said he had an update on a property served by the housing repair program prior to the pandemic and requested it be added to the agenda. The agenda was unanimously approved with that amendment. (M. Charley / M. Alexander)

MINUTES:

The minutes from the August 23, 2023 meeting were unanimously approved as presented. (N. Betts / M. Charley) The notes from the October 25, 2023 discussion were acknowledged.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Discussion of options for people experiencing homelessness in the community –

S. Sands reminded the Commission that the nearest homeless shelters are in Roanoke and Staunton. RARA encourages individuals seeking shelter go to them so as to become eligible for the additional services offered, and will provide vouchers for transportation or gas. However few people accept the offer because they do not want to be in the shelter system. Another option is the warm shelter in Waynesboro which is a partnership of several churches there. RARA also has a voucher system for emergency overnight stays at partnering local hotels, however hotel approvals for Rockbridge County residents have recently plummeted due to issues the hotels have had with property damage. Short of establishing a local shelter, which he and M. Charley explained would be unrealistic, he asked if the Commission could suggest other options.

Several Commissioners and City staff shared anecdotes of recent, local interactions with individuals living out of their cars who had been confronted by law enforcement and asked to move. There was extended discussion of the possibility of a designated parking area available to people in these circumstances, such as the Seattle program mentioned during the October 25th discussion, or a warm shelter program similar to the one in Waynesboro.

A. Glaeser cautioned that a designated parking program, no matter where it was located, could require zoning actions. M. Alexander suggested that public support would likely require significant community education as to the existence of a local need. Following additional consideration of possible sites for a designated parking area and how to approach implementing such a program, M. Charley and S. Sands offered to form a subcommittee to develop position paper based on the models used for programs in other municipalities and K. Beard offered to provide staff support.

B. Update on CDBG planning grant for windshield housing assessment – A. Glaeser reported the City had been awarded the planning grant and he would attend the first planning meeting on December 13th.

C. Update on CSPDC Regional Housing Study survey - A. Glaeser reported the regional housing study was still expected late Spring or early Summer.

D. Update on property served by the housing repair program prior to the pandemic – A. Glaeser reported he had been in touch with Mission Next Door to check on the status of the repairs requested at 205 Massie Street. He was able to confirm that the main repair – the installation of new gutters – had been completed, but several more minor repairs remained incomplete, mostly due to their having fallen through the cracks when repair work resumed after pandemic restrictions were lifted. Mission Next Door was apologetic and pledged to schedule those repairs, though there were other more pressing safety related projects at other locations that would receive priority. A. Glaeser asked if Threshold wished to use a portion of the funds being held to make a donation to Mission Next Door, either for the expenses associated with the outstanding repairs at 205 Massie Street or for repair work in Lexington more generally. A. Glaeser also reported that Mission Next Door had recently completed repairs at 12 Perry Lane and provided a breakdown of the repairs, donated materials and associated volunteer hours. Following discussion, **M. Charley moved to direct staff to donate \$500 to Mission Next Door. M. Alexander provided a second and the motion passed unanimously. (6-0)**

ADJOURN:

The meeting was adjourned at 5:16 p.m. (S. Sands / M. Charley)

S. Sands, Chair
Threshold Housing Commission