

**OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

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**STAND UP FOR YOUR NEIGHBORBOODS**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**January 14, 2014**

**10:00 a.m.**

**City Hall**

**117 W. Duval St., 1st Floor**

**Lynwood Roberts Room**

**Attendance:** Council Members Denise Lee (Chair), John Crescimbeni (arr 11:51a) Warren Jones, Jim Love (arr 11:58a)

**Excused:** Council Members Greg Anderson, Bill Bishop, Bill Gulliford

**Also**: Cleveland Ferguson – Mayor’s Office; Chief Pat Ivey – Jacksonville Sheriff’s Office; Kimberly Scott – Regulatory Compliance; Robert Campbell – Council Auditor’s Office;Peggy Sidman and Paige Johnston – Office of General Counsel; John Pappas – Public Works; Dave McDaniel - Mowing Landscape Maintenance; Robert Prado – Municipal Code Compliance; Dan Macdonald – ECA; Yvonne P. Mitchell – Council Research Division

See attached sign-in sheet for additional attendees.

Council Member Lee called the meeting to order at 10:13 a.m. The meeting began with introductions from the committee and attendees.

**Minutes**

Motion/2nd move to strike the word “subcommittee” in title – Jones/Crescimbeni (4-0)

Motion/2nd move to approve December 10th minutes as amended - Jones/Crescimbeni (4-0)

**Old Business:**

**HabiJax Update – Allison Albert, JALA**

Ms. Albert briefly described her background experience with zombie foreclosures. She conducted research on the HabiJax handout from the December 10th meeting. The results concluded 3 out of the 17 properties are zombie foreclosures (mortgages attached); 4 properties involve probate issues (no evidence of mortgage); and several properties are with LLCs (tax deed sale or Certificate of Title issued for prior foreclosure). The majority of the properties are located in the minority neighborhood. Ms. Albert stated zombie properties have a mortgage attached and the borrower has defaulted in payments. The bank has files for foreclosure but never completes process due to value of property; voluntarily dismiss; or never initiates a foreclosure. Thus, many homeowners generally vacate premises after notice of foreclosure filing which leaves the property unattended. One foreclosed property decreases adjacent properties value down by $7,500.

Ms. Albert works with borrowers to get mortgages satisfied through banks. Her argument is when a business evaluation has an effect on a minority neighborhood it is a predatory lending practice. There was extensive discussion regarding the process for determining zombie properties and expediting procedures with filing injunction/foreclosures.

*Assignments*

* Ms. Albert

1. Continue work on the three zombie homes to satisfy the mortgage through the banks

* Mr. Ferguson
  1. Identify zombie properties in zip codes 32206, 32208 and 32209
  2. Determine if/how Real Estate Division tracks foreclosures
* Foreclosure/Zombie Subcommittee Members

1. CM Jones, Chair
2. Cleveland Ferguson
3. Kimberly Scott
4. Allison Albert
5. Mary Kay O’Rourke
6. Calvin Burney
7. Joe Namey
8. Elaine Spencer
9. Cherry Shaw

* Foreclosure/Zombie Subcommittee Tasks
  1. Discuss how to reduce zombie foreclosures
  2. Determine process for handling liens on foreclosure properties
  3. Develop a written process for addressing zombie foreclosures
  4. Provide subcommittee report at first meeting in February

**Foreclosure procedure on properties with uncooperative/unreachable owners – Peggy Sidman**

Ms. Sidman reported the City does not foreclose on properties that have superior liens (mortgages, tax liens, or first to record). By foreclosing on a property, the City would become responsible to become current with all superior liens. An owner that cannot be found can be served notice through a published advertisement.

*Assignments*

Ms. Sidman – enlarge chart, increase font size, and add “publication” notice

**Planning Department process for conveyance of properties to CHDOs and Non-CHDOs – Kenny Logsdon**

Mr. Logsdon reviewed each phase of the process of conveyance of all properties.

*Assignments*

Mr. Ferguson – provide a comprehensive presentation in February regarding location of all properties

Mr. Burney

1. Ensure process is updated
2. Phase I - add City Council to circulation
3. Phase II(b) – a written approval should be received by Council Member instead of verbal
4. Phase III – change first bullet to “…City maintains property”
5. Work with Ms. Sidman to review policy between Ordinance 97-14 and Chapter 122

**Status report on 45th Street and Avenue B – Calvin Burney**

Mr. Burney submitted a memo regarding the improvements of the Quickway Food Store. There is a follow up meeting with the owner on January 15th. Mr. Burney will be discussing the parking area, fence and any other outstanding issues. It should be noted CM Lee’s legislation to down zone the property will proceed if the owner does not cooperate.

**Report from Car Wash Committee – Calvin Burney**

Mr. Burney reported the proposed legislation developed was a joint effort with Environmental Quality Division. The legislation is to regulate non-automatic car washes. A subcommittee meeting is forthcoming to finalize draft to present.

*Assignments*

Mr. Burney – expedite draft for presentation at next meeting

**Updated CDC Report – Dayatra Coles**

Ms. Coles presented a CDC Fee Summary list that displayed inventory and outstanding fees for each organization. She reported that each CDC with an outstanding fee is currently working with the appropriate divisions to resolve fees. Ms. Scott explained after properties are clear of violations, the CDC can submit for reduction of the administrative fine(s) which goes through Office of General Counsel and Regulatory Compliance.

1. Wealth Watchers (WW) – outstanding fees total $15,071.13.
2. Community Development Coalition Corporation (CDCC) – no outstanding fees.
3. Operation New Hope (ONH) – chart shows a zero balance; however, outstanding fees total $469,191.01.
4. Northwest Jacksonville CDC (NJCDC) – outstanding fees total $623,502.91.
5. Grace and Truth CDC (GTCDC) – outstanding fees total $243,094.55.
6. Helpful Citizens, Inc. (HCI) – chart shows a zero balance; however, it was reported agency does have an outstanding balance.
7. Metro North CDC (MNCDC) – no outstanding fees.
8. Habitat for Humanity Jacksonville, Inc. – outstanding fees total $808,922.40

*Assignments*

Ms. Coles – make corrections to chart and resubmit at next meeting.

1. Add date lien was forgiven (reduced)
2. Change column to read “Nuisance Liens”
3. Add additional sheet of criteria for reduction of fees
4. Add column that list issues with each property (Environmental issues, etc.)

**New Business:**

**Scheduling future Ad Hoc Blight Committee Meetings – CM Crescimbeni**

CM Crescimbeni requested consideration of the committee to modify the Blight meetings to a bi-weekly schedule. The committee agreed in the affirmative to begin meeting bi-weekly with a combined agenda of the land and human components of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Neighborhood Blight. The next meeting will be on January 28th.

**Additional Information**

CM Lee requested Mr. Ferguson to schedule a meeting with her to discuss Public Works comprehensive plan.

CM requested an update of the Fight Blight Campaign by Ms. Batson and Mr. Martinez at the next meeting.

**Public Comment**

There were no comments from the public.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:38 p.m.

Yvonne P. Mitchell, Council Research Division (904) 630-1679

Posted 01.16.15 5:30p.m.