

COMMUNITY REVIEW MEETING, APRIL 2, 2013

The East Hartford Housing Authority held a special meeting on Tuesday, April 2, 2013 at the Community Cultural Center located at 50 Chapman Place, East Hartford, Connecticut. The meeting was called to order at 6:40 p.m.

Debra Bouchard and Kelly McDermott welcomed everyone for attending the presentations tonight by Mutual Housing Association of Greater Hartford, Inc. and Goodwin College, JHM Group & Imagineers for the purpose of the King Court disposition process. They explained the ground rules for the presentations. Attorney Alexander stated that due to the majority of the Board of Commissioners of the East Hartford Housing Authority being present this meeting was noticed with the Town.

PRESENTATION BY MUTUAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

Catherine MacKinnon, Executive Director

Mutual Housing Authority gave their presentation to the group. Some of the points were:

- Explained how/when/why Mutual Housing Association was formed.
- Mutual Housing operates with four lines of business: real estate development, property management, resident initiatives and housing education. These were further explained. Mutual Housing owns 11 properties.
- In 2007, Mutual Housing took over management of its own properties. They have teams of property managers: 3 property managers, 1 compliance manager, 1 work order administrator and 9 facilities team members.
- The Resident Based Programming was explained: ready to rent, homebuyer's education, resident initiatives, leadership academy and Board of Directors.
- Patricia Gotimer and Jahdiel Cruz gave an overview of what they have learned through the Leadership Academy and also while serving on the Board of Directors.
- Participatory Planning – It was explained how residents have participated in the past at their different sites.
- Resident Group – Work hard to get residents involved in their developments.
- Resident Program – It would depend on what the residents want to be involved in and how they want it structured and work through the Leadership Academy to put together a training program to facilitate through the process.
- Job Training – They added a job readiness component to their Leadership Academy and over the years have always tried to hire from within.

Alca Construction

Joe Calafiore, President

Alca Construction has worked with Mutual Housing for more than 15 years building affordable housing and 6 of the 7 projects you have seen they were the construction manager. The following examples of similar projects they worked on successfully and implemented a resident participation plan which involved local housing authorities and non-profit developers :

- Mary Shepard Place project in Hartford worked with Hartford Housing Authority and set up a program to employ residents and worked with the New Haven Housing Authority on the Farnam

Courts Project (both of these projects they were able to hire residents to work for them during the construction phase).

- In conjunction with Mutual Housing they worked with the Hartford Jobs Fellow (which provides pre-employment preparation and training for individuals) at the Park Terrace II development.
- Explained how residents would be able to apply for job openings
- Work through Hartford Jobs Fellow who is willing to provide pre-employment training with residents of King Court.
- Job notices will also be posted on site that will instruct residents where to go to get information on employment opportunities.

Larry Kluetsch, Consultant

At this time, a brief overview was given of what the plans will be for the King Court renovations which is going to be a \$10 million makeover is what is planned at King Court, which includes the following:

- Updating all of the unit's kitchens, bathrooms, new flooring, new windows, etc.
- "Green" improvement to make units more energy efficient.
- Addition of a Community Room.
- Expanding the recreation areas and improving landscape.
- Site improvements including: new paving, sidewalks, and lighting.

Paul B. Bailey, Architect

This firm specializes in affordable housing and has designed over 4,000 units throughout Connecticut and over 90 housing developments have been funded through CHFA, HUD or DECD. Mr. Bailey showed some similar projects they have done on housing authority sites.

At this time, Mr. Bailey showed the proposed changes to the units at King Court and explained what would be done at each type of building.

The meeting was now opened to the public to ask questions of Mutual Housing Authority.

Ms. Denise Summers asked if Mutual Housing Authority can guarantee that you will provide all current King Court residents suitable housing at King Court. Ms. MacKinnon stated that promise has been made and residents that are overhoused they propose to create one-bedroom units so the overhoused issue can be addressed in that manner. She stated that Mutual Housing Authority is in the housing business not in the unhousing business.

Ms. Maria Claudio said in the architectural part changes were mentioned on the first level will there be any changes in the basement or the second level. Mr. Bailey said on the second level they will upgrade the bathroom, improve closets and all new HVAC and heating and ventilating and all new lighting rehab. The layout of the upstairs will not change.

