

**MINUTES**  
**HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (HCDC)**  
**Meeting – October 26, 2011**  
**Fresno City Hall, Room 2165-A (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)**  
**2600 Fresno Street**  
**Fresno, California 93721**

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

With a quorum being present, the meeting was called to order by Chair Cox at 5:05 p.m.

**Commissioners**

Present:	Rogenia Cox, CHAIRPERSON Judge Armando Rodriguez, VICE-CHAIR Bob Farrar, Commissioner Stephanie Roberts, Commissioner Drew Wilson, Commissioner	Absent:	Bobby Bliatout, Commissioner Daniel Payne, Commissioner
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**Staff**

Present:	Claudia Cázares, Manager Housing and Community Development Bonnie Christian, Recording Secretary	Absent:	Craig Scharton, Assistant Director Development and Resource Management Department
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**B. COMMUNICATIONS**

None

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the HCDC Meeting on June 8, 2011 and the minutes of the HCDC Meeting on September 14, 2011 were approved.

**D. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

1. RECOMMEND ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMITTAL OF AN APPLICATION FOR, AND ACCEPTANCE OF, \$1.5 MILLION IN CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, CALHOME PROGRAM (PROPOSITION 1C) GRANT FUNDS, AND AUTHORIZATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT ASSISTANT DIRECTOR TO SIGN ALL NECESSARY DOCUMENTS TO IMPLEMENT THE GRANT. *(Presented by Corrina Nunez, Housing and Community Development Division)*

Ms. Corrina Nunez, Project Manager, gave a summary of the project as follows:

Staff recommends that HCDC recommend to City Council adoption of a resolution for submittal of a \$1.5 million grant application and authorization for the Development and Resource Management Department Assistant Director to sign program documents. Of the requested \$1.5 million in CalHome funds, \$400,000 will be used for owner-occupied rehab and \$1.1 million will be used for first-time homebuyer mortgage assistance. Staff anticipates 16 rehab loans will be funded with \$400,000, and 22 mortgage assistance loans will be funded with \$1.1 million. Six prior CalHome awards have been received since 2003. The application is due to HCD by December 7, 2011, with award announcements to be released by March 7, 2012. The CalHome Program funds will be layered with HOME funds to leverage program dollars to the fullest extent possible. The Resolution is required for application submittal.

Vice-Chair Rodriguez asked who makes the determination of the division of the allocation to the north and south of the state? Ms. Nunez answered she believes it's part of the statute for the program, and then HCD just divvies up the money. She doesn't know how the percentage comes about.

Commissioner Farrar stated he's done a couple of these financings for families in his past experience, and these are fabulous programs. It helps people leap into homeownership, and it's nice working with the City as a lender doing that.

Chair Cox agreed, and said she thought it was a great program also.

MOTION: Vice-Chair Rodriguez made a motion to approve Item D-1.

SECONDED: Commissioner Farrar

AYES: Chair Cox, Vice-Chair Rodriguez, Commissioners Farrar and Roberts.

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

*(Commissioner Drew Wilson entered the room and took his place with the Commission.)*

## E. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

1. CRAIG SCHARTON, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, DEVELOPMENT AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT, AND ELLIOTT BALCH, DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION MANAGER, WILL GIVE A PRESENTATION ON THE DOWNTOWN AND COMMUNITY PLAN.

Elliott Balch, Downtown Revitalization Manager, gave a presentation on the Downtown & Community Plans. He stated they're still in the process of reviewing the plans, moving towards adoption, and this commission, as well as others, will be included in the steps they follow for approval, which should take about a year.

The Fulton Corridor Specific Plan and the Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan, as well as the form-based Downtown Development Code, were started in January 2010. The goal is to protect the older neighborhoods that surround Downtown over time; to ensure the development that happens there over the next decades fits with the historic pattern and fabric of the neighborhoods, and contributes to a mix of incomes over time rather than perpetuating the concentration of poverty in Fresno in those neighborhoods. The City wants to aid revitalization, make development easier, make the rules easier to understand and to follow, and cheaper, and also to encourage more economic activity, starting on the Fulton Mall and emanating from there.

