

Sonoma County Community Development Committee



Human Services Dept. Representative: Oscar Chavez (Chair), Tenant Representatives: Stephanie Hiller, Jessica Vega
1st Dist: Betzy Chavez (Vice Chair) 2nd Dist: Michael Regan 3rd Dist: Vacant 4th Dist: Willie Lamberson 5th Dist: Linda Garcia
Interim Executive Director: Barbie Robinson, MPP, JD, CHC

Public Meeting
Concurrent with the Cities & Towns Advisory Committee
Wednesday, May 20, 2020
10:00am-11:30am

Minutes

Approved on July 15, 2020

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Oscar Chavez called the CD Committee meeting to order at 10:05AM and roll was called.
CD Committee Members: Betzy Chavez, Michael Regan, Willie Lamberson, Oscar Chavez, Linda Garcia

CDC Staff Present: Barbie Robinson, Executive Director; Tina Rivera, Assistant Director; Martha Cheever, Housing Authority Manager; Kirsten Larsen, Community Development Manager; Felicity Gasser, Equity and Compliance Manager; Alegria de la Cruz, County Counsel; Holly Kelley, Equity and Compliance Program Specialist; Shelley Ticehurst, Administrative Aide

2. Public Comments for Items Not on the Agenda

No comments were made.

3. Approval of Minutes from April 15, 2020 CD Committee Meeting

Betzy Chavez motioned to accept the minutes from April 15, 2020. Michael Regan seconded.

Ayes: Betzy Chavez, Michael Regan, Willie Lamberson, Oscar Chavez

Noes: None

Abstain: Linda Garcia

Absent: Jessica Vega, Stephanie Hiller

4. Proposed Changes to the CD Committee Ordinance

Oscar Chavez moved Agenda Item 4 to the end of the agenda as it pertains only to the CD Committee.

5. Public Hearing: Five Year Consolidated Plan and 1-Year Action Plan (pg. 8)

Please see accompanying PowerPoint presentation for more detail on this item.

Holly Kelley, Equity and Compliance Program Specialist, presented on the Commission's Five-Year Consolidated Plan and 1-Year Action Plan for formula grant funds received from HUD for the Urban County. The Consolidated Plan is "an important glimpse into the current housing



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situation faced by Sonoma County's poorest families" (Will Carruthers, *North Bay Bohemian*, May 1, 2020) The Consolidated Plan will adjust to real world events and circumstances as needed, such as the impacts that will come from dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. The One Year Action Plan is voted on each year and sets the goals for the coming year to ensure we can meet the five-year goals in the Consolidated Plan. Sonoma County's Consolidated and One Year Plan goals are:

1. Affordable Housing, increase and preserve housing stock
2. Homelessness prevention and intervention
3. Non-Housing Community Development

Opened for questions from CD Committee members

Willie Lamberson – Will Leadership Council be weighing in on this Plan?

Director Robinson answered that the Leadership Council will be informed of the Plan. We are working on defining their roles and responsibilities regarding the Plan.

Willie Lamberson – On page 118 4th paragraph, it says "increase income through workforce readiness and increase income through disability initiatives." What does that sentence mean?

Holly Kelley – The section of the Consolidated Plan cited refers to the HOME Sonoma County Strategic Plan which will be completed later this year, so the income mentioned there isn't included in the Consolidated Plan although it is taken into consideration. That area will likely be more fleshed out by the Leadership Council. **Director Robinson** concurred with Ms. Kelley's explanation.

Willie Lamberson – On page 122, plans to produce new units, preserve affordable housing units. What is the status of those units, are they part of the current projects or future projects?

Holly Kelley – For the Action Plan we estimated how many units we expect to create with the current Alta Mira project and the rate of housing rehabilitation based on the funding we've allocated. The four years after that were estimated using the projects we see in the pipeline as well as historical data over the last Consolidated Plan period. These projects only take into account the CDBG, HOME and ESG funds, not all funding sources.

Willie Lamberson – Page 136, last sentence, "If appropriate, describe publicly owned land or property located within the jurisdiction that may be used to address the needs identified in the Plan." Have we identified any properties?

Holly Kelley – We have the Water Agency property as well as the Hewitt Parcel. We are still gathering information on what the opportunities are as well as our role in these properties.

Willie Lamberson – Who is the go to person regarding these properties?

Director Robinson identified the Community Development Commission as the appropriate agency, and herself as the contact for parties interested in developing it themselves or entering into agreement or sale of the property.

Willie Lamberson – Page 140, second paragraph, 15% of HOME funds set aside for CHDOs,



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however this requirement was waived due to the COVID-19 emergency. Did the CD Committee discuss this waiver?

Holly Kelley – The CD Committee did not discuss this as the waiver, allows us to use the funds for Tenant Based Rental Assistance.

Willie Lamberson – Should that reallocation of funds have been discussed by the CD Committee for approval?

Director Robinson – This is part of the conversation we want to have, in the Ordinance language there is provision for emergency circumstances. That language could be construed as ambiguous and will be some of the discussion moving forward in her discussion with the Board of Supervisors clarifying these roles and responsibilities. Since we are in an emergency and the work is moving quickly. The reason HUD has these rules is to allow us to move as quickly as possible with the greatest flexibility under urgent circumstances.

Willie Lamberson – Page 148, not familiar with Sonoma County Affordable Housing, Inc., who are they?

Felicity Gasser – That agency is a subsidiary of EAH, Riverfield Homes is an existing property that we awarded funds to for rehabilitation. Often with affordable housing developments there is a subsidiary is for the completion of the project and property management thereafter.

Willie Lamberson -- Page 149, brings up a discussion about the Action Plan during the next year to address the needs of public housing. On the Water Agency property entered into an equity shared arrangement, is this policy going to be carried on from here on out because there is a statement that the Urban County does not own or operate public housing units?