Ms. Maria Claudio said on the map they show numbers but those are different than they currently are and asked if the address numbers would change. Mr. Bailey said those numbers were on the plans given by the housing authority and the current address numbers would not change.

Ms. Maria Claudio asked about the 300 unit development that was reduced to 235 units. Mr. Klutch said that one third of the site was empty and residents are being moved around on the site but will not be losing their unit. Ms. MacKinnon said that New Britain Housing Authority wanted to reduce the number of units.

Ms. Beatrice Kettles asked about the Living Room/Dining Area and wanted to know if every unit will have a full kitchen that will allow for a kitchen table. Mr. Bailey said that in some units due to the staircase it would be a substantial change and that is something that could be looked into but the kitchen and bedroom will be much larger with the additional bathroom.

Ms. MacKinnon said they really tried to create housing in which people will stay and have their families grow because this is not temporary housing.

Ms. Tamia Gillispie asked about a playground area with a basketball court. Ms. MacKinnon said that there is currently a basketball court space and noticed there is space there and it will be up to the residents to determine how it is to be used.

A question was asked about affordable housing and our rent is based on income how will that be done going forward. Ms. MacKinnon said all the current residents will be affordable to you for 40 years as a requirement of the funding. She said that people that live there they will be under the same funding source that is there now. The rent structure will be quite similar for the people that live there. As people move out, units still need to remain affordable to people for 80% of area median and the financing that they propose would have to remain affordable to people at 60% of their area median.

Ms. MacKinnon stated that the basements are pretty nice they need to have some clean up and one change she would make is to bring the washer and dryers to the main level.

One resident stated that the basement floods and there is mold. Ms. MacKinnon said that would be something to look at.

Ms. Denise Summers asked if there would be a way to put a community center right in the community. Ms. MacKinnon said that is what they are proposing. Ms. Summers asked what would prevent you for putting a community center in that area. Ms. MacKinnon said that the only thing she would expect would be zoning approval may be needed.

Commissioner James Patterson stated that with the Community Center he did not see any plans for a daycare and believed that would be something needed for the families. Ms. MacKinnon said that if someone wanted to operate a daycare facility out of the community center and stated that most of the community centers are used for meeting space but believed that would be a good idea and get more use out of it but they don't operate any daycares but could contract with someone.

Ms. Maria Claudio said that Mutual Housing Authority is not for profit and asked what does that mean. Ms. MacKinnon said the organization is an association and the people who live in our properties are members of that association and there are no owners. At the end of the year, any money that is left over goes back into the organization.

Ms. Maria Claudio said that Mutual Housing Authority has 456 units with 9 maintenance employees and asked if the 9 maintenance employees would also work at King Court. Ms. MacKinnon said that they would hire a maintenance team to work at King Court and King Court would sustain its own property management employee.

Ms. Maria Claudio asked where is Mutual Housing Authority's office located? Ms. MacKinnon said the main office is on Nile Street in Hartford and they have site offices as well.

Ms. Tamika Gillispie asked about the relocation plan. Ms. MacKinnon said that Mutual Housing Authority would have to figure out what the relocation plan would be with the residents. She understands there is interest in people moving back to their original unit, therefore, they would renovate the vacant units and move people to them and possibly move people back to their old units. She said she is unsure whether or not everyone would want to move around. Ms. Tamika Gillespie said if people are in a two-bedroom in a four unit apartment building would they have an opportunity to move to a townhouse. Ms. MacKinnon does not foresee that to be a problem since there are a lot of vacant units which will allow for a lot of flexibility and we will try to accommodate the current residents before others are brought in.

Ms. Maria Claudio said that Mutual Housing Authority has talked about experience and the ideas on the renovations for each unit at King Court what is the timeframe of that construction. Mr. Bailey said that they were looking at two years and it will be done in three phases. Ms. Claudio said if you move me out how long would she be out of her unit. Mr. Bailey said approximately seven months and the empty units would be done first to keep the amount of moving and displacing of people. Ms. Claudio asked who would be responsible for the relocation costs of the current residents. Ms. MacKinnon said it would be at the expense of Mutual Housing Authority.

