APPROVED

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE ARLINGTON HEIGHTS HOUSING COMMISSION
VILLAGE OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, ILLINOIS
September 18, 2024

IN ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners Present:	David Miller	Dave LoSavio	Gabriel Nagy
	Janice Krinsky		
Commissioners Absent:	Ken Kiefer	William Delea	
Staff Present:	Nora Boyer, Housing Planner/Staff Liaison		
Others Present:	Fred Vogt	Senior Citizens Commission	
	Keith Moens	Village Resident	

I. CALL TO ORDER

A motion was made by Commissioner Miller, seconded by Commissioner Nagy to select Commissioner Krinsky to chair the meeting in the absence of Chairman Kiefer. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Acting Chairman Krinsky.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: J. Krinsky, D. LoSavio, D. Miller, & G. Nagy
Absent: K. Kiefer and W. Delea

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Miller, seconded by Commissioner LoSavio to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2024 meeting. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

IV. REPORTS

Ms. Boyer stated that she had no updates on the multi-family residential projects that are subject to the Inclusionary Affordable Housing ordinance.

V. NEW BUSINESS

The Shelter Inc. CDBG funding request was moved up on the agenda. Ms. Boyer stated that Shelter Inc. was previously approved for a CDBG grant of $38,340 for a fire alarm system and sprinkler system at its group home on E Valley Lane. This project was put out for bid and the minimum of three bids was received. The resulting cost exceeds the approved grant amount $4,992 for a total of $43,332. This is the bid amount from the low bidder on the project. There is sufficient funding in the 2023/2024 CDBG budget and in the 2024 Village budget to cover the additional $4,992. Staff recommends approval.

Commission Miller asked if the fire safety systems are required by the Village. Ms. Boyer confirmed that they are required.

A motion was made by Commissioner Miller, seconded by Commissioner LoSavio, to approve the increase of $4,992 in the CDBG grant to Shelter Inc. for a fire alarm system and sprinkler system at the E Valley Lane home bringing the total grant amount from $38,340 to $43,332. The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Single-Family Rehab Program
Ms. Boyer reported that there have been no changes since last month.

B. Arlington Heights Affordable Housing Trust Fund
Ms. Boyer said that staff sent letters to the respondents to the Request for Letters of interest asking if any of them would be interested in using trust fund monies for a rental preservation program rather than new construction. Respondents were asked to reply by September 20, 2024. One respondent had responded with interest to date and a telephone call is being scheduled with that respondent. Ms. Boyer said that if she only hears back from the one respondent, she may re-send the email asking about interest in rental preservation.
Commissioner Nagy asked if the Village has worked with the respondents before or if they have been vetted. Ms. Boyer said that she had worked with or heard of most of the respondents before. If the Village were to engage in a project with one of the respondents, the Village would further vet them before entering into a commitment. At this point, the Village is only gathering information.

Commissioner Miller clarified that the Request for Letters of Interest process was done at the direction of the Village Board to explore potential uses of the trust fund and further the Village's discussion of options and priorities.

VI. NEW BUSINESS CONTINUED
The Housing Commissioner resumed addressing the New Business agenda items.

A. Inclusionary Housing Ordinance Review
Ms. Boyer provided a brief review of the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance and the Inclusionary Housing Guidelines, in particular the percentages of total units within developments that are required to be affordable and the fee-in-lieu options. The percentages and fee amount vary depending on the location of the development and whether there is any public assistance.

Commissioner Nagy asked if the Arlington Heights requirements are in-line with the requirements of other communities in the area. Ms. Boyer said that there are inclusionary housing requirements in other municipalities in the Chicago area, but none of the municipalities in Arlington Heights' immediate area have inclusionary requirements. She said that the percentage requirements in Arlington Heights are on the lower side compared to the requirements other communities' ordinances. However, sometimes communities have higher percentages in their ordinances but grant variations resulting in lower actual production. Also, Arlington Heights requires that the affordable units be affordable in-perpetuity while other communities have affordability requirements such as for 30 years. Evanston is considering making changes in its requirements.

Commissioner Nagy commented that reducing restrictions on developments could make it more feasible for developers to produce affordable housing, for which there is a market, but the complex processes and requirements discourage developers from involving themselves in the affordable housing market even though it could be profitable. Commissioner Nagy commented on the limited numbers of units that inclusionary requirements tend to produce. While these units are helpful, we need to look at ways to encourage larger numbers of affordable units in areas where families are.

