

Meeting Notes

DATE January 19, 2012

PURPOSE Initial Housing Workgroup Meeting

FROM John Connell

ATTENDEES Mike Butrum, Governmental Affairs Director/Asheville Board of Realtors; Matthew Vande, Principal/Vandemusser Designs; Laura Copeland, VP Public Policy/Asheville Chamber of Commerce; Jan Davis, City Councilman/City of Asheville; Jessica Stringfield, Graduate Student/Appalachian State University; Karen Caldwell/Buncombe County Health Department; Paul Reeves, Director of Construction/Asheville Area Habitat for Humanity; Gaya Erlandron, Executive Director/Living New St; Dennis Berndt, Program Director/Hinds Feet Farm; Jeff Staudinger, Community Development Director/City of Asheville; David Nash, Community Development Director/Asheville Housing Authority; Donna Cottrell, Housing Coordinator/Buncombe County; Stan Crownover, Environmental Health/Buncombe County; Alex Mawhinney, Principal/Lifestyle Support; Pam Hysong, Area Director/USDA Rural Development; Marnette Colborne, Executive Director/Haywood Habitat for Humanity; Hugh Lipham, Director of Residential Development/Housing Assistance Corporation; Sheryl Fortune, Housing Director/Western Carolina Community Action; Richard Molland, Executive Director/Community Housing Coalition of Madison County; Kae Parker, Recorder/Transylvania County Community Land Trust; Sherry Vaughn/Blue Ridge Sustainable Initiative

Karen Kiehna and John Connell with Land-of-Sky Regional Council staffed the housing workgroup. Karen acted as facilitator for the workgroup meeting, while John scribed.

Question #1) Who else should be here today (people/agencies)? Are any counties underrepresented?

- Haywood, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania Counties are underrepresented.
- Mountain Projects (Cheryl Wilkins).
- Home Builders from each County.
- Board of Realtors from each county.

- Single mothers and others who are traditionally underserved.
- Western Highlands and other agencies that provide supportive living services.
- Chamber of Commerce from Transylvania, Henderson, Madison and Haywood Counties.
- Affordable housing developers, both for-profit and non-profit.
- School systems.
- Council's on Aging.
- Local government representatives.
- Commercial lenders.
- Younger demographic.
- OnTrack Financial Education and Counseling.
- Self Help Credit Union.
- Western North Carolina Green Building Council.

Question #2) Look at the list of data plans, studies and other initiatives. Are there other plans, studies and initiatives that we should be aware of that are pertinent/related? For ongoing projects, how can we best coordinate our efforts with them?

- Academic research.
- Annual survey of rental housing communities.
- Share trends in Market Analysis done by developers for tax credit projects.
- Information gathered by OnTrack Financial Education and Counseling.
- UNC/MHO report on Housing/Transportation-“Long Way Home”.
- Information gathered by the Self Help Credit Union.
- Energy efficiency data collected by the Western North Carolina Green Building Council and area Board's of Realtors.
- Data gathered by Mission Hospital on where employees live.
- Data gathered by area Chamber's of Commerce on where employees live.
- Data related to in/out migration in the region.
- Current best practices.

Question #3) What are the issues and opportunities highlighted by these plans and initiatives that are perhaps common to all five counties?

- Creeping inflation.
- How to create a balance between recent requirements for more restrictions on bank lending vs. overly loose (sometimes predatory) lending practices prior to the housing bubble burst.
- Prevalence of mobile home parks.
- Housing paradigm shifts.
- Education concerning housing paradigm shifts.
- Changing Federal priorities concerning housing, both political and funding.
- Energy efficiency.
- Transportation/Housing/Workplace link.
- Regional and local cultural realities.
- Where are we? Where are we going? How do we get there?

Question #4) What are the region's main challenges to measurably increasing the supply of housing affordable to a diversity of incomes?

- NIMBY'ism (Not In My Backyard).
- Rural housing issues.
- Land cost.
- Size restrictions on building lots.
- Lack of adequate infrastructure.
- Lack of funding.
- Mobility.
- Lack of contractor's.
- Terrain.
- Operational costs of new and existing houses.
- Lack of understanding of the need for more income appropriate housing.

- Comparables.
- Innovations in housing.
- Compact development.
- Zoning and other regulations.
- Incentives to create affordable (income appropriate) housing.
- Appraisal and lender issues.

Question #5) What other issues and opportunities are important to the region?

- Aging mobile homes.
- Accessibility.
- Minimum housing standards.
- One bedroom/studio units.
- Smoke free multifamily housing.
- Healthy built homes.
- How to finance housing cooperatives and other non-traditional forms of housing.
- New approaches to funding.
- Energy efficiency and cost as it relates to affordability. (Up front cost of energy efficiency measures leading to future savings?)
- Preservation of existing housing.
- Balancing urban and rural needs.
- Income stratification in housing. How do you support income diverse neighborhoods without causing gentrification?
- Utilizing best practices now.
- Coping with decreases in funding.
- Building reuse to housing.
- Redefining abandoned developments.
- Changing attitudes.
- Growing demographic of baby boomers who will need affordable, accessible housing.