Senator Henry Genga asked how long do you anticipate the renovation process to take. Ms. MacKinnon said it will take about two years. Senator Genga said at the beginning of the meeting no prices were to be discussed but he saw a slide that showed how much money would be used to renovate this property and he asked where will those funds come from. Ms. MacKinnon said they will come from a

combination of places such as the Low Housing Tax Credit Program, CHAMP Program and they have raised money from all different sources. Their Park Terrace II had 17 sources of funding which was a \$14.5 million project and they ended up with \$800,000 in debt the rest was through a grant and the tax credit program.

PRESENTATION BY GOODWIN COLLEGE/JHM GROUP

Todd Andrews, Goodwin College

Mr. Andrews thanked everyone for allowing them to make a presentation tonight. He stated joining him this evening is President of JHM John McClutchy and introduced other members of their team Imagineers (management company—they would handle property management issues and resident issues), David Holmes of Capital Studio Architects (architect) and legal team along with the housing education resource center (who will be involved with programmatic compliance and resident participation). Mr. McClutchy will share with the group his experience with these entities especially in the area resident participation which is the most important thing in this process. JHM was chosen by Goodwin College because they are experienced in developing thousands of affordable housing units not only in Connecticut but throughout the country. Most important to Goodwin College is how JHM has worked collaboratively with community groups and with the neighborhood residents on determining what the needs are of the residents and determining the solutions particularly when you are dealing with a project such as this which there is a sale.

Mr. Andrews gave an overview of Goodwin College.

- Moved to the campus in 2009—renovations started in 2005.
- The site was polluted along the river, environmentally contaminated, former industrial area, blighted place to dump garbage and do drug deals, etc. and that was not something reflecting positively on the college.
- Goodwin College provides 24/7 roaming security patrols that also goes through King Court to make sure the properties they have around King Court are secure.
- Neighborhood has benefitted from the security presence.
- They are helping to stabilize the neighborhood and beginning our revitalization efforts.

Mr. Andrews explained that educational institutions (colleges and universities) serve as anchors within a community. They are a place for jobs and put money back into the community. The college employs local resident and with this project this will allow them to continue to do that. Goodwin College recently had an economic impact study and they are among the five highest taxpayers in East Hartford and had over a billion dollar economic impact through East Hartford. Goodwin has over 3,000 students and they educate their local residents and five of which are residents of King Court and they employ local residents and now have over 570 employees. Goodwin owns 70 homes for rental housing units. Goodwin has two high schools under construction within walking distance of King Court and the old Willowbrook school has been renovated for pre-k and up to third grade. Planning to have a child daycare center in the school which will be available to residents as well as the community. He explained the different kinds of healthcare they are planning to have in the school.

VISION

Mr. Andrews stated their vision is to redevelop King Court and its surrounding neighborhood in a manner that ensures the health safety and welfare of all while securing the ongoing availability of long-term affordable housing for all King Court residents.

CONCEPTUAL PLAN

The conceptual plan for renovations at King Court is as follows:

- Maintain continued occupancy by current King Court residents
- Rehabilitate occupied units to ensure they are both safe and functional
- Rehabilitate unoccupied units

CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN

Mr. Andrews explained that there are limitations to the site itself and these are conceptual because we have not heard enough from the residents to come up with the end plan. From previous discussions with the residents and housing authority they have incorporated the following:

- Playground/playscape
- Basketball Court
- Courtyards
- Community Garden (explained that 4,000 lbs of food was given to the food bank last year from another community garden that was set up for use by residents and businesses)

PROCESS

Mr. Andrews stated the following items during the process:

- Continue with the State Moderate Income Program
- Provide eligible families with affordable housing opportunities (some families may be students)
(Student housing will not be set up as dormitories)

PROPOSED BENEFITS

Mr. Andrews stated some benefits in the proposal are as follows:

- Improve standard living and quality of life for the residents at King Court who cannot afford or need additional education
- Goodwin will extend significantly reduced tuition to the residents
- Employment opportunities at the College and currently there are over 30 openings
- Career services department
- Resume writing skills
- Interview skills
- Computer Labs
- Access to school library and use of recreational facilities

JHM GROUP

John McClutchy, President

Mr. McClutchy explained how JHM Group got involved with King Court is because they have been involved with many affordable housing developments. Connecticut is the headquarters for JHM Group and they have a lot of units in this state. He stated that they have worked with CHFA since its inception and worked with DECD for over 40 years. JHM Group has done over 55,000 housing units and 60% of that is affordable (more than 30,000 units was affordable housing). Mr. McClutchy stated that Goodwin College in his opinion has made a great statement for this community because they are a great organization and built themselves up over the last several of years to a college that is well recognized and understood as a higher education facility. Goodwin College is not just built buildings but bringing educational opportunities and creating job opportunities for the people that live here.

