

HUMAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

September 14, 2020

A meeting of the Human Affairs Committee was held Monday, September 14, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. in via teleconference.

Chairwoman Kelly

As Chairwoman of the Human Affairs Committee, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means:

We are utilizing Zoom and the meeting link can be found on the agenda as well as on the City's website. You can also join by telephone by dialing: 1-929-205-6099; Meeting ID: 812 3274 6694 and Password: 776051. The Public may also view this meeting on Comcast Channel 16.

b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting:

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, through public postings. Instructions have also been provided on the City of Nashua's website at www.nashuanh.gov and publicly noticed at City Hall and Nashua Public Library.

c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access:

If anybody has a problem accessing the meeting via phone or Channel 16, please call 603-821-2049 and they will help you connect.

d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting:

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting via the methods mentioned above, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled. Please note that **all votes** that are taken during this meeting shall be done by **roll call vote**.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. **When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-To-Know Law.**

Alderman Wilshire called the roll and asked them to state the reason he or she could not attend, confirmed that they could hear the proceedings, and stated who was present with him or her. The roll call was taken with 5 members of the Human Affairs Committee present:

Alderman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly, Chairman, presided.

Members of the Committee present: Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright, Vice Chair
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman June M. Caron
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

Members of the Committee absent:

Also in Attendance: Sarah Marchant, Community Development Division Director
Carrie Schena, Urban Programs Manager
Bobbie Bagley, Director of Health & Human Services
Bill Adamson, Nashua Police Department

ROLL CALL

Chairwoman Kelly

I am here, I am alone and I can hear everyone.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

I am present, I am in this room alone and I can hear everyone.

Alderman Klee

I am present, I can everyone and I guess that's it.

Alderman Caron

Yes, I am here, I am alone and I can hear everyone.

Alderman Wilshire

Alderman Wilshire is here, I am alone and I can hear everyone. We do have a quorum.

Chairwoman Kelly

Great, and also in attendance I see Director Marchant, Ms. Schena, Director Bagley. Did I miss anybody? OK we will open to Public Comment. Is there anyone from the Public who would like to make a comment this evening? I don't see anybody on. Ok.

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

Chairwoman Kelly

We are going to start tonight with a presentation. It is a housing update from Director Marchant and Ms. Schena.

PRESENTATION

Nashua Housing Update

Sarah Marchant, Director of Community Development

Good evening, thank you, I am going to share my screen but first, Carrie Schena, the Urban Programs Manager is here with me tonight and we will each kind of tag teaming this and if you have any questions, please feel free to just ask. It is a short survey and it is in your packet. Anybody who is watching at home should be able to find it as part of the packet online. Can everybody see? OK? I hope that's a yes. So here's our Housing Update tonight. This is going to be an overview of kind of the data about where we are housing-wise and then Carrie is going to give an overview of the programs available to the Urban Programs Department and what our next steps are.

So currently you have three charts; in the left-hand corner is Nashua Rental Vacancy Rate. The two lines, the red shows the vacancy rate for all units; the green line shows the vacancy rate for two-bedroom units. While this line does look somewhat volatile, I would encourage you to look to the left-hand side and the percent of the actual vacancy rate. A healthy vacancy rate is 5% and from 2010 to 2019 what this is showing is we have made it to half of what is healthy only once. And at this point in time, we are well below 1% vacancy rate, which is an unprecedented situation. That means you can't really even get paint on the walls and unit is turned over. There is essentially no housing available on the market at any point in time.

The chart below that shows the rental distribution by the number of bedrooms. The green line shows 0-bedroom studio units; red line show one bedroom; blue line show two bedroom; and purple lines show the three-bedroom units and their cost spread. I think one of the most telling factors here is that there is almost, there are very, very, very few units for \$1,000.00 or less in this City. The vast majority of units are significantly higher. So that absolutely affects not only the price of the unit but the availability of the different types of units.

The third map and graph which is on the right-hand side, shows downtown Nashua Census Tracts and we are trying to look at the difference between the median monthly rent in that Census Tract versus the median monthly income. These Census Tracts are some of some of our most diverse. They are also some of our poorest Census Tracts. And they are also some of our most dense, so there's more housing and people living in these areas than in many other parts of the City.

If you look at the different tracts just for a reference point because I don't if a lot of you are used to looking at Nashua this way. On the far-right hand side is the Merrimack River, on the left-hand side is Route 3 and kind of cutting through the middle is the Nashua River. So Tract 107 shows it centered along Main Street, kind of bisects that in half with East and West Hollis Street dividing it in half. What you can see is that if we look at Tract 104 on the table above, that the median monthly rent in this Census Tract is \$1,250.00 but 30% of median income for renters is closer to \$950.00. So that's almost a \$300.00 a month difference in what the average rent is versus what people can truly afford. And that disparity is shown pretty much across the board for all of the Census Tracts in our Downtown. The 30% of monthly income is a Federal Standard that's used, to say that is a safe place to be spending your income and above that becomes a significant financial hardship for a family.

