Concord Housing Commission

August 23, 2012 meeting, 8:00-9:15 am

Rosemary Heard, Chair; C. Nadeau (Nobis); J. Madden (Friends Program) S. Arndt (landlord), C. Walker (MCSB) and guest, Gloria McPherson.

Rosemary outlined the history for Gloria with others contributing: Formed when Mayor Donovan was in office. 3-4 years ago. All walks of housing; homeless to renter to higher ed.

Rosemary reported that NHFA says 6,800 on roster for vouchers, 4,000 at risk for homelessness with an average 6-8 years to get off this list.

Focus on development opportunities in growth community, how to increase density, apartments over garages, etc.

Not a large voice, but wants to be meaningful. Council rep, Amanda Grady, somewhat inactive. Now Jennifer Kretovich, who is recovering from an illness at this time. Occasional attendance by Carlos Baia or Matt Walsh or Mayor.

Undertaking with Jeff was important.

Claudia-market dictates focus; workforce housing big.

Rosemary: older than 60 year old population to double over next 20 years, so accessible to amenities important. The town is changing.

How can committee lever more in the city?

Steve: best collective thing-to do things thoughtfully. Affordable housing now all over town. Diverse group who monitors housing all over town.

Committee does not buy land or have a budget, but a quiet voice.

Would be happy to report findings of committee to the city. Occasionally an update sent to the Mayor.

Disproportionate amount of affordable housing on Main Street. Were 500 Units, but no market rate housing; 3 Menino Place, 1 VA House, some moved in together, a few into assisted living. A high percentage with mental health issues. The increase in gas prices is creating even more problem. Still need other housing in close proximity to services.

Other challenges include how to define affordable housing. The earning capacity of people is key.

According to a study that Rosemary found in Merrimack County, the average rent is \$1,450/month (NHHFA) (some discussion ensued about that figure) Assuming 30% per month housing allowance/income, creates a stress.

Other mentions included perspective that government housing pulls down private sector housing costs. Government is paying for the management that private owners have to cover for themselves.

Qualified folks have waiting list. Many on disability list have mental health issues.

Gloria gave her update from the city:

Revisions are being made to cluster regulations

Design guidelines: apartment under review, but not private homes or duplex regarding lighting, signage, layout, landscaping; Community corridors and set up by district to better define gateways to the city. Village centers as a district.

People will present their own ideas at Planning Board meetings going forward.

Accessory apartments: inventory of downtown carriage houses and barns are being looked into.

Rosemary: Welcomes Gloria to let this committee know how they can contribute. Working young adult with disabilities integrated with parents.

Co-housing; intentional community-separate housing on shared land-usually smaller, less expensive. Common house has guest houses.

Gloria would like to be included in this group for a few months (Tim, please add Gloria to the eblasts)

Some new builds with investment perspective. Looking at long term. Seacoast building still viable.

Steve ended with the comment: How can this committee be more useful to the city. What topics can be researched and discussed.

Adjourned 9:15 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Bacon Membership Manager Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce