



HOUSING SOLUTIONS NETWORK

Tuesday, September 11, 2012

9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

1209 S. Garfield Avenue, Traverse City

A. Welcome and Introductions

Connor Miller	North Sky Nonprofit Network
Jeff Vitton	GT County
Nicki Basch	GTB Housing
Cathy Odom	NMCAA
Carol Brito	MSHDA/Homeownership
Virginia Coulter	GT County
Cindy Eveleigh	Goodwill
Gina Ranger	Munson
Ginger Bardenhagen	Michigan Department of Agriculture
Ilah Honson	Traverse City Housing Commission
Marla Martin	Rotary Charities
Justin Sterk	Rotary Charities
Sarah Lucas	NWCMCOG

B. Consideration of Agenda and July 2012 Meeting Minutes

V. Coulter suggested moving the awards discussion above County Updates and Migrant Housing agenda items. The agenda was accepted as modified.

The meeting minutes were accepted as presented.

C. Grand Vision Housing Awards

S. Lucas updated that the Advocacy Committee had discussed housing awards at the meeting in August. A nomination was made for the Grand Visionary award, but there was also discussion on a housing-specific award. Offering an award could allow for good press and attention to issues/agencies. Cheryl Naperala was nominated for a Grand Vision Housing Leadership award. Committee members are working towards an awards luncheon in November that would also act as a fundraiser for the agency associated with the honoree.

D. County Updates

V. Coulter updated that Grand Traverse County is going through environmental review of their CDBG grant, and is also working with MSHDA and consultants to develop a targeted placemaking strategy. They held their first meeting with stakeholders yesterday.

E. Migrant Labor Housing

Ginger Bardenhagen, Michigan Department of Agriculture, provided a presentation on migrant housing rules and issues. She explained that there are 90,000 migrant workers and families in Michigan, and that 3 crops depend on migrant labor. She inspects migrant labor housing in 20 counties. In that area there are 850 housing sites and 4,000 living units. Inspectors check plumbing, heating, occupancy levels, fire suppression, etc. She noted that there are different building codes for migrant camps than there are for typical housing units and reviewed camp hazards such as proximity to pesticides, refuse, etc. and explained rules and requirements for migrant housing codes. 100 square feet is required per occupant, but she noted that most camps don't meet the maximum occupancy.

Ilah Honson asked if the migrant housing inspection codes were consistent with other inspection codes, i.e. Housing Quality Standards. G. Bardenhagen answered that they are subject to separate building codes and inspection codes.

S. Lucas asked what the needs are for new migrant housing. G. Bardenhagen stated that funding is the biggest need. A grant program that provided up to \$15,000 for building or improving migrant housing is no longer available. She stated that most farms probably only need improvements to their housing, rather than new migrant housing camps.

F. Grand Vision Housing Inventory and Strategy

S. Lucas reviewed the Housing Strategy project history. A presentation was provided at the last meeting; due to time constraints, discussion was postponed for this meeting. She asked for comments and suggestions.

C. Odom noted some formatting issues. V. Coulter suggested condensing some sidebar information down, or relocating it to other sections, to help with the flow of the document. C. Odom asked about accessory dwelling units and whether the strategy would have an effect on local government decisions. S. Lucas noted that local government planning commissions are engaged in the master plan process and will have opportunity to be engaged as well in the housing strategy. The strategy presents a platform for talking about these issues with local governments, but local governments will still be the final say on what happens with these individual issues.

G. Grand Vision to Grand Action – HUD Sustainable Communities Grant

S. Lucas updated on Grand Vision regional planning activities. The plan will cover land use, transportation, housing, energy in Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, and Wexford Counties. To date, the focus of activities has been data gathering. Over the next couple months, work will be done to put together background analyses. Events will be held in each county for the energy component of the plan in January, and housing/transportation/land use expo-type events will be held in February. She noted that the Grand Vision Housing Solutions Network will provide oversight for the housing element of the regional plan, and suggested creating a subcommittee or task force to help with review of drafts and other activities. C. Odom and V. Coulter volunteered to participate. G. Bardenhagen asked what types of groups will have booths at the expo. S. Lucas answered that each of the Grand Vision Networks will have a booth. She added that we will be asking for help with outreach from Network members to get as many people there as possible.

H. Market Studies

S. Lucas reviewed needs for updated market studies. Current market studies are now required for MSHDA's Housing Resource Fund (HRF) grant applications. One way to fund this type of study is for interested organizations to contribute to the cost of a regional study. She noted that she was also advised by MSHDA that an HRF grant application could be submitted to pay for the costs of a study. I. Honson stated that it makes sense for involved organizations to contribute to the cost, and then charge private developers or others for access to the study once it's complete in order to finance future studies. J. Vitton noted difficulties with charging for access to information due to Freedom of Information Act requirements. Members suggested having further discussion when estimates for the study, etc. are available. J. Vitton suggested one approach might be for one entity or community to apply for grant funding for an organization to conduct the study in-house, then train other communities how to do the work.

I. Roundtable Discussion and Announcements (5 minutes)

C. Odom noted that NMCAA has received a grant of \$604,000 to house homeless veterans and their families. It's a one-year renewable grant. Also, she attended the MCEDA conference and participated in a session on MSHDA's new targeting approach. She noted that NMCAA will begin the targeting process for their CDBG counties soon and discussed the importance of including other county housing stakeholders in the discussions on which areas should be targeted. Members offered suggestions on contacts/stakeholders for Benzie and Wexford Counties.

C. Miller updated on the student videos that will be shown at the Grand Vision Community Action updates. He added that the new Grand Vision Vistas, Marla Martin and Justin Sterk, will be working with students on community projects. J. Sterk noted that they will be looking for student volunteer projects.

C. Brito updated that MSHDA will be offering down payment assistance for new homeowners. Veterans/service personnel that are first-time homebuyers (i.e. have not owned a home for at least 3 years) will receive a grant/gift of up to \$5,000, and all other first-time homebuyers can receive up to \$3000. \$15 million is available statewide. More information will be forthcoming; the programs are just being rolled out.