This slide shows cost burden households so this slide is specifically showing how many households, or what percentage of households that are renter occupied and owner occupied are spending more than 30% of their income either on rent or on owner costs. So on the left-hand side is renter occupied; on the right-hand side is owner occupied. And these are pretty stark. The dark blue from the light green to the dark blue is a higher percentage that is spending more than 30% of their income on housing. The darkest blue is showing more than half of the Census Tracts in Nashua were greater than 50% of the people in that tract are spending more than 30% of their income on housing every month.

Citywide the average is around 45.6%. It's also somewhat stark on the renter, excuse me, on the owner-occupied side. The fact that we have Census Tracts with more than 40% or more than 35% of more than 30% of owner-occupied households spending more than 30% of their income to sustain their owner-occupied housing is also pretty concerning. You can see the areas of overlap between both of these,

again concentrating in our downtown, but also in different sections of the City depending on the – where they are if its renter or owner occupied.

Switching a little bit further over into the owner-occupied side this is just some data for if you were to try and buy a property in the area right now. The chart on the upper right hand corner shows residential property sales over the past almost decade. And what you can see is the green line shows median price which is certainly been growing steadily. The red line shows the annual number of units sold and the purple line shows the average number of monthly listings. I think what is significant here is the very strong trend in the green line since 2012 in an upwards trajectory. It's gone up \$100,000.00 from the average selling price being \$213,000.00 to over \$315,000.00 as of the end of last year. That trend is certainly continuing in 2020 despite the pandemic. But also the purple line with its decreasing value which is even more so now with so few units on the market that is one of the things that is pushing up the price of units over time. So there aren't houses available for purchase and if they are available for purchase, they are significantly more expensive than they used to be.

In addition, there are if you look at the chart on the bottom side, it shows the difference in median income versus purchase price over the same period. So the green line in the bottom right hand side is median monthly income of the owners. You will see that that has remained pretty steady over the past decade whereas both the price of a single-family home and a condominium have risen pretty sharply. So again that shows a more than affordability gap and as we are all experiencing this pandemic and living here, and we have been working through this pandemic and so many people without work. There has been some relief programs that are specific to New Hampshire in our area that have come out from the CARES Act for people who are having trouble paying their rent or their mortgage.

The CARES Act funding from Governor Sununu and the GOFERR Committee has initially funded \$35 million dollars to help rent stabilization and housing support. Out of the \$35 million there's \$20 million initially available, spread out across the State with Southern New Hampshire Services being our cap agency here. So this money is available through the local cap agency; on the bottom is the website, pretty simple, www.capnh.org. It is a relatively easy process to apply for this funding. It is specifically to help household costs that fell behind on rent or owner costs since April 2020 through now. There is a maximum per household of \$2,500.00 per household. So that is a capped amount; that's the most any household can get at this point in time. And the funds are paid directly to the landlord and with that, if you are admitted into the program, they will pay back rent, they will pay your rent to help get you whole and they will assign a Regional Case Manager so that families or individuals who need to take advantage of these services, can also be put in touch with anyone else who needs any other resources and services that are out there to help them through this time.

I'll say Bob Mack the Welfare Officer is an expert in this. He's an excellent resource and he has been working very diligently with all the many other organizations in our community that help support housing. So there's an amazing network of community groups that really support housing and I think there's quite a few people you can reach out to here in Nashua. With that, I am going to pass it over to Carrie, about some of our City Sponsored Programs.

Carrie Schena, Urban Programs Manager

Hi everyone, this is Carrie Schena, I am manager of the Urban Programs Department which is within Community Development. So this slide is quite busy but I put it in more something that people can go back and reference and not necessarily to take it all in live, but basically under Urban Programs we have three pillar programs. We have an owner-occupied rehab program for many, many years. It's a very traditional program that communities do with their community development block grant. That is geared toward low income property owners who live in homes that are 1 to 4 units and we can cover those rental units as part of the household. It's a 0% interest loan, the loans are deferred; we often do subordinate to them if somebody is going to refinance later on down and want to get themselves in a better position, we encourage that.

Typically they are repaid when the property is sold and then that money comes back to the City and goes right back into the fund to go out to other rehab projects. We have a new program that we piloted last year that was very successful. It started with just a small amount of money, roughly \$55,000.00; we have that at \$150,000.00 this year and so we are looking forward to rolling that out. There's a huge demand and as Sarah was talking about with the affordability issue, we have a lot of existing (audio cuts out) landlords and although they are collecting rent, they are having a cash flow issue. And it's very difficult if you are charging a low rent to a low-income tenant to be able to do those large capital projects. Often, we are seeing those projects get deferred until it reaches a critical point. So this program was created, it was based on a lot of feedback from the community and from community partners during our Consolidating Planning Process, about 5 years ago. And more recently we just did our (audio cuts out) and that again is a \$0% interest loan program. It is a little bit less money, its \$20,000.00 for the first unit and \$5,000.00 for each additional. We will enroll properties up to 8 units on that program. So we are not looking to do like the large multi-families that are you know managed by professionals. These are more your mom and pop property owners that we would want to get. And Nashua has a lot of multi-family properties that are owned individually. That is for critical repairs, so it's not a renovation type program it truly is for like if the heat has broken, if the electric is not up to code, if the roof is leaking, we want to keep people housed in those units and this loan program is geared towards that. And we ask that the owners do contribute some match.