Mr. McClutchy explained how he lived as a child and grew up as a carpenter and as a carpenter he learned how to build buildings and not just buildings but homes. He believes that you need to sit down with the residents and the stakeholders who will go through the process and include them in every aspect from the planning and all the way through the construction and design and decoration of the units such as choosing the appliances, sinks, blinds, etc. He stated they have done this throughout their history and they have done it in the Hartford area, they have done 55,000 units

Mr. McClutchy explained that King Court is a state moderate rental housing program and only three states have them and they have failed in all three states. He explained they were capital building programs that allowed no subsidies to maintain units, therefore, the units incurred a lot of maintenance over time and this is not the fault of the housing authority or anyone. This was a program that was not well thought out and established in 1949 and people went out a built a lot of units which over time deteriorated. Mr. McClutchy stated that moderate rental is supposed to be for people at or below 80% of area median income. As the units deteriorated and there becomes empty units, it creates a dangerous and uncomfortable situation for everyone the community as well as the King Court residents.

Mr. McClutchy stated that there have been numbers thrown out tonight about the development costing \$10 million to renovate and he does not understand how any can establish it will cost \$10 million to do this project since that is not a big number to them. He stated that he has done projects that have cost \$5.5 billion. Mr. McClutchy said one of the reasons they joint ventured this project with Goodwin College is because they have their own capital resources as so do they. The longest process through this is how to put together the financing together. You need to have money in your bank account to get to the next level. As they look at this, they look at their mission, their experience, their capability, their commitment and financial resources. He said that we believe we have all of those things to make King Court work. He stated they will review the following: can you have a kitchen table in the kitchen, a community garden, child playscape, basketball court, etc. and explained them concerns that can arise for having these different things and placement of them in the development. In being a private for profit company, all of their developments they help their residents deal with childcare and many of the developments have childcare on site. He stated they go out and partner with a childcare provider and

they provide childcare for their residents and it is an important part of what our residents need in order to live. Goodwin College already has this established and they have already shown they are providers in childcare. There are a lot of reasons to have Goodwin College as developers such as the community facility to be used for: interviewing residents, parties/functions, computer labs, honor students to be act as tutors, run programs for adults to assist finding jobs, training for interview. In terms of jobs, they always start looking at the community they are building in and this being King Court and look at the surrounding neighborhood and ask if jobs can be created.

Mr. McClutchy said there will be a construction period and we need to sit down with the residents and discuss what that construction will comprise of: relocation, new construction, how many units will there be. He stated that he does know that this will create a lot of jobs and some of the jobs will be entry level other jobs will be skilled jobs.

Mr. McClutchy stated that they did the first state privatization of a state moderate rental development, Rippowam Park in Stamford, CT fifteen years ago of 430 units. At any given time, they had 10 to 11 residents working on that complex. They have been through this process for a long time and he said they are here to make your community better and they cannot do it without the residents help.

It was noted that Imagineers was here tonight. Mr. McClutchy said they have worked with Imagineers since 1976 and have 17,000 units in the state.

The meeting was now opened to the public to ask questions of Goodwin College/JHM Group.

Ms. Suzette Wright asked if they can give examples where you have accomplished this type of work before. Mr. McClutchy stated in Darien, CT was a 53 unit state moderate rental housing development called Allen O'Neill development which had fallen in disrepair much like King Court. They worked with on a joint venture with the Darien Housing Authority and the Town and changed the zoning to allow for more units because there was a lot of land that was available (it went from 53 units to 106 units) and went on to explain the types of units. They have a resident organization there that has worked with them from the beginning of the process and put together a building committee. They met with PHRN and put together a RPP that is in place and they have attend each meeting every month and have been involved with every detail of that project. In Stamford, they did a development called William Ward Homes a public housing development and at the time it was a very dangerous area and they went in and rehabilitated those units and they are fully occupied and there is a huge waiting list. There is a daycare center on site with a community room, exercise facility and two-thirds of the employees there are property residents. They train to bring people through the process. He also stated there are three play areas on the site.