There are the two plans and the code that is an accompaniment to them, that were recently released in draft form. It is a new zoning code for the 7,000-plus-acre area of both of these plans. Each of the chapters it contains has policies that relate to that topic as well as actions that help implement the goals for each of those topics. The future of the Fulton Mall really is the first thing, and then there's specified identified areas at the north and south ends of the mall that are seen as key to catalyzing the development of the area. The plans and code are available on the website. Mr. Balch mentioned they would be happy to sit down with the commissioners and go through the plans, in person, and they can be loaned to them as well.

Vice-Chair Rodriguez asked if it's been adopted by the City Council that they're going to make Fulton Mall open to traffic. Mr. Balch answered no, there's a lot of process yet to go on that. During the charrettes in 2010, there were ten different options for the Fulton Mall put forth. Certain blocks open to traffic; cross-streets open to traffic; keeping it the way it is and restoring it. From those ten, the Community Advisory Committee chose three that they recommended for further study. And those are the ones that appear in the Plan. And the Administration recently chose one that would go into the EIR process as the preferred alternative, but even that's not a final selection by the City Council. The Council will need to review everything that comes out of the EIR process to make a final decision.

Vice-Chair Rodriguez asked, regarding the Hotel Fresno, what stage the progress is in, since the City did approve a loan to the developer there.

Ms. Claudia Cázares stated the project is being held up by legal proceeding initiated by the City, but will move forward soon.

Vice-Chair Rodriguez asked about what is going on with the yard to the Met Museum. Mr. Balch stated he believes the tenant improvements for the C-MAC, the Media Access Collaborative, are done or near done. He said they should be moving in soon, and there's an active effort to recruit tenants for the fourth and fifth floors.

Vice-Chair Rodriguez asked if it's City owned, and the City is now trying to rent the space to whomever, using a consultant or agency. Mr. Balch answered yes, to his knowledge the City Manager's office is dealing directly with people who are interested. He continued that the use of the building has to be consistent with a non-profit use

because of the financing that was used to pay down the loan.

Commissioner Farrar asked if there were still museum pieces in there. Mr. Balch answered no. Commissioner Farrar asked if they were auctioned off. Mr. Gregory Barfield stated that as part of the settlement, the bankruptcy, those items were sold at auction to satisfy the lenders who originally had stepped in the middle of the Met deal, and none of those proceeds ultimately ended up coming back to the City.

Ms. Cázares asked when the last day to make comments on the public review draft was. Mr. Balch said they're asking for comments by November 14<sup>th</sup>.

Vice-Chair Rodriguez inquired as to what's happening in the area between the baseball stadium and the China Town area regarding parking, and any help to the business owners in that immediate area. Mr. Balch responded that's the reason China Town is included in the Fulton Corridor Plan, because they wanted to look at both sides of the high-speed train station, to make sure that it works for both sides, and he explained the street grading situation in that area of town.

Vice-Chair Rodriguez asked if the destruction or raising of the Monterey overpass will be included in this plan, or if it's something separate. Mr. Barfield stated the demolition of the Monterey Street Bridge is to take place in the early part of January of 2012. He said staff has indicated there will be a contract before City Council within the next several weeks for the person or persons who are going to do the demolition. Regarding the homeless people there, the work they're doing in and around that bridge right now is to clear the area so the demo can happen on time. Mr. Balch stated the Plan envisions that overpass being gone.

2. GREGORY BARFIELD, HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND POLICY MANAGER, CITY OF FRESNO, WILL PROVIDE AN UPDATE ON HOMELESS PROGRAMMING IN SUPPORT OF THE 10-YEAR PLAN TO END AND PREVENT HOMELESSNESS.

