

**Observer Report
Planning and Development Committee
October 8, 2007**

Observer: Nancy Bashook

Aldermen Present: All present

Staff Present: Jim Wolinski, Donna Spicuzza

Media Present: Roundtable, Evanston Review

Meeting began: 7:30 pm (scheduled at this time) **Meeting ended:** 8:10 pm

Items for Consideration

(P1) Request for HOME Funds from HODC for \$194,396 to Rehab 1929 Jackson into Two Affordable Home Ownership Units.

Consideration of the recommendation from the Housing Commission for approval of the proposal from Housing Opportunity Development Corporation (HODC) to rehab and remodel two units at 1929 Jackson and convert them to condominiums for sale to low income homebuyers for less than \$140,000. Additional information is transmitted.

Executive Director of HOME, Mary Ellen Tomasy explained that the developers submitted a revised development budget that matches sources and uses. Hard costs are \$198,500 plus \$19,500 for contingencies. This is up from \$182,000. Soft costs (financing for principal and interest, HODC development fee, legal fees, etc.) total \$53,396. The funds will be disbursed as costs are incurred.

Ald. Rainey spoke strongly against the idea of the middleman, HODC, to find and renovate properties that can be used for affordable housing. She thinks this is too expensive and not the best use of the HOME funds. She wants to subsidize the home buyer directly, rather than pay CHDO's. "Must figure out another way to provide affordable housing." She agreed to vote for this proposal, but will not do so for another.

Ald. Moran spoke in favor of the CHDO's and said we need people who will help the home buyer find affordable housing. They potential buyers do not have the knowledge and wherewithal to economically pursue housing without an organization who advocates for affordable housing and has the expertise to develop these properties. He believes funds should be committed to these organizations.

Mr. Wolinski agreed that it is worthwhile to work with CHODO's. They have the expertise and oversight and are taking a risk on the units.

Ald. Jean Baptiste thinks we should get more creative in thinking about how we provide affordable housing. He asked Ms. Tomasky if local contractors were being hired for the project. He wanted to amend the proposal to include the statement that local contractors would be hired.

Approved.

**(P2) Plat of Subdivision for 1613 Church Street/Church Street Village
Consideration of the recommendation from Site Plan and Appearance Review Committee to approve a plat of subdivision at 1613 Church Street for Cyrus Homes.**

Approved.