

MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT AND CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Courtyard Center
12732 Main Street

Monday, December 7, 2015

CALL TO ORDER: 6:32 P.M.

ROLL CALL:

CHAIR BRIETIGAM
VICE CHAIR CONSTANTINO
COMMISSIONER BLACKMUN
COMMISSIONER MCINTOSH
COMMISSIONER MUNETON
COMMISSIONER PHAM
COMMISSIONER RAMIREZ

Absent: Brietigam, Muneton, Pham

ALSO PRESENT: Allison Mills, Neighborhood Improvement Manager; Nida Watkins, Project Manager; Monica Covarrubias, Senior Program Specialist; Alana Cheng, Senior Administrative Analyst; Judy Moore, Recording Secretary.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by Vice Chair Constantino.

Commissioner Pham joined the meeting at 6:34 p.m.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – PUBLIC

Verla Lambert stated that her neighborhood received letters from the Neighborhood Improvement Committee (NIC), and they initially thought the letters were from the Neighborhood Improvement and Conservation Commission (NICC), as the name was similar. She would like more clarification of the names. She also asked if any ESG (Emergency Shelter Grant) funds were used for the Living Springs Christian Fellowship neighborhood revitalization efforts. Staff clarified that a verbal partnership existed between the City and Living Springs. Ms. Lambert, however, questioned the liability, and would like more communication with the City.

Staff then clarified that the NIC was a City committee headed by the Police Department.

MINUTES

It was moved by Commissioner McIntosh and seconded by Commissioner Blackmun to approve the Minutes from the September 14, 2015 Meeting. The motion carried by a 5-0-2 vote as follows:

Ayes: (5) Blackmun, Constantino, McIntosh, Pham, Ramirez
Noes: (0) None
Absent: (2) Brietigam, Muneton

MATTERS FROM STAFF

ACKNOWLEDGE 2016 MEETING DATES: 2016 Meeting dates were acknowledged.

Staff then introduced Nida Watkins as the new NICC Commission liaison.

CODE ENFORCEMENT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BROCHURE:

Staff discussed and received input on the new 'Code Enforcement Frequently Asked Questions Brochure', which would help to direct misdirected calls to the correct divisions or outside services. Commissioner McIntosh asked that the website link for the information be prominent on the City's webpage. Staff added that the brochures were distributed at every level.

COMMISSIONER APPOINTMENT TO ORANGE COUNTY ESG COLLABORATIVE:

Staff discussed and received input on the change of process for awarding Federal Emergency Solution Grant (ESG) Funds to local non-profit service providers. One Commissioner was to be selected to serve on the ESG application review committee.

Commissioner Blackmun nominated Commissioner McIntosh. The motion failed by a 1-4-2 vote.

Ayes: (1) Blackmun
Noes: (4) Constantino, McIntosh, Pham, Ramirez
Absent: (2) Brietigam, Muneton

Commissioner Pham nominated himself. The motion carried by a 3-1-1-2 vote as follows:

Ayes: (3) Constantino, McIntosh, Ramirez
Noes: (1) Blackmun
Abstain: (1) Pham
Absent: (2) Brietigam, Muneton

Commissioners congratulated Commissioner Pham.

MATTERS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner McIntosh asked if the City had a release of liability with Living Springs. Staff explained that originally, Living Springs approached the Neighborhood Improvement Division in an effort to do good work in the community; that through standard Code Enforcement procedures, deficient properties with homeowners who wanted to comply with code, had their contact information given to Living Springs; that the City's involvement was minimal by providing contact information only; and that residents were happy with the church's work.

Commissioner Blackmun asked for the criteria for selecting a neighborhood to revitalize. Staff explained that the NIC looked at crime statistics, Code Enforcement cases, building abatement cases, and CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) low to moderate income neighborhoods; that five to six neighborhoods were chosen; that staff would then look for the most impact with the completed work; that Ms. Lambert's neighborhood was near the top of the list; that one neighborhood was chosen per year; that the Police Chief was the committee Chair;

that it was a collaborative effort; and that there were no loans or grants for individuals.

Commissioner McIntosh stated that residents were scared their neighborhood could be deemed blighted. Staff responded that there was no ulterior motive as it costs money to fix streets if the intent was to eventually strip them out.

Commissioner Ramirez added that a limiting factor for eminent domain was funds and that to take land was cost prohibitive, especially with redevelopment gone.

Ms. BB Eastman, who was on the legislative task force for the Governor to remove redevelopment, stated that redevelopment was now called revitalization; that her neighbors speak to each other and conduct meetings; that there were no CDBG grants for homeowners; that Anaheim asks residents what they want; that people don't trust City Hall; that their neighborhood was on Page 4 of the Eminent Domain Abuse Act; that AB2 was signed by Governor Brown; that their neighborhood cameras caught City street staff pointing out homes; and that she was offended that her neighborhood was considered 'Broken Windows'.

Commissioner Ramirez recommended that a new dialogue be started with the new City Manager, Scott Stiles, who was very community oriented, especially to maintain the integrity and character of the neighborhoods; that Code officers usually look at properties because someone has called; that Code officers do not have time to proactively look for violations due to limited resources; that the neighborhood needs to build relationships; and that the selection criteria was public record.

Commissioner McIntosh referred to the demolished 1890's historic Harper home on 12381 Nelson Street and noted that it was the former home of the City's original blacksmith and that there was no consideration for its significance; that the Planning Division was unaware of historic homes; that the City Council shot down the Mills Act request; that he would like the Planning Commission and NICC to produce an historic recognition document beginning with the 1986 historic resources survey; that historic sites could receive front lawn markers similar to those in the city of Orange; that demographics were changing with no long term residents; that steps should be taken to respect, acknowledge, protect, conserve, and preserve the historic sites.

Staff then noted that the NICC works for Federal Funds under HUD (Housing and Urban Development) only; that the historic preservation requests were outside the Commission's jurisdiction and that the Planning Commission or City Council may be a better choice; that the City Council would need to give direction to move forward; that the research could be done independently as residents, not as Commission members; that the Housing Authority does not fall under the NICC either, even though it owns several properties; and that the NICC was different from the Neighborhood Improvement Division.

Commissioner Pham followed up with Ms. Bravo from the September 14th NICC meeting with regard to her housing issue, and though he referred her to a program for transitional homes, she was now living in an Anaheim motel.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

The next Regular Meeting of the Neighborhood Improvement and Conservation Commission will be held Monday, March 7, 2016, at 6:30 p.m., at the Community Meeting Center, 11300 Stanford Avenue.