Mr. Barfield, said that he was not present when they met to discuss the Renaissance at Santa Clara project. One of the questions and concerns that came up was what about those individuals who are currently encamped in and around the Renaissance Project and around the Monterey Street Bridge?

Mr. Barfield acknowledged that he is the person who is responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the 10-year Plan to end chronic homelessness in our community. Adopted in September of 2008, the City and County Plan, which is jointly approved, provide for what is called Housing First. That Housing First policy means you provide housing to an individual regardless of clean, sober, or any other kind of prerequisite, and then you wrap services around an individual. He went on to explain the work the partnership of the Fresno-Madera Continuum of Care is doing to support families and children in our community. The City will know in the early part of 2012 the success of that application for funding. The City has been awarded \$3.1 million in the Economic Stimulus Package. City money was combined with County of Fresno funds, under the same RFP, and actually scored the same way, and the money was distributed jointly. 2,804 people have been served under that program in just two years.

Vice-Chair Rodriguez asked in what way the people were served. Mr. Barfield answered, 52% of those individuals were re-housed. They were in a place not meant for human habitation. The other percentage of that money was used to help people from falling into homelessness.

Vice-Chair Rodriguez questioned as to when he drives by there, the numbers don't seem to change. There's still a lot of people out there on the streets. The winter is coming, and if they've helped 2,804 people, he wonders how come the problem still looks so bad. Mr. Barfield pointed out that if the City had not had this stimulus money, they probably would have been talking about 8,000 or 9,000 people physically on the streets. In January of each year the City does a full-blown point in time count of homeless individuals. The count was 4,378 at the end of January this year when the City did their count. That was up by 616. Schools have been affected too; identifying additional homeless students.

Chair Cox stated she believes the City is doing all they can do, because people are homeless for different reasons. She is in full support of what the City and the County want to do with helping the homeless. Her only concern is that she doesn't think all the housing should be built in District 3. She said these people migrate throughout the city.

Mr. Barfield agreed that homelessness is a city-wide phenomenon. It's a community-wide issue. The three that have been the focus lately, Renaissance at Alta Monte, it's a County-owned building; the Renaissance at Trinity, which was just opened and has 20 individuals living in it, it's completely occupied; and now Renaissance at Santa Clara, which will be at Santa Clara and "G," those projects have been in the pipeline since the day he took office. In working with the Housing Authority, the City has made a conscious effort and decision not to do anything else in District 3.

*(Chair Cox departed for the evening and Vice-Chair Rodriguez chaired the remainder of the meeting.)*

Vice-Chair Rodriguez asked if Mr. Barfield would identify again the location of Apollo and Redeemer. Mr. Barfield explained that the former Apollo is now called Alta Monte, on Blackstone, near Diccico's, directly across from Carl's Jr. The Renaissance at Trinity is located at Trinity and Whitesbridge.

The demolition of the Monterey Street Bridge originally was a rehab project, not a demolition project. The pillars have crumbling concrete within, making it a demolition project. Vice-Chair Rodriguez asked if there's any place where you can look at it, on a map or piece of paper showing the schedule for the demolition. Mr. Barfield said the demolition is kind of a fluid thing. The City understood when our DARM Department did the environmental assessment back in March of this year, and it was certified in May and approved in final form in June, it calls for that to become level, at grade, and it called for that because of the unknown questions of the rest of the terrain. So bringing it all the way down made sense. The City needs to get in to the site to provide security fences and get everything ready for the contractor to come in, and that needs to be done in December.

Commissioner Farrar brought out that's kind of a tough time to move those people. Mr. Barfield said there's never a good time, and gave details about some of the encampments at the present time.

Commissioner Roberts asked when these homeless people are moved, what techniques are used. Mr. Barfield answered, from the lawsuit the ACLU filed and settled, which was before his time, the City is only required to provide a minimum of a seven-day notice, and to store any personal property for 90 days. Under Mayor Swearingin, and the Administration, the City has been able to provide one thing that's not required of them, and that's assessments, outreach, and hopefully some linkages to housing.

