

## HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Wednesday, February 11, 2015

3:30 p.m.

County Administration Building  
10th Floor Assembly Room

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### 1.0 Roll Call

Chairman Rose called the Housing and Community Development Commission (HCDC) meeting to order at 3:53 p.m.

<u>X</u> Judy Armstrong	<u>X</u> Karl Molek
<u>X</u> Carol Calabresa	<u>X</u> Ginny Mulligan
<u>X</u> Steve Carlson (ex-officio)	<u>X</u> Linda Pedersen (Vice-Chairman)
<u>X</u> Mary Cunningham	<u>X</u> Ray Rose (Chairman)
<u>X</u> Sandra Hart	<u>X</u> Harriet Rosenthal
<u>X</u> Diane Hewitt	<u>X</u> Burnell Russell
<u>E</u> Leonard Krapf	<u>E</u> Glenn Swanson
<u>X</u> Aaron Lawlor (ex-officio)	<u>X</u> Janet Swartz
<u>E</u> Joe Mancino	<u>X</u> Daniel Venturi

Guests: Donna Drinka of Catholic Charities; Ralph Bishop of I-PLUS; Kori Larson and Linda Berkowitz of Glenkirk; Carissa Dunkelberg of Gewalt Hamilton; Lisa Pugliese of the Affordable Housing Corporation; Evelyn Chenier and Rachel Washington of Family First; Julie Donovan of Habitat for Humanity; Amanda Orenchuk of the Village of Mundelein; Barbara Cornew of Evanston; Lety Castellanos of Waukegan Township; May Ellen Saunders and Jackie Lynn of ElderCARE; Paul Dean of Family Service; Bob Kula of Avon Township Highway Department; Joel Williams of PADS; John Quintanilla of Prairie State Legal Services; Steve Cieslics of Trotter & Associates; Mari Christopherson of CASA Lake County; Bruce Johnson of Nicasa; Ben Saiz of Little City; Megan McKenna de Mejia of Mano a Mano; Rob Anthony of Community Partners for Affordable Housing; Maggie Brockway of Youth Conservation Corps; Kitty Cole and Betsy Lassar of Lake County Housing Action Coalition; Michael Smith of Rosalind Franklin University; Richard Zulinski; Richard Osty; Nimrod Warda of the City of North Chicago; Ezell Robins of the City of Waukegan; Audrey Nixon of the Lake County Board; and Randall Mullen and Jennifer Alpha of TDA Consulting, Inc.

Staff: Brittany Sloan, Jodi Gingiss, Brenda O'Connell, Jordan Bartle, Janel Gomez and Laura Walley

### 2.0 Approval of Minutes

2.1 Approval of January 21, 2015 minutes

**Motion:** To approve the January 21, 2015 minutes

**Motion Made By:** Burnell Russell

**Motion 2nd By:** Judy Armstrong

**Motion approved with Diane Hewitt abstaining**

### 3.0 Chair's Remarks

The Chairman had no remarks.

### 4.0 Public Comment (items not on the agenda)

There were no public comments.

### 5.0 Old Business

There was no old business.

### 6.0 New Business

#### 6.1 Avon Township CDBG Public Infrastructure Grant Amendment Request - 2013

Ms. Janel Gomez explained that Avon Township was requesting a reduction in scope and the leveraging amount for its PY2013 roadway improvement project due to budgetary constraints caused by a decrease in tax revenue. The portion of the project to be completed will have the greatest community impact, providing improved roadway, drainage, and sidewalk and curb construction. Ms. Gomez had rescored the project, as now presented, and determined that it would have scored higher than the original project, as the roadway has significantly deteriorated since the project was originally approved.

**Motion:** To approve the PY2013 Avon Township CDBG Public Infrastructure Grant Amendment Request

**Motion Made By:** Daniel Venturi

**Motion 2nd By:** Diane Hewitt

**Motion approved**

Ms. Jodi Gingiss thanked Ms. Gomez for her service to Lake County and announced that she had accepted a position with the City of Champaign. The HCDC gave Ms. Gomez a round of applause.