Holly Kelley – There is a distinction between public housing that is operated and owned by the Housing Authority versus public land that we enter into an agreement with a developer to negotiate the financing or the construction of the units. Once units are completed we don't operate or own them.

Kirsten Larsen – Confirmed that public housing is owned by the Housing Authority, her understanding is that currently we will only hold properties and issue Requests for Proposals for developers, so not the same legal determination of public housing.

Willie Lamberson – So the shared equity arrangement was just a one-time deal. Page 158, says Housing Authority hired a landlord liaison?

Holly Kelley – Her name is Orbelinda Landaverde, and she was hired a couple of years ago. Her information is in the staff directory. Ms. Kelley will send Ms. Landaverde's contact information to Mr. Lamberson.

Public comment

No public comments were made

Holly Kelley concluded by reminding everyone that the Consolidated and Action Plans are still in



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draft form and comments are still allowed until close of business May 31, 2020 and may be sent to her email at holly.kelley@sonoma-county.org

Betzy Chavez made the motion to recommend approval for the 2020 Consolidated Plan and One Year Action Plan. Michael Regan seconded.

Ayes: Betzy Chavez, Michael Regan, Willie Lamberson, Linda Garcia, Oscar Chavez

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Jessica Vega, Stephanie Hiller

6. Discussion: Proposed funding plan for CARES Act funding

Interim Director Barbie Robinson and County Counsel Alegria de la Cruz presented on this item. CARES Act funding falls under the CD Committee's responsibilities, but is emergency money and must be deployed quickly and may not always be possible to have meetings to respond in a timely matter. Ms. De La Cruz noted that some emergency meetings with the CD Committee and CTAC may be required to determine allocation of some of the funding that comes in from the CARES Act. The funding comes from more than just CDBG, so there may be some funding decisions that the consolidated committees will not need to weigh in on.

Oscar Chavez asked Director Robinson – since we're using existing channels to allocate these funds, do the Committees need to have more frequent meetings?

Director Robinson responded that she will follow up with HUD and our County Counsel on this question. For quick moving items the City and County elected officials may make the decisions and then come back to the Committees. For other items we may need to come to the Committee for input. The ultimate goal is to always bring it before the Committee, but may not always be possible.

Willie Lamberson attended a webinar with Congressman Huffman who stated that some of the funding will go to rental assistance. What do we think about that?

Director Robinson – This is part of the discussion we are having with each jurisdiction's elected officials want to utilize their funds for within the funding guidelines.

Public Comment

No Public Comments were made.

Item 4 resumed: Proposed Changes to the CD Committee Ordinance

Director Robinson mentioned in a prior Committee meeting that the Board of Supervisors want a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the Committees and Councils. One area of concern that is being worked on is the overlapping authorities for CD Committee and Leadership Council as well as with CDC staff work and recommendations. The ordinance



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language is being reviewed for clarity the scope of responsibilities being based on funding sources or the type of activities for each body. A draft of the ordinance will be brought for review to the next meeting. The CD Committee specifically engages around HUD funding currently, and some HUD funding is used for homelessness is part of the Leadership Councils role.

Willie Lamberson stated that when HOME Sonoma County formed basically took on the role as the Housing Authority for Sonoma County.

Linda Garcia asked would it be helpful for Leadership Council to have a member for CD Committee sit with them to improve communication? Also, was there also a review of the whole CDC as well as this committee.

Director Robinson – that is what we want to clarify. Any matter concerning the Commission will go before CD Committee; however, the Board of Supervisors likely did not envision such a broad scope of responsibility of the CD Committee. The review of the Commission is beyond the review requested by the Board at this time.

The Board is also looking at their role in HUD funding related to homelessness or affordable housing, etc.

Oscar Chavez thanked Director Robinson for her information and is interested in reviewing the proposed changes to the ordinance.

Director Robinson noted that it is the Commission's position to share as much information as possible, so it doesn't change the director's position to keep the CD Committee updated on activities happening across the Commission even if the activities do not require action from the Committee.

Linda Garcia – When the director gives the update please give some information on the proposed combining of departments and what the status is.

Director Robinson – Requested to answer later

Betzy Chavez echoes Linda Garcia' and Willie Lamberson's suggestions. She acknowledged that cutting staff's work would be helpful. She considers that each member of the Committee's voices contribute positive information to each issue and wants us to benefit from each other.

Willie Lamberson asked County Counsel Alegria de la Cruz about HUD rules for Housing Authority are for civilian oversight committee. Only concerned with Housing Authority requirements for using HUD money.

Director Robinson – This is one of the reasons we are reviewing, clarifying and operationalizing the ordinance to ensure that are in line with HUD regulations

Alegria de la Cruz confirmed that any ordinance changes will be in compliance with the HUD regulations.



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Public Comment

No Comments made

Director Robinson returned to **Linda Garcia's** question regarding the status of combining of departments of Health, Human Services and the CDC.

Combination of departments is still moving forward through a consultant in the County Administrator's office. This pandemic has demonstrated the interrelationship of the impacts across the programs and departments in question and how we are responding to this crisis. Insofar as we know the consultant's report will still happen in the fall.

Betzy Chavez commented on the CARES agenda item about leveraging community resources. How is the CDC going to work with non-profits, such as La Luz Center? The intersection with the community leaderships working with homelessness and suicide prevention. How can we get our CDC staff involved in those trainings? Suggested more discussions around how we can work on community partnerships.

Director Robinson requested points of contact within the operations center that can help inform that.

7. CD Committee Adjournment

Oscar Chavez adjourned the meeting at 11:30AM

Respectfully Submitted,

Shelley Ticehurst, Administrative Aide

