



THRESHOLD
Lexington's Housing Commission
Wednesday, August 23, 2023 - 5:00 P.M
Second Floor Conference Room, City Hall
300 E. Washington Street, Lexington, VA

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Approval of Agenda**
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
 - A. Approval of July 26, 2023 minutes*
- 4. New Business**
 - A. Public Meeting for proposed city-wide housing conditions windshield survey and needs assessment and application for CDBG Planning Grant to fund the proposed project.
 - 1) Overview of proposed CDBG Planning Grant and housing conditions survey
 - 2) Public Comment
 - B. Elect Chairperson
 - 1) Nominations
 - 2) Motion & Vote
 - C. Elect Vice-Chair
 - 1) Nominations
 - 2) Motion & Vote
- 5. Adjournment**

*indicates attachment

MINUTES

THRESHOLD

Lexington's Housing Commission
Wednesday, July 26, 2023 – 4:00 p.m.
Second Floor Conference Room, City Hall

Threshold:

Present: Shadrey Sands, Chair
Nadine Craney
Fred Kirchner, Vice-Chair
Nicholas Betts, Council Liaison

Absent: Marylin Alexander, Council Liaison
Marisa Charley

City Staff:

Arne Glaeser, Planning Director
Kate Beard, Administrative Assistant

CALL TO ORDER:

S. Sands called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

AGENDA

N. Betts moved to add a discussion of programs Threshold has undertaken in the past to the New Business section of the agenda. The agenda was unanimously approved with that amendment. (N. Betts / S. Sands)

MINUTES:

The minutes from the June 28, 2023 meeting were unanimously approved as presented. (N. Betts / N. Craney).

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Discussion of letter in support of CDBG planning grant for windshield housing conditions survey –

F. Kirchner voiced support for the survey, especially for the fact that it would be a citywide assessment undertaken by an objective outside party. A. Glaeser reported Commissioners Sands, Alexander and Betts provided City Council with information about the survey and grant opportunity at the last Council meeting and Council had been generally supportive of the idea. N. Betts agreed Council was supportive of pursuing the grant, but he added that any future request from Threshold for funding would require discussion. S. Sands suggested the survey data would establish what needs exist and inform what type of program would meet those needs. There was support for submitting a letter in support of the planning grant and there was general agreement that the sample letter included in the packet was acceptable as written. N. Betts suggested the addition of a sentence stating that a comprehensive study would provide a better understanding of which areas of the city are in most need of repair. **N. Betts moved to give staff the authority to modify and finalize the letter for signature by the Chair. F. Kirchner seconded and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)**

B. Discussion of holding grant required public meeting during the August 23, 2023 regularly scheduled meeting –

S. Sands requested the Commission review the draft CDBG Planning Grant timeline. He noted that his understanding of the process was that the CSPDC would assist with the grant application and that Threshold would act as the public facing entity for the public meetings. There was general support for that arrangement. Noting the grant timeline, A. Glaeser said the August Threshold meeting would provide a good opportunity for the first public meeting, particularly if the meeting time were changed to 5:00 p.m. to accommodate common work schedules. Following discussion of how the meeting would unfold, A. Glaeser confirmed an invitation would be extended to the CSPDC and the agenda would include a staff report and opportunities for public comment and Commission follow-up discussion. **N. Betts moved to hold a public meeting to discuss the windshield survey on August 23, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. N. Craney seconded and the motion passed unanimously. (4-0)** A. Glaeser said staff would advertise the meeting in the paper and on social media. Following discussion about potential pushback from citizens not interested in having their property included in the survey, A. Glaeser said the City would provide an opt-out process for anyone who requests one.

C. Discussion of past Threshold programs -

N. Betts suggested a better understanding of past housing programs and their success would be helpful when considering how future programs would be implemented and funded. F. Kirchner offered that the Threshold Commission has existed since 1989 and has provided a number of services, some more effective than others. He noted that the city's present housing needs may not be the same as it's past needs and cautioned against making the assumption that what worked in the past would be most effective currently. With that caveat, he said that Threshold had been most effective when focusing on relatively small projects with a budget of no more than \$25,000. He indicated the initial focus was on yard maintenance and rehab projects, but there had also been a forgivable loan program for a time which ended largely because the neighborhood had been saturated. He added that there had been a limited number of instances in which Threshold purchased homes, fixed them up and resold them. He said the rental inspection program was not affiliated with Threshold, though the staff member who administered the inspection program was also the contact person who assisted citizens with the applications for Threshold programs. The Building Inspector at the time was also involved in assessing code related safety conditions that would warrant Threshold intervention.

OTHER BUSINESS:

S. Sands reported that RARA would also provide a letter in support of the planning grant and asked for input about other organizations from whom support letters could be solicited. There was general agreement that staff should contact Habitat and Mission Next Door to ask for support letters.

ADJOURN:

The meeting adjourned unanimously at 4:51 p.m. (N. Betts / N. Craney)

S. Sands, Chair
Threshold Housing Commission