#### 6.2 ElderCARE Lake County Affordable Housing Program (LCAHP) Grant Amendment Request – 2015

Mr. Jordan Bartle presented ElderCARE's request to amend its PY2012 and PY2013 LCAHP projects to allow up to \$2,000 per senior household for home improvement grants, as the current maximum of \$750 had proven inadequate for the accessibility and safety improvements needed. The improvements are necessary to enable the senior citizens to remain in their homes. ElderCARE also requested a time extension within which to expend its PY2012 funds, as the prior \$750 maximum had caused difficulties in locating fundable projects.

**Motion:** To extend ElderCARE's expenditure deadline for its PY2012 grant and to approve the increase in the projects' grant maximum per senior household to \$2,000 for its PY2012 and PY2013 LCAHP Grants.

**Motion Made By:** Sandra Hart

**Motion 2nd By:** Mary Cunningham

**Motion approved**

### 6.3 Presentation of 2015 – 2019 Consolidated Plan Draft

Ms. Gingiss thanked those in attendance for their participation in the 2015 – 2019 Consolidated Plan (Plan) process and she introduced Mr. Randall Mullen and Ms. Jennifer Alpha of TDA Consulting, who would present the draft Plan.

Mr. Mullen said that he and his associate would provide a refresher on the County's current economic environment, the input received during the information gathering portion of the Plan process and the goals determined by the community needs expressed during that process. Finally, the 2015 Annual Action Plan would be discussed.

Ms. Alpha informed the audience that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) now requires that the Plan be place-based and data driven, therefore the community must look at its needs through public participation and the collection of data. The 2010 – 2014 Plan was written prior to the full impact of the economic downturn and its effects on the County, which greatly increased the need among its citizens. Additionally, diminishing resources have also negatively impacted Lake County, requiring a restructured strategy to set priorities and select projects. Ms. Alpha presented data on the increase in the County's poverty level and the levels of cost-burdened renters and homeowners. She then went over the different aspects of the public input process, stating that three major needs were expressed; the need for low-cost housing, investment in neighborhoods and jobs. Ms. Alpha presented the ten goals that were developed around those needs.

Mr. Mullen reviewed the HCDC proposal to increase funding for affordable housing to 59% and jobs to 7%, while neighborhood funding, including infrastructure repair and improvements, would be reduced to 34%. He compared this proposal to the expenditures during years covered by the 2010 – 2014 Consolidated Plan, when the County spent 58% on infrastructure, 38% on affordable housing and 4% on jobs.

Ms. Gingiss highlighted the changes to the draft Plan, made in response to the comments received during the January public hearing and presented within the agenda packet as a red-line version. She mentioned Lake County would be working with the City of North Chicago to administer its projects and the City's five goals were integrated into the County's draft Plan. Further, both North Chicago and Lake County proposed to fund public service projects up to the maximum allowable dollar amount. The City of Waukegan's Plan was also included within the draft Plan and all three entities would receive comments during the ensuing public hearing. Ms. Gingiss then informed the audience of Waukegan's five goals, as detailed within the draft Plan.

Mr. Mullin stated that the HCDC was focusing attention on the areas of greatest need within the County, specifically those areas with 55% or more of the population with a household income at or below 80% of the Area Median Income. He said HUD encouraged geographic targeting of these priority areas to receive focused grant awards. He recommended the County also broadly target transportation and employment centers, therefore funding projects in these areas would help the County remove impediments noted within the Analysis of

Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI). Ms. Gingiss directed the HCDC's attention to the list of communities that were located within those targeted geographic areas, stating that the HCDC would need to decide if the Plan would include geographically-designated areas. She added that the Plan also allowed for the location of affordable housing in high opportunity areas, not only in areas that currently had a concentration of affordable housing.

Ms. Gingiss informed the HCDC that HUD would require the County to submit the 2015 Annual Action Plan within the 2015 – 2019 Consolidated Plan, so a very general version of the Action Plan was included in this second version of the draft Consolidated Plan. No specific activities or locations were included, only general information on proposed funding amounts for each goal area. She then asked the HCDC to consider two scenarios on how to expend the five-year public infrastructure funding over the timeframe, asking their opinion on utilizing a straight-line or an incrementally-decreasing method of funding. A discussion on this matter ensued.

