

Cambridge Human Rights Commission Thursday, December 5, 2013

Present: Commissioners Chanta Bhan, Bonita Cox, Mercedes Evans, Melissa Gonzalez-Brenes, Kerry Gough, Kim T. Nghiem, Harry Reyes, Sabrina Selk; and City staff Nancy Schlacter, Mariah Freark and Carmen S. Negrón.

Absent: Commissioners Brendan St. Amant and Randa Shedid.

Guests: Police Superintendent Chris Burke, Chris Cotter from Cambridge Community Development (CDD)

Documents Used:

- November 2013 minutes
- First Time Homebuyers class registration form
- Flyer for Affordable Housing Opportunities
- Community Preservation Act brochure
- Inclusionary Housing Rental Program Preliminary Application & Guidelines for Rental Applicant Pool
- Housing Program Income guidelines
- Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust brochure
- Human Trafficking information
- CHRC Outreach Plan

1. Call to order

Chair Bonita Cox called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. No one was recording the meeting.

2. Public Comment

No public comment.

3. Introductions

Commissioners and staff introduced themselves and welcomed new Commissioners Sabrina Selk and Harry Reyes. A moment of silence was observed in honor of our beloved Commissioner Elaine Angelone, who passed away recently. Commissioners and staff shared the sentiment that Elaine was a great person and will be missed.

4. November Minutes Approval

Commissioner Gonzalez-Brenes motioned to approve the November minutes. Commissioner Evans seconded. Minutes were unanimously approved. (Commissioners Bhan, Cox, Evans, Gonzalez-Brenes, Gough, Nghiem, Reyes, Selk).

5. Presentation on Affordable Housing in Cambridge by Chris Cotter from CDD

Chris Cotter oversees the City's affordable housing programs. He explained CDD's role in implementing and maintaining affordable housing in Cambridge, and provided Commissioners and staff with materials illustrating how CDD does this. He explained that CDD works with agencies and non-profits in Cambridge, including the Cambridge Housing Authority, Homeowners Rehab, Just-A-Start and others.

Mr. Cotter explained how affordable rental and ownership opportunities are administered by CDD. He stated that CDD prioritizes families with children, especially young children, and they also try to preserve diversity in the city. Commissioners had questions for Mr. Cotter, which he answered in the course of his presentation.

6. Executive Director's Report

E.D. Schlacter updated the Commission on pending cases, outreach, staff activities, and the recent mediation training taken by Commissioners and staff.

7. November meeting follow-up

a. Surveillance Cameras – Supt. Burke provided a brief summary of the answers to questions that Commissioner Gonzalez-Brenes had posed to him after the November meeting. E.D. Schlacter said she would email this information to Commissioners.

b. Outreach brainstorming

A discussion was had about the updating and translating of current outreach materials, with the feedback of Carole Sousa and the Community Engagement team. The Commissioners offered feedback on additional locations to distribute flyers, additional communities to target, and other possible outreach methods. Commissioner Gough suggested a subcommittee may be necessary. The Commission agreed to discuss the prospect of a subcommittee at the next meeting.

c. Human Trafficking – Superintendent Burke

Supt. Burke provided the Commissioners with information on human trafficking. Commissioner Bhan requested he provide information related specifically to trafficking of children in Cambridge. Supt. Burke will look into it and report back.

d. GLBT –Shelter Survey

E.D. Schlacter updated the Commission about a meeting she and Commissioners Bhan and Gonzalez-Brenes had with members of the Cambridge GLBT Commission about the transgender shelter survey. She reported that the GLBT Commission seemed excited about working on this and will be in touch about how we can assist them.

8. New Business

E.D. Schlacter encouraged Commissioners to let her know before the next meeting if they have items they would want on the agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m. Next Commission meeting is Thursday, January 9, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.