

**TOWN OF BLACK MOUNTAIN
HOUSING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
September 15, 2009**

The **Black Mountain Housing Commission** held its regular monthly meeting on **Tuesday, September 15, 2009 at 10:00 a.m.** in the Town Hall at 160 Midland Avenue, Black Mountain, N.C.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order with the following members present:

Connie Pruitt, Secretary
Ellen Farris, Vice Chair
Jeff Hunter
Dot Jones
Jessie Sherrill
Dawn Wilson

Absent:

Joanne Brannon
Peter Vazquez

Other(s)

Alderman Joan Brown

Staff:

Elizabeth Teague, AICP, Planning Director
Rosa B. Hilbert, Senior Administrative Assistant

Vice Chair Pruitt declared a quorum present and the meeting was duly constituted and opened for business.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Ellen Farris made a motion to adopt the agenda. Connie Pruitt seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

III. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Vice Chair Pruitt made a motion to adopt the minutes of August 18, 2009 with a correction on page two. Ellen Farris seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

IV. NEW BUSINESS -Debrief on Round Table Discussion of Emerging Needs in Today's Economy

1. Follow-up questions or comments

Commission discussed round table and expressed appreciation for the participation of the Swannanoa Valley Ministry, Manna Food Bank and Counselor Begley. Group also discussed information from Chip Craig at Grey Beard Realty on housing sale trends. Dawn Wilson noted that in her real estate business she is seeing evidence of more foreclosures. Anecdotally, members of the Commission surmised that some foreclosures are being absorbed into relatives houses and aren't necessarily seeking out services. There is a need to do another housing workshop and get more coverage in the Black Mountain news.

Ellen Farris questioned whether water bills in manufactured home parks were also a factor. She had heard that some Parks have a single meter and bill their residents monthly, sometime charging more for water than the unit actually uses individually. Elizabeth Teague agreed to ask the Town Water Department to see if they could verify water billing issues associated with Manufactured Home Parks.

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2. "Next Steps" to meeting any identified gaps in services

The Commission discussed organizing another local homeownership workshop with Mountain Housing and Habitat. Also getting an article in the Black Mountain News and being more proactive in educating the public and elected leaders about housing issues.

Commission also expressed interest in inviting owners of rental property to a seminar on Section 8 Housing. Dawn Wilson stated that there are high rents in this area but that new rentals are coming available because some people are having trouble selling their property. Section 8 subsidies can be mixed with other programs to reduce monthly rentals. Commission discussed the difference between "affordable housing" and low-income housing. There are families in our community who can't afford the prices which are considered affordable by Buncombe County guidelines. To what extent could the Section 8 program fill that gap? You can convert any rental property or existing single family home for rent into a "Section 8" property if you meet the guidelines.

Regional Home Consortium will begin work on Regional Housing Needs Assessment this month which should provide updated information about trends and housing availability. Elizabeth will talk to the water department, get a list of all the manufactured home parks in Town and bring something back to the Commission at the next meeting.

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Homeowner Assistance Program

Elizabeth Teague reported that the ACA students tried to come and do some work with help from the coordination efforts of Dot Jones and Jessie Sherrill. Rain limited their ability to do yard work but they were able to assist with some mulch. The students were very enthusiastic and it would be worthwhile to try again another time. Future work could be done to clean and repair gutters on many properties identified. Volunteer groups would need to have a ladder.

2. Update on Roberts Farm Project

Elizabeth Teague reported that the Robert's Farm master Plan was recommended by the Planning Board and is going before the Aldermen. During the Aldermen Meeting at which the Aldermen called for a Public Hearing there were some negative comments concerning neighborhood impacts – especially as regards traffic. Housing Commission suggested that perhaps the developer would be willing to meet with some of the neighbors prior to the hearing in order to hear concerns. Elizabeth will see if she can arrange a meeting with Rod Hubbard's team and some of the individuals who spoke.

VI. STAFF AND MEMBER REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS -

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Connie Pruitt made a motion to adjourn. Board voted unanimously in favor.

Ellen Farris, Vice-Chair

Rosa B. Hilbert
Senior Administrative Assistant