#### 6.4 PUBLIC HEARING – 2015 – 2019 Consolidated Plan Draft

**Motion:** To open the Public Hearing at 4:59 p.m.

**Motion Made By:** Linda Pedersen

**Motion 2nd By:** Judy Armstrong

**Motion approved**

Ms. Gingiss said that this public hearing would pertain to all three Consortium members' (Lake County, North Chicago and Waukegan) materials within the draft Plan.

Ms. Donna Drinka, of Catholic Charities, thanked the HCDC for the rapid rehousing and homeless prevention funding that her agency had received. She said that the grants had helped low-income individuals and families to secure or maintain permanent housing.

Mr. Paul Dean, Executive Director of Family Service, expressed gratitude for his agency's funding, which provided services to senior citizens and their caregivers throughout Lake County. He thanked the HCDC for its approval of ElderCARE's amendment request earlier in the meeting, as Family Service often partners with ElderCARE. He stated that the geographic areas proposed within the draft Plan are the same areas that his agency targeted, along with other public service agencies with which Family Service has collaborated. He then offered information on the number of the County's senior citizens and the great need for funding to assist these individuals.

Ms. Mari Cristopherson, of CASA Lake County, thanked the HCDC for current funding to train the volunteers to advocate within the judicial system for the County's abused and neglected children. She provided information on the number of volunteers, the hours of service provided and the number of children assisted and placed in safe, permanent homes. She said that the increase in the poverty level correlated directly to an increase in the number of abused and neglected children. As CASA has begun to focus on those who will soon "age out" of the system and often end up homeless, the agency wished to collaborate with the County to prevent homelessness among this population.

Mr. John Quintanilla, of Prairie State Legal Services, informed the audience that Prairie State offers legal aid to the elderly and low-income households to assist them with housing-related issues, as well as other legal matters. The agency runs the County's Fair Housing program, which handles illegal discrimination issues. He then provided information on the variety of problems that citizens have brought to the agency's attention. Mr. Quintanilla stressed the need for an increased amount of safe, decent affordable housing, which would help to solve many of their clients' difficulties.

Ms. Julie Donovan, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity, voiced her appreciation for the County's many years of support for Habitat's projects, which have provided permanent affordable housing to the community. Habitat's mortgage payments are generally \$500 - \$600 monthly, while fair market rent is \$988 monthly. She encouraged the County to target the geographic areas indicated within the draft Plan, adding that transportation issues were very important to the low- to moderate-income population. Ms. Donovan applauded the use of CDBG money to help fund the necessary infrastructure improvements for Habitat's Carter Crossings Subdivision, which provided affordable housing to 33 families. This partnership between her agency, the City of Waukegan and the County helped solve that need and confirmed her belief that combining infrastructure funds with affordable housing projects would be an appropriate direction in which to proceed.

Ms. Mary Ellen Saunders, of ElderCARE @ Christ Church, thanked the HCDC for prior and current support of her agency's programs to help senior citizens remain healthy and independent in their own homes. She encouraged the draft Plan's proposed support of older adults, many of whom are low-income individuals and reside within the targeted areas but are also spread across Lake County. ElderCARE helps these households throughout northern Lake County with transportation, provided by volunteers, to medical appointments and grocery stores and also friendly visits to provide social interaction. Ms. Saunders said she hoped the HCDC would think broadly about the types of services needed to assist older adults, as this demographic continues to increase.

Mr. Ralph Bishop, of I-PLUS, expressed his appreciation for his agency's funding and then informed the audience of the services it provided to disabled individuals who are homeless. I-PLUS collaborates with other public service agencies, including Prairie State Legal Services, to assist these clients, who suffer from various mental disabilities. The agency handles its clients' income to ensure that the rent, utilities and other bills are paid. He praised the draft Plan's multi-disciplinary approach for funding applications and offered to work with any agency that encountered an individual who could benefit from his agency's assistance.