There were four full days of Project P4, which was an assessment where close to 100 volunteers came out and helped, from 5:00 a.m. to about 8:30 or 9:00 a.m. The City has used this vulnerability index every time they've done one of these major encampment moves.

Ms. Cázares asked when the Project P4 took place. Mr. Barfield replied July 17<sup>th</sup> through the 22<sup>nd</sup> of 2011, and they only focused originally on the area south of Ventura, because they knew these encampments were closing, and knew the bridge was coming down, and knew the Renaissance at Santa Clara was going to be built. The City has also expanded and used it at the Veterans' stand-down the last week in September, and will continue to use it as a regular tool.

Vice-Chair Rodriguez asked if they are working with the City Attorneys' office or a legal advisor to make sure they don't wind up on the wrong end of lawsuits. Mr. Barfield said yes, and the City Attorneys' office continues to advise them when they do the encampment kind of work, but also Jim Betts, who represented the City in Federal Court, is still our legal counsel for these matters. On the occasions where we have to break down the encampment, the attorney is notified and gives assistance.

Mr. Farrar asked if the local churches are assisting. Mr. Barfield said two churches have helped, Hope Lutheran and its sister church, who provided all of the internal household goods for the 103 people housed at "H" Street. The Catholic diocese, Bishop John Steinback's last pastoral message to the diocese was on homelessness. They've established a homeless committee, they are now in the parishes doing education. The City is trying to get churches encouraged to assist. He added it's very challenging to do this type of work. Three years ago no one knew what a homeless person was, and didn't look beyond that sign on that cardboard, and our community has stepped up and figured out these are real people, and there's a story behind it.

Mr. Barfield stated he looks forward to coming back to the Commission in the near future with all of their final reports they are processing and sending to Congress, and giving a greater look at what they're planning to do once the federal fiscal year is finalized. He appreciates the Commission for being a part of the team.

#### **F. COMMISSIONERS' ITEMS**

None

#### **G. UNSCHEDULED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

Vice-Chair Rodriguez asked if there were any unscheduled oral communications, and Ms. Brunette Harris came forward to speak.

Ms. Brunette Harris, with H.E.A.T. for Southwest Community, stated she was objecting to any funds being agreed upon to be released for any project. She believes those funds could be used better than what they've been hearing

since they've been coming to these meetings. There are elderly people in Southwest Fresno who need their houses rehabbed, and it should have been on the Commission's Agenda for years, but she believes it has not. She is concerned that every fiscal year, when the City gets funds from the Federal Government, the funds are to be spent, but she believes those funds were being held.

She continued, "The community doesn't have any say on anything that's been going on, it's just an OK from every department, from Planning, from HCDC, then it goes to the City Council, which the City Council and the Redevelopment is the same agency. So that's what I'm objecting to. Those federal dollars that come in to the City of Fresno, we don't want them spent anywhere. They should have been spent years ago, but you guys have recaptured it, the City has; I say you because you're with the City. They've been held and now they're coming back and saying the money is already there. It should have been spent but it wasn't."


Ms. Cázares clarified that as far as the HOME funds that come into the office that she administers or oversees, the division has five years to spend the money, so they don't have to spend last year's money last year, or this year's money this year. According to the federal regulations, the Housing Division has five years to spend HOME funds, and two years to encumber. She's not sure about what other programs Ms. Harris is talking about, it may be RDA money, and she can't answer about that. But as far as the HOME funds that her staff brings before the Commission, if the division is not spending and encumbering in accordance with the federal guidelines, that money gets taken away, so the Commission would already have received a report from her stating so. She stated her department has been following federal regulations.

#### H. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to bring before the Housing and Community Development Commission, the meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

Next Regularly Scheduled Commission Meeting: **November 9, 2011**

Attest: Rogenia Cox, Chairperson

  
Attest: Claudia Cázares, Manager  
Housing and Community Development