

Minutes from the 2005 QAP
Public Hearing
August 5, 2004

Agency staff members in attendance:

Helena Cunningham
Debra Washington
Ann Herring
Cynthia Weatherspoon
Johnese Roberson
Terri Granata
Regina Robertson
Millicent Primas
Michelle Christopher
Jon Phelps
Robin Dubuclet
James Jordan
Louis Russell
Alvin Johnson, Jr.
Danny Veals

Other guests in attendance:

Richard L. Murray
David Turrentine
Edward Taylor
Johnny Fuselier
Will Guillory
Kerry Banks
James Freeman
Woody Whittington
Vernon Martin
Lionel Smith, III
Craig Davenport
Phyllis P. Phillips
James Neville
Jonah Dowling
Frank Sagnibene
Evelyn Winfield
Jack Tolson
James Bond
Wayne Clark
John Majure

Francisco Lestero
John P. Mitchell
Grant Etheridge
Tommy Hebert
Walter Guillory
Jeff Beaver
Butch Richardson
Clara Burke
David Miller
Robert Whittington
Todd Little
Art Schuldt
William McDonald
George Jenne
Daniel Strange
Ashley Smith
Robert Rowan
Dale Lancaster
Keith Slabaugh
Tony Baxter
Yvette Cola
D. Keith Howard
Joe Monsove
Greg Page
Tony Brunini
Frank Thaxton
Travis Miller
Ford Gibson
Fred Jacob
Desirre Octave
James Hunter
Teresa Stewart
Craig Wall
Terri J. Dauzat
Yvonne R. Emerson
Ray Rose
Stuart Rose
Mike Vales
Doug Vales
Michael Mann
Hank Mann
Martha Johnson
Buddy Spillers
Denise Lavergne
Jacqueline Papillion
Louis H. Thomas

John Freeman
Murry Calhoun
Byron Turner
Windell Millicks
Will Belton
Scarlett Duplechain
Shawn M. Barney
Dan Wimberly
Linda Banks
Maury Baker
Morris Carmbs, Jr.
James Gilmore
Craig Condon
Kevin Williams
O'Neal Furr

Helena Cunningham – Welcomed everyone to the Public Hearing.

Michelle Christopher – Introduced HOME and LIHTC staff along with the Agency's Program Director. She introduced the brand new LIHTC staff: Jon Phelps, Jimmy Jordan and Louis Russell. And noted the loss of Marjorianna Willman, Veronica Dent and Desirre Octave, who assisted the LIHTC last year. After addressing housekeeping matters. There was an introduction of the guests.

SKIP INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

I guess now that everyone has been introduced, I will read into the record the written comments that we've received in the past weeks.

SKIP READING OF LETTERS

At this point we will open the floor for comments.

David Turrentine – Commented about minimum lot sizes, 24 CFR (Site and Neighborhood Standards) and minority concentrations in QCTs and Farmerville. Finally, he commented on the reduction in Section 8 payments that are coming through the voucher program. In our point-driven scenario for selection criteria we get more points for adding more goodies, for example, washer/dryer connections, 100% brick, and blue star energy efficiency. All of these things are wonderful things for homes, but they cost money. What's happening to us today with the voucher reductions is that we are getting less rent from voucher tenants.

Helena Cunningham –Commented on the economic development pool, clarifying the Agency's intent to only set aside \$300,000 in tax credits for the Farmerville area.

David Turrentine – “Just a thought for 2006. I’d be all for (Farmerville), but I want more than 6 weeks to go find my land.”

Keith Howard – My concern is redevelopment of areas that already exist in the metropolitan areas such as New Orleans, Shreveport, and Baton Rouge and the minimum lot size requirements.

Michelle Christopher – Agreed that the Agency could give deference to city and parish ordinances regarding minimum lot sizes where they existed.

Keith Howard – I know Baton Rouge, Monroe and Shreveport all cover new construction requirements with parish ordinances or by local governing ordinances.

Helena Cunningham– Noted that the problem is found in rural areas where standards aren’t established. We are finding that developers are putting the houses too closely together. Then at that point area leaders are at the agency asking why did we allow that to happen. But they (rural areas) don’t have any established zoning or standards for lot size. So, this is our effort to create something.

Keith Howard – Can you possibly amend it to say where there is not an existing zoning ordinance, then that way...

Helena Cunningham – That’s a great idea.

Keith Howard – Then that way we could adhere to the local municipalities, but where there is not an existing zoning ordinance then it must meet certain criteria.

Robert Rowan – Indicated that if HOME has to comply with 24 CFR then LIHTCs should, too.

Michelle Christopher – Explained why 24 CFR was added. We understand that this is the direct conflict between the tax credit program and the HOME program. The tax credit program says go to the QCTs, get the bump up in basis, whereas the HOME programs says, for the most part, if you are going to the QCTs don’t create areas of minority concentration. We have run into difficulty in recent years of having areas saturated with the affordable housing developments. So what we are asking is if you are going into these areas, meet these requirements.

Helena Cunningham – I think it’s a good policy. We need to monitor the amount of low-income units going in the same area.

George Jenne – Discussed minimum lot sizes and urban areas.

Tony Brunini – Questioned the non-profit set-aside of 15% and why the non-profit was more worthy than a for profit developer.

Michelle Christopher – Indicated that non-profit/CHDO projects accounted for over 20% of the allocation of our credit ceiling. We, taking comments that were made at the planning session earlier this year, decided to put a cap on the amount of non-profit projects to the 15%.

Tony Brunini – That is better, but I would like to see it drop to the 10%. My second question I have is the 24 CFR section. I'm going to have a hard time finding a place in Monroe that does not have a majority concentration of minorities.

Travis Miller – The thing I wanted to mention is a lot of the other states are giving points for quality and experience in development.

Clara Burke – Commented that she was opposed to Site and Neighborhood and the 15% limit on non-profits.

Kerry Banks – Will there be a HOME funding round?

Cynthia Weatherspoon – We are going to do a forward commitment of 2005 Funds for the HOME program.

Unannounced Speaker – commented that they were opposed to public notice sign posting in that it invited NIMBYism.

Helena Cunningham – The Agency is trying to be able to address that concern by saying well they should have known, and I think the community has a right to know what's going on in their area. We have to tell them well, you should have known. There was a posting; there was a notice in the paper. That's our way of making sure that the Agency has done due diligence with letting the neighborhood know that affordable housing is going up in your area and that it's a good thing.

Unannounced Speaker – We need some representation from north Louisiana since we don't have any now, on the board. We notice that our man is gone, Mr. Ferdinand, and he was replaced by somebody from south Louisiana and south Louisiana always gets the deals. So I think somebody needs to address that and I want it taken care of expeditiously.

Helena Cunningham – Well, we don't control that and just for the record, there is no correlation between board members and where deals are done in this state.

Michelle Christopher – And that concludes the 2005 QAP Public Hearing.