Ms. Betsy Lassar, of Lake County Housing Action Coalition (Coalition), thanked the HCDC and staff for developing the thoughtful and strategic draft Plan and for the opportunity to have the Coalition's input considered. Directing attention to the geographic priority section of the Plan, she spoke favorably about the inclusion of transportation and employment centers as a geographic priority for expanding the supply of affordable housing. However, the Coalition asked that a geographic priority also be included for the expansion of affordable housing outside of areas currently containing a high concentration of such housing. This would coincide

with the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice's (AI) finding that the County's affordable housing should be spread throughout the County. The Coalition asked that the Plan accommodate the inclusion of "providing welcoming neighborhoods" as an associated goal for low-cost housing, as a range of housing options would be essential to creating diverse and welcoming communities. Ms. Lassar also mentioned speaking with staff concerning a housekeeping clarification pertaining to the rehabilitation of current affordable housing and the creation of new rental affordable housing through acquisition and rehabilitation. Staff concurred with this matter, which will be corrected in the Plan.

Mr. Joel Williams, Executive Director of PADS Lake County, addressed his concerns that the City of North Chicago did not propose to provide any funding for homeless assistance in its section of the draft Plan. He said he may address the City Council on this matter, as North Chicago is one of two cities with the largest number of residents assisted by PADS. He stated he hoped that North Chicago would reconsider its position on this matter.

Mr. Michael Smith, of Rosalind Franklin University, voiced his opinion of the importance of welcoming communities, stressing the importance of linkage of services and the ServicePoint referral system, as he finds that many people do not know how to access available services. He agreed that transportation and affordable housing were important issues and he informed the audience that the University offers a free clinic, which includes eye exams, on Thursday evenings.

Ms. Amanda Orenchuk, of the Village of Mundelein, stated that she has attended a number of the Consolidated Plan meetings and while she has not yet received official direction from Mundelein, she wanted to make the HCDC aware that the Village had been present and attentive during the meetings. She said it is possible that Mundelein will comment on the Plan in the future, once the possible impact of the Plan was considered fully.

**Motion:** To close the Public Hearing at 5:28 p.m.

**Motion Made By:** Harriet Rosenthal

**Motion 2nd By:** Carol Calabresa

**Motion approved**

## 6.5 Approval of the 2015 – 2019 Consolidated Plan

Commissioner Swartz thanked staff for the continual refinement of the draft Plan, stating that the document had continued to improve, but that there were several items that needed additional clarification. She concurred with the Coalition's point that affordable housing should be spread throughout Lake County, as noted within the AI, and this goal should be reflected within the Plan. Further, the Plan should include "providing welcoming neighborhoods" as an associated goal for affordable housing in the appropriate goals chart. Due to this requested inclusion, Ms. Gingiss asked permission to fill in the associated goals within the charts, as this had not previously been done in order to keep the charts simplified within the boundaries of housing, neighborhoods and jobs. It was also requested that wording be added to indicate that acquisition and rehabilitation of affordable housing was included within Goal #1 of the Plan.

When asked why the City of North Chicago did not plan to provide funding for

homeless assistance, Ms. Gingiss explained that the City had determined to use its very limited public service funds to augment the County's plan, in order to apply funding to projects that the County had not targeted. Additionally, the City will follow HUD's guidelines to discontinue awarding small grants to multiple agencies. North Chicago and Lake County will continue to work together over the years to adjust funding to provide service coverage.

Ms. Gingiss asked the HCDC if Funding Scenario #1, which consists of straight-line funding across the next five years, should be used for the PY2015 application and review cycle. Preference for Option #2, incrementally decreasing funding, was supported by Commissioners Hewitt and Russell. A discussion about how to handle unallocated funds within a goal category and targeted funding over the five-year period ensued.

