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**Meeting Minutes
Steering Committee Meeting
West Cook County Housing Collaborative**

**May 28, 2014
3:30 p.m. – 5:00 pm.
Forest Park Village Hall
517 DesPlaines Avenue, Forest Park, IL**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by David Myers at 3:35 p.m.

II. Attendees

- Members Present: Ronald Nightengale and Tonita LeShore (Bellwood); Alderman Cesar Santoy (Berwyn); Mayor Anthony Calderone and Tim Gillian (Forest Park); Mayor Edwenna Perkins and David Myers (Maywood); Colette Lueck and Tammie Grossman (Oak Park).
- Member(s) Absent: Alicia Ruiz (Berwyn).
- Others Present: Evan Summers (Berwyn); John Gerut, Kristine Giornalista and Jerome Sader (IFF); Maria Saldana (Oak Park Residence Corporation); Rob Breymaier (Oak Park Regional Housing Center / West Cook Homeownership Center); Janet Smith and Erika Strauss (UIC-Voorhees); Marisa Novara (Metropolitan Planning Council).

III. Non-Agenda Public Comment

There was no non-agenda public comment.

IV. Agenda

MOTION to accept by Mayor Calderone and seconded by Alderman Santoy. MOTION passed unanimously.

V. Minutes of March 20, 2014

MOTION to accept by Trustee Lueck and seconded by Mayor Calderone. MOTION passed unanimously.

VI. Mission Statement

- IFF presented a new WCCHC mission statement for discussion: "The West Cook County Housing Collaborative works together to strengthen and balance the sub-regional housing market through intentional initiatives and policies."
- There was general agreement that WCCHC does not represent all of West Cook County. "Sub-region" in this context is the five WCCHC communities.
- The word "stabilize" was suggested as an alternate to the word "balance." It was noted that "stabilize" could convey a negative message about WCCHC communities. The group agreed to eliminate the word "balance."
- The group agreed that a core function of WCCHC is knowledge sharing and peer information exchange among the members. "Knowledge sharing" or a similar phrase should replace "policies."
- IFF will propose a revised mission statement with alternate phrases to capture the concept of knowledge sharing.

VII. New Program Concepts

- IFF sought feedback on new program concepts that IFF and Metropolitan Mayors Caucus developed in response to the priority areas identified at the March 28 meeting.

- **West Cook Advantage Homeownership Program.** West Cook Advantage (WCA) is a rebranding and expansion of the current homeownership program currently funded through the DCEO grant. WCA will be the public name for all WCCHC efforts involving the acquisition, rehabilitation and affordable resale of homes for owner occupancy. The Attorney General Mortgage Settlement Grant will fall under the WCA umbrella and will include single family homes, condominiums and 2-4 flat units.
- **Foreclosure Resolution Initiative.** The objective of this effort would be to reduce the number of aged foreclosure cases (i.e. “zombie properties”) in WCCHC. WCCHC could build on the existing Cook County Foreclosure Mediation Program, which involves tracking of new foreclosure filings and outreach by local organizations to families involved in foreclosure. The tracking system could be expanded so that IFF and others could work with servicers and municipalities on resolving aged foreclosure filings.
- **Rental Community Engagement Initiative.** The objective of this initiative would be to strengthen regulation and incentives to improve the management of rental housing. The program would include analysis of and recommendations for improving existing municipal practices and regulatory “tools.” Another component would be providing training to landlords.
 - Mayor Calderone agreed with the potential value of data collection, though he voiced concern that these recommendations and programs would have limited effect in Forest Park since it is not a home rule community. Without the home rule powers, it is difficult to get landlords to participate in trainings. R. Breymaier commented that there was a proposed bill in 2013 in the Illinois Senate [SB1155] that contemplated greater powers for non-home rule communities regarding crime-free housing and rental housing regulation.
 - Mayor Calderone suggested that Oak Park’s programs for rental housing would be a valuable resource for replicating policies for WCCHC members.
 - T. Grossman noted that they have foreclosure and rental initiatives in place in Oak Park and would not want those programs to be run by WCCHC. T. LeShore also said Bellwood would want to keep running their own foreclosure and rental programs. D. Myers said Maywood could benefit from both. E. Summers noted that Berwyn has been challenged to implement programs on foreclosure resolution and rental properties.
 - Trustee Lueck noted that not every community will benefit equally from all WCCHC programs, and that each government entity needs to have a conversation about what their role is in housing stabilization: Is this an appropriate government responsibility? And if so, can the community contribute resources?
 - T. Gillian said all communities recognize the need for help with the 2-4 flat rental market.
- **Comprehensive Plan Implementation Support.** In this effort, IFF would assist WCCHC members in creating “development ready” sites and/or programs identified in the new comp plans.
 - T. Grossman noted that all communities will need support updating their ordinances and zoning. She suggested that WCCHC make a joint application to CMAP for Local Technical Assistance (LTA). E. Summers noted that a WCCHC application would be a potential tie into the *Go To 2040* plan.

- IFF applied to Cook County for a CDBG grant to support this work; if awarded the grant, the term would be October 2014 through September 2015.

VIII. IGA and Funding

- With the reductions in philanthropic support, IFF identified an approximately \$50,000 annual gap in revenue.
- C. Santoy asked for a budget that reflects the program sources and uses (e.g. DCEO) in addition to the coordination and technical assistance budgets.
- T. Gillian asked when the existing funds will run out. IFF confirmed that IFF, MMC and MPC have funding from The Chicago Community Trust (CCT) and JP Morgan Chase Foundation (Chase) through the end of June 2014. The Grand Victoria Foundation grant runs through September 2014. A CTT grant for \$25,000 covering July 2014 through June 2015 was recently confirmed. An application to Chase is pending.
- Members agreed to discuss the possibility of making a \$10,000 contribution to WCCHC's operations for upcoming years. Several members noted it would be tough to fit this into their current budget cycles, but it might be possible to introduce in future budget cycles. Representatives stated the need to take the figures home to their boards and have conversations about what funding is possible.
- IFF will distribute a revised budget before the next WCCHC meeting.

IX. Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Kristine Giornalista, IFF.