Mr. McClutchy said that they did the first state moderate rental conversion in the State of Connecticut (Rippowam Park) and the most recent is The Heights at Darien. He said that they know what needs to be done in regards to approvals from the State and the Town.

Ms. Maria Claudio said to Mr. Andrews that he said he did not know what the residents needed which concerned her because what they need and everything they asked for was in the RFQ. She stated that the residents met five or six times and came up with a list of what the residents wanted, what they needed and what they were asking for. Ms. Wright stated for you to say you do not know what the residents need concerns her because it has been put in writing.

Mr. McClutchy stated that the residents did have a lot of items in the RFQ and they were looked at and he said from experience that he can sit down with the resident group and as you walk through the items he can assure you that he can bring up an five additional points for every one that you have that certainly were not addressed in the paperwork that they were given. He stated he does not want to go out and build/develop something that in the end the residents come back and say to him why didn't you tell us this was going to cause a problem. He said he can tell you what the cost will be, how the balance of space within the unit and better utilize the space. He said can we take what you have a design a development now absolutely but he does not believe it will result in what you want unless you have ongoing input throughout the process. Mr. McClutchy did not believe that Mr. Andrews meant to say that he did not know what the residents want but we want the residents involved throughout the process.

Ms. Maria Claudio said if the Housing Authority has not made a selection by next month of which group/team to go with how would JHM Group know the residents needs would you meet prior to a decision? She stated at this meeting all you are offering the residents is your expertise, who you are and how long you have been in the business. Mr. Clutchy said we can design something and give it to the residents but does not believe that is what you really want them to do. You can also visit the complexes they have done and show you exactly what has been done and you could meet with residents and see how they work with them and what the result was for them.

Mr. Todd Andrews stated that the Housing Authority issued a Request for Qualifications to state their qualifications and was not a Request for Proposals to explain how the project would be redeveloped.

Ms. Tamika Gillispie asked what is going to be your intent to meet with each of the tenants and how long will the process take once you find out what everyone wants . She said she understands that the plan is to start with the occupied units and will everything be updated and what is that part of the plan. Mr. McClutchy stated once the Housing Authority decides they can talk to residents they will do so.

Ms. Carolyn Brooks had a comment on the recertification process with the East Hartford Housing Authority.

Mr. Mark Scheinberg President of Goodwin College stated that they did not just get involved with King Court when it went up for sale they got involved with King Court the day they moved into the area they are located now. He stated their mission as an institution is to assist people the best they can and make sure they have decent living, wage and get them out working and they are very good at it. He said many colleges build walls around themselves, however, they are a community based organization for a non-profit that cares about the neighborhood. He said if anyone believes they bought houses in your neighborhood because they like to purchase houses that is not true they do that because they wanted to clean up the neighborhood around the school because it use to be a very dangerous area. They are dedicated to the neighborhood because they live with you they live on the next block and the reason why it matters so much to be a part of King Court is partly an offensive posture and make sure King Court is kept clean, in good shape and that the residents are happy that you are good neighbors and getting stronger because you are their neighbors and if it does not work out like that you know where to find them. Mr. Scheinberg said we do not want to elbow someone else out or run a housing project but since there is one right on their campus it will work out really well and the residents will have safe place and a place where you feel good about being there. He said the reason why they are doing it with their own checkbook is absurd and anyone else you talk to will be with tax credits or taxpayers' money or subsidies trying to figure out how to tie people together. Mr. Scheinberg stated that Goodwin College owns 2 King Court which use to be the Youth Center and it is very, very important them and you don't want it to go with someone who may make a mistake and not the right choice because not only will you have to live they problem they will also have to live with it. He said that is why Goodwin College is so dedicated to King Court.

Ms. Bouchard thanked everyone very much.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.