**Motion:** To approve the 2015 – 2019 Housing and Community Development Consolidated Plan, with inclusion of the housekeeping changes mentioned above

**Motion Made By:** Mary Cunningham

**Motion 2nd By:** Daniel Venturi

**Motion approved with Diane Hewitt and Burnell Russell voting nay**

## 6.6 Discussion of PY2015 Application Materials

Ms. Gingiss stated that the goal of this item was for the HCDC to empower the ARCs to work out the details on the PY2015 Application Materials, which were presented in draft form, based on guidance from the draft Consolidated Plan. She asked the audience for any input on the materials and the updated scoring criteria, which were also altered due to the draft Plan. Mr. Mullen proposed that the Public Infrastructure ARC should be re-titled the Public Improvements ARC, as the new name would better reflect the broader range of projects allowable within this category. This new name will be proposed in an upcoming by-laws change. A slide presentation was given on the application process and its timeline; each ARC's area of responsibility; scoring bonuses; minimum scoring thresholds; income surveys; allowable applicants; and successful process implementation (see slide printout in agenda packet). General consensus favored the use of minimum scoring thresholds and geographic scoring bonuses, curtailing the use of income surveys and maintaining the status quo with respect to eligible applicants.

Ms. Gingiss asked for authorization to work with the ARCs on the proposed scoring bonuses, as outlined within the slide presentation and printout. The decisions made by the ARCs will be presented to the HCDC for approval at the March meeting.

Ms. Lisa Pugliese, Executive Director of the Affordable Housing Corporation, offered thanks on behalf of the Coalition's membership for the thoughtful and strategic planning process. She said that her comments were derived from the Coalition's letter, which she hoped that the Affordable Housing ARC would consider during its upcoming meeting. While the Coalition supports the need for low-cost rental and supportive housing units, there was concern that the proposed 5 points bonus for these each of these units might effectively negate the remainder of the scoring criteria, when considering a large project against

smaller projects. The Coalition proposed a more modest bonus system, such as 3 points per unit with a 15-point cap. An additional scoring criterion was suggested to reward those projects that would meet multiple policy objectives, such as energy-efficient units and units for larger families. The Coalition's letter also spoke to additional language clarification within the draft Plan. Lastly, Ms. Pugliese requested clarification on the neighborhood analysis scoring criteria, as the Coalition's interpretation of this item might be different than the County's. She explained that the Coalition's understanding was that points would be awarded to projects that meet the housing needs of the area in which they would be located.

Mr. Rob Anthony, Executive Director of Community Partners for Affordable Housing, also spoke on behalf of the Coalition, addressed several additional points mentioned in the Coalition's letter. He spoke about the geographic preference areas, requesting that a bonus be awarded to projects located near transportation and employment centers. He asked for language clarification in the housing application pertaining to the goal of rehabilitating existing low-cost housing, as he thought that this should agree with the draft Plan's goal to also expand the supply of affordable housing through acquisition and rehabilitation. He then asked for language consistency between the goals stated in the draft Plan and the housing application materials, as detailed in the letter. Finally, he requested that the application be streamlined, as there are several repetitive questions.

**Motion:** To continue the fine-tuning of the PY2015 Application Materials, with the direction and scoring bonuses presented to the Commission, in meetings of the respective Advisory and Recommendation Committees and to approve the Commission's direction to disallow the use of income surveys and to disallow utility taxing districts as applicants.

**Motion Made By:** Carol Calabresa

**Motion 2nd By:** Diane Hewitt

**Motion approved with Daniel Venturi and Steve Carlson not present**

## 7.0 Staff Reports

Ms. Brenda O'Connell said that the Point-In-Time count, assessing the number of homeless individuals in Lake County, included all residents of shelters and those individuals that were unsheltered on the night of the count. Five people were found on the street, which was the same number encountered during the previous two counts. That information and data from PADS Lake County, Samaritan House, domestic violence providers and the Veterans Assistance homeless services will be gathered to compose a report that will present the County's knowledge about homelessness in our community.

Ms. Gingiss reminded the HCDC that the March meeting would be held on March 11<sup>th</sup> and that all ARC meetings are scheduled for February 18<sup>th</sup>, with the exception of the February 27<sup>th</sup> Public Improvements ARC. She thanked everyone for their assistance with the planning process.

## 8.0 Adjournment

**Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 6:12 p.m.



**Motion Made By:** Linda Pedersen  
**Motion 2nd By:** Harriet Rosenthal  
**Motion approved**

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