

**Summary Notes of Regular Meeting of
The Hope VI Advisory Committee Meeting
Holland House Community Room
2810 61st St., Galveston, TX 77551
April 14, 2010; 10:00 A.M.**

Advisory Committee Members Present: Miguel Aleman, Cornelia Banks, Kenna Bush, Laura Murrell (Gulf Coast Interfaith rep.), Dewayne Jones, Steve LeBlanc, Sheridan Lorenz, Ralph McMorris, Wendy O'Donahoe, Sterling Patrick, Mary Patrick (GISD rep.), Dr. Ben Raimer, Debra Wray (Lone Star Legal Aid rep.), Shrub Kempner, Jeff Sojstrom, Gina Spagnola, Sharon Strain, Leslie Summers, Rev. Charles Wheat, Barbara Hector, Frank Villareal.

Public Attendees: Scott Jepsen & Gayle Epp (EJP Consultants), Steve Fischer & Denise Patterson McKenney (FMCS), Ronald Harwick & Michael Arbour (JHP), John Eckel, Jo Ann Harris, Deborah Vallair, Juanita Ovalle, Esperanza Ovalle, Christina Thompson, Tina Niemeyer, James Stanley.

Steve Fischer opened the meeting with thanks to the Advisory Committee for agreeing to serve. He stated that GHA wants to ensure it is a win-win situation for everyone involved. He then introduced Denise McKenney, FMCS. She explained that they are trying to assess the needs of the City of Galveston. She then initiated self-introductions of all Advisory Committee members. There were also four former members of Magnolia Homes in attendance.

Scott Jepsen shared that the recurring question he has heard has been, "Why have a Hope VI Advisory Committee?" He explained that the desire is to have a variety of feedback and to provide a way for the former residents of Magnolia Homes to participate. He stated that GHA wants to meet the needs the best they can for those residents and that it is a comprehensive process, with all input being taken very seriously.

Mr. Fischer stated that they would be here from time to time, attempting to establish ground rules and try to create an effective use of the committee's time. He said that they will safeguard the meetings as a neutral space and make sure the hours count for something that everyone supports in the end.

Mr. Jepsen explained that they would be speaking more than normal today due to time constraints and that there would not be a time open for public comments at this particular meeting. He shared that HOPE VI is not just about putting a roof over someone's head but in helping the returning residents move back to self-sufficiency. He said that when the Advisory Committee for this group was established, it was noted that a key component that was missing was someone to focus solely on social services.

He stated that when considering Magnolia Homes, the following was studied:

- Looked at the GHA Redevelopment Plan
- Determined which of its plans might best be suited for HOPE VI

Mr. Jepsen continued that many attendees helped to establish what the true priorities were and that a large majority settled on Magnolia Homes as a perfect location. He stated that Cedar Terrace is another great opportunity, but will take more time to put together than Magnolia Homes and that GHA is merely prioritizing.

Mr. Fischer offered, as an alternative to a public comment time, that comments and questions could be written down and handed in to Denise McKenney at the end of the program.

Mr. Jepsen introduced an overview of HOPE VI, explaining that HOPE VI is neither democratic nor republican initiated; it is a bi-partisan program. HOPE VI is also funded annually and there is funding available at the current time. The requirements also change from year to year from HUD.

Mr. Jepsen added that HOPE VI is about reintegration and reducing poverty. HOPE VI's goal is to create self sufficiency in communities.

Questions and Comments from slide presentation:

On Mixed-Income Developments: The new model is to bring a variety of income levels to the development as well as blended cultures. A private owner can own and operate these units.

On Benefits of Mixed Finance: The before pictures show typical "projects". A fundamental of HOPE VI is to break down those barriers. The desire is to impact the entire community. GHA will be bringing in private investors, and developing those relationships.

On HOPE VI Funding: Eligible costs cover not only public housing, but also affordable for-sale units. Also offers relocation for residents currently living at the site. The acquisition of land is also possible with this money.

On Houston's HOPE VI Historic Component: This project was done in Houston's 4th Ward historical area. Eighty percent of the land was vacant or dilapidated. They moved historic shotgun houses into clustered areas. Some of the lessons learned were that it was costly and would have been cheaper to build new.

On Lincoln Park HOPE VI Revitalization: Another city, Springfield, Ohio. They did not have a lot of resources or tools. They found some investors. They also received some great help from a nearby community college. A lot of other money has to come to the table to make this happen.

On Columbia Parc (NOLA): This example is located in New Orleans and has a retail component and a park component. All units are identical.

On Englewood Senior Apartments: An example in Pensacola, Florida, that is a similar project. It was designed to blend in well with the community.

On Columbia Heritage Senior Housing: An example of HOPE VI in Atlanta, Georgia. This is the quality of what the City of Galveston would be getting.

On Roseland Scattered Sites: This example is in Dallas, Texas. We had to integrate the existing public housing with the new. This was successful and blended in with the community. It was a HOPE VI initiative about helping revitalize the community.

On Magnolia Gardens, Beaumont, Texas: The city owned a large parcel of land. It was a perfect spot to do mixed income housing but the housing authority had to sue (friendly) the city to obtain the land and remove the underlying deed restriction for use as a fairground.

On Maverick Gardens, Boston: This is our last example. After a very competitive program, the numbers rose significantly. We want the residents of Magnolia Homes to be able to improve their standard of living as well.

On HOPE VI Community & Supportive Services: 15% of HOPE VI can be set aside for resident services. GHA is currently trying to find previous Magnolia Homes residents for this program. It is also important to leverage the funds on this. Existing programs cannot be replaced, but they can be augmented. Each household will be required to meet with a case manager on a regular basis. GHA wants to give their residents an opportunity to get help.

On HOPE VI Application Point Comparisons: The lifespan of HOPE VI is approximately five years. Do the services drop off? A key part is that GHA figure out a way to continue to fund these services locally.

On Components of a Competitive Application: There is a strong need to work with an expert developer to meet the time guidelines of HOPE VI. GHA must show that these developments will improve the entire community.

Initial Thoughts about Magnolia Homes: We are not here to talk about the 569 units. We are focusing on Magnolia Homes – 120 units. GHA has to provide senior housing as well. Home ownership is a key element as well as tax rolls.

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After Presentation:

Sharon Strain shared that this consulting team has won 33 HOPE VI grants. She stated that although they would not share their accolades, it needed to be shared. She explained that as a group, this can happen by putting our trust in these people and that they help us accomplish our goals.

Michael Arbour stated that there are no pre-conceived notions here. Buildings must fit in with the surrounding design. They must also have proper landscaping, and must fit in with the Victorian architecture as well. He explained that the Magnolia Homes site has access to UTMB and transportation, which is a key to making senior facility work. He then shared that student housing has also been discussed and may be worked into the plan. Home ownership was also discussed, as well as green space, and retail space (such as dry cleaners and coffee shops). Other housing types, such as duplex, mid-rise senior, and fourplex, are also being considered and these options will be discussed.

Steve LeBlanc and Scott Jepsen discussed the City of Galveston's involvement with the grant money. Mr. LeBlanc stated that any commitments from the City of Galveston must be taken before the Council and be approved, there needs to be a way to make sure that we all remain on the same timeline. Mr. Jepsen added that tax credits would also be an issue.

Mr. Fischer promised that any questions turned in would be answered on our website before the next meeting of the HOPE VI Advisory Committee on 5/12/10 at 10:00 a.m.