

M I N U T E S
SPECIAL MEETING

GARDEN GROVE NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT AND
CONSERVATION COMMISSION (NICC)

COMMUNITY MEETING CENTER
11300 STANFORD AVENUE
GARDEN GROVE, CALIFORNIA 92840

MONDAY
May 13, 2013

CALL TO ORDER: The special meeting of the NICC was called to order at 6:35 p.m. in the Council Chamber

PRESENT: Chair Freer, Vice Chair O'Neill, Commissioners:
Younies, Zamora, Cepeda and Pham

ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT: Allison Mills, Community Development Division Manager, Monica Covarrubius, Sr. Program Specialist, and Rosemarie Jacot, Recording Secretary

PLEDGE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice Chair O' Neill

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None

MINUTES

March 4, 2013

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes for March 4, 2013.

ACTION: APPROVED (5) AYES

PUBLIC HEARING

Public Hearing for Fiscal-Year 2013-14 Action Plan

The staff report dated May 13, 2013 was introduced. Barbara Shull, Fair Housing Foundation, addressed the Commission outlining their services and approach to meeting the needs of the City. Letters of recommendation were introduced. This information has all taken place in the City of Garden Grove:

- The Fair Housing Foundation brings their services to Garden Grove with monthly meetings in the CMC and the Library as well as Housing.
- They provide services in English and Spanish with staff and have contracted with Certified English Languages International, for translation, and interpreting in Vietnamese as well as an additional 180 languages.
- Counseled 299 residents in the City of Garden Grove on rental property owners, managers on their rights and responsibilities
 - Provided fair housing counseling to 22 tenants
 - Opened 14 cases of fair housing discrimination
 - Staffed 2 booths at community events
 - Conducted 3 Certificate Management Trainings
 - Held 9 walk-in clinics
 - Conducted 3 tenant workshops
 - Conducted 3 housing provider workshops
 - Made connections with 9 community based organizations
 - Have reached 949 residents with outreach and education
 - Provides direct client services
 - Scope of work is effective and exceeds the needs of the City as well as HUD's
 - An office will be opened in Irvine, summer of this year
 - Complaints have been minimal

Timothy Huynh, Mercy House, addressed the Commission. Mercy House is an emergency shelter that was funded by ESG, and is part of this Action Plan that is before the Commission tonight. He thanked staff and the commission for this grant and encouraged the commission to pass the Action Plan.

David Levy, Fair Housing Council of Orange County, addressed the Commission. They were previously the service provider to the City of Garden Grove until the current program year:

Concerns:

- Unclear about this meeting tonight and the purpose
- Submitted for lesser amount than the Fair Housing Foundation
- They have a physical office and provide late hours
- Claims the Foundation does not answer the phone, they have tested this and have had to leave messages

- States the Council lacks Vietnamese language capability, they tested this, message left in Vietnamese by the Council was not returned
- Does not believe the Foundation meets HUD's limited languages proficiency requirements

Sharon Wie, Director of Interval House, addressed the Commission. They are one of the most comprehensive domestic violent shelter programs in the county. They are the only domestic violent shelter that accepts teenage boys and are asking for the City's continued support for emergency shelter program and rental assistance program under the Rapid Re-housing program.

Denise Kato, President and CEO, of Fair Housing Council, addressed the Commission. Introduced letters of recommendation.

- They take walk-ins. She believes that low-income people whose first language is not English have difficulty communicating over the phone.
- Services were never cut during their tenure with the City of Garden Grove
- The Foundation has beautiful reports
- There were phone problems previously that have now been rectified
- They have done trainings- Landlords and realtors learn how to run businesses without discrimination
- They have agreements with Anaheim, and Santa Ana
- The only Fair Housing Council that owns their own building

Khoi Pham, retired from Fair Housing Council, addressed the Commission. During his time he served many Vietnamese people with language and legal issues. Every day he counseled landlords and tenants on the rights and wrongs on fair housing.

The Commission inquired what prompted staff to choose the Fair Housing Foundation over the Fair Housing Council. Staff noted that it was increasingly difficult to communicate with staff at the Council, phone messages and emails were not returned. From an administrative standpoint it was difficult to work with the Council. It took many months to receive the Council's Corporate Resolution and therefore, took that long to finalize the written agreement to provide services. Staff had Denise Kato's personal cell phone number and found her message box so full no message could be left.

The past year staff has found the Foundation to be very communicative, and wanting to work with staff, to publicize and schedule meetings and trainings many here the Community Meeting Center in Garden Grove.

Staff contacted the City's Housing Division to see if they have received any complaints. No complaints have been received.

It was moved and seconded to accept staff's recommendation to transmit the 2013-14 Draft Action Plan and citizen comments to City Council.

ACTION: APPROVED

(3) AYES – CHAIR FREER, VICE CHAIR O'NEILL, COMMISSIONER CEPEDA

(1) NO – COMMISSION YOUNIES

(2) ABSTAIN - COMMISSIONER ZAMORA, AND COMMISSIONER PHAM

MATTERS FROM STAFF

Housing Element Update-Progress Report

The staff report dated May 13, 2013 was introduced. There were no public comments. The Commission indicated they were satisfied with the update. Staff noted that they have met certain goals already or are on track to meet certain goals by 2014.

MATTERS FROM COMMISSIONERS

The Commissioners noted that being new to this process it is sometimes difficult to formulate questions. Staff let them know they are here to help the Commissioners understand what is going on and what is being asked of them.

Staff explained what types of issues might be brought before the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m. to its next regular meeting on June 3, 2013 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rosemarie Jacot