B. Village Owned Property

Information was provided on the two vacant Village-owned properties that could be suitable for housing. Maps were provided. One of the locations is in a single-family (R-3) neighborhood and the other is adjacent to multi-family. Commissioner Miller suggested that if the adjacent multi-family property is rental, it may be worth asking the owner about potentially developing the Village-owed property for rental. Commissioner LoSavio asked about the small, multi-family properties to the south of downtown Arlington Heights. Ms. Boyer responded that there are a couple of areas where the zoning permits duplexes and smaller multi-family buildings. Commissioner Nagy said that he may do some exploring of these properties but was thinking in terms of something bigger to take advantage of economies of scale.

C. Illinois Affordable Housing Planning and Appear Act

Ms. Boyer provided information on this State Act that sets 10% as the minimum level of affordable housing in order for municipalities to be exempt from the other requirements of the Act. This 10% is often sited as an affordable housing goal, but it is a minimum threshold. Links were provided to documents on the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) website. Commissioner Krinsky commented on the wide range of percentages of affordable housing in municipalities across the State. She further commented that some municipalities have little to no affordable housing and are not doing their share in addressing the need.

D. Discussion of Request for Joint Meeting with the Senior Citizens Commission

The Housing Commission is receptive to having a joint meeting. An agenda would need to be developed focusing on sharing information and in order to ensure that the meeting is productive. Commissioner Miller commented that affordable housing for seniors has been identified priority. Ms. Boyer commented that older existing rental housing tends to not be accessible due to the lack of elevators making only the first floor units appropriate for some people.

Mr. Vogt said the Senior Commission recently met and directed their staff liaison, Tracey Colagrossi, to work with Ms. Boyer on the agenda. He said that the Senior Commission is interested in emphasizing "aging-in-place" by assisting current senior residents in maintaining their homes and making improvements that would enable them to remain in their homes safely.

Commissioner Miller commented that aging-in-place programs may have the potential for impacting a large number of residents at a reasonable by making changes like accessibility improvements. Commissioner Miller asked about potential funding sources. He said that it would be good to identify potential funding from existing sources before the proposed joint meeting. Ms. Boyer commented that the Northwest Housing Partnership has funding for accessibility improvements and their program offers forgivable loans. Mr. Vogt said that the Senior Commission is interested in asking what options are feasible.

Some potential dates for a joint meeting were discussed. Ms. Boyer said that she would work with Ms. Colagrossi with regard to the joint meeting. Commissioner LoSavio suggested inviting a representative of the Northwest Housing Partnership to the joint meeting.

Ms. Boyer clarified that the joint meeting would be subject to the Open Meetings Act. Commissioner Krinsky commented that nothing would be voted on at the proposed joint meeting.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

A. October 16, 2024 Meeting Agenda

Ms. Boyer had indicated to the commissioners that she is not available on the regular October meeting date of October 16th. It was suggested that waiting until a November date for the joint meeting with the Senior Commission may be better and it could serve as a combined October and November meeting for the Housing Commission. October 28, 2024 was also suggested as a possibility.

VIII. Public Comment

Mr. Keith Moens commented that the quickest way to get more affordable units would be to increase the percentages of affordable units, linkage fees, and the fees-in-lieu required under the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance. He said that the 10% requirement is too low. He commented that the development on Algonquin is getting $18 million in TIF funds and is guaranteed a 12% internal rate of return. He said that getting 30 affordable units (10%) is not a good deal for the Village. This could be discussed at a Housing Commission at a meeting in the future when more members are present, but Commissioner Miller commented that we need to think about how to use our political capital to make the biggest impact. He said that we should look at what kind of increase in the number of affordable units would occur if there were an increase in the percentages compared to focusing attention on other potential initiatives.

Mr. Moens also commented that the 10% minimum in the State Act was presented by the opposition to the Grace Terrace development as the State's affordable housing goal, and it was used repeatedly to argue that Arlington Heights does not need more affordable housing since the State's current calculation for the level of affordable housing is Arlington Heights is close to 20%. Mr. Moen's said that the assumptions in the Act for owned housing units results in an overstatement in the number of owned units that are affordable. He said that education, including providing information to the Village Board, is needed about what the Act means and the assumptions used in the calculations.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Miller, seconded by Commissioner LoSavio to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 pm. The motion was approved by voice vote.

Next Meeting: To be determined.