The other program that we have is also HUD Funded. It's a competitive rent program that the City applies for. Our Lead Paint & Healthy Homes Program and we are actually in the process of winding down our current grant. We are doing our last few properties now but we have resubmitted a new application for \$5.7 million dollars which would be a very large volume, but a program that we would like to have awarded. We should find out about that in the next few weeks. We look forward to reinstating that; we are hoping our application will fare well. We usually pair that with both of the other two programs listed on the left. So we really try to weave and braid the funding to leverage it and have it spread as far as it possibly can to address all the issues.

Last slide. So these are just a couple of infographics that we have. We use these to market the programs. It's just really a recap on what I just talked about, the Homeowner Housing Program and Rental Rehab Program. We will be developing a new one for Lead when that comes out. Then we have our HOME Program, which the other three that I just talked about were CDBG which is Community Development Block Grant. The HOME Program, we receive from HUD annually an entitlement grant and we have an annual allocation that comes through, that comes through this Committee for distribution. The typical things that we do, the HOME Program is all about affordable housing, it's the only thing you do under that program.

We usually set aside kind of a bucket of money that is available for general, affordable housing development. And that can be to non-profits or private developers, you can be a rental or homeowner, you can be doing new construction or rehab for affordable housing. The program also allows home buyer assistance which some people may be familiar with in other communities, down payment and closing costs, education and that can be structured as grants or loans. The third one here, Tenant Based Rental Assistance, something that we talked about at this Committee several months ago when we were developing the Consolidated Plan. It is basically housing vouchers, but it is limited to a 24 month period, really to target those gaps where maybe your public housing authority or your State vouchers aren't reaching and you can design that to target toward homeless or other special needs in your community.

And then the last one is Homeowner Rehab. I listed it there. It's not something that a lot of people do with their home program. It's very difficult to institute because under this program the way the regulations are structured, you have to address every code issue that exists in the home and often we don't have enough money to do that. So to create a program where we would be creating an unrealistic end goal (audio cuts out). Next slide. I think that might be the end.

Director Marchant

This is me, yes. So what are we doing right? We have talked about a picture that shows a pretty imperative need for us to change how we think and how we look at housing. And so what are the next steps? The City is currently with our RKG Associates on a formal housing study. That is supported by Economic Development Director Cummings, Carrie Schena and myself. So we are working with them and it should be finalized by the end of the month, early October at the latest to really give us some great data to base changes on, more than just we've talked about here.

The scope of their study includes some of the things we have talked about here, a wider spread of economic data, some stakeholder interviews from the community. It has a rental housing market analysis, owner occupied housing analysis, a gap analysis, where are our gaps, and the barriers. Why are people seeing barriers to getting into housing? One of the most important things and I think the thing that we will talk about the most and focus on are strategies to improve our situation. So those are coming in the final report which is expected, again, in just the next couple weeks. This is a really exciting time for that as we are kicking off the Master Plan in just the next couple weeks. Having all this housing data to underpin how we communicate about the Master Planning process and really talk about what is real and true on the ground, versus sometimes what are our perceptions. It will be really important in talking to the community and helping the community give us feedback to the City about what our larger vision is and what's most important and how do we prioritize some of these strategies.

So that's Carrie's and I contact information. We are always available as needed. And then I am just going to turn off my screen. Are there any questions?

Alderman Wilshire

Thank you, Madam Chair. What is the company again that you're working with on this study?

Director Marchant

RKG Associates and they specialize in housing studies.

Alderman Wilshire

Ok, alright, I didn't catch it the first time around. Thank you.

Director Marchant

No problem.

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Madam Chair. Pardon me. I am kind of searching through my pages here. When you were showing the tracts like 104, 105 and so on, those aren't just the downtown, 107 is the heart of the downtown where Main Street, is that correct?

Director Marchant

That's correct.

Alderman Klee

So when you're looking at 105 and 104 you are going up into French Hill?

Director Marchant

105 would be more of traditional French Hill; 104 would be more of the north end; 106 would be more of the Crown Hill neighborhood and then 10...

Alderman Klee

I'm just trying to get perspective here.

Director Marchant

And 108 is actually – goes from kind of the edge of the Tree Streets all the way down to Whipple Street area to the highway.

Alderman Klee

Ok so when you were talking about, I am just going take 107 for instance, and you were saying there was a population of 1,507 people, with housing units of 918. I am reading this correctly right?

Director Marchant

That is correct, yes.

Alderman Klee

And you were talking, and I think I had kind of lost my brain here for a second, you were talking about the median income and so on. So when I look above that and I'm looking at the blue and red bar graphs, if I were to look again at 107, if I am reading this correctly it is showing that the blue would be the monthly rent and the red would be the 30% of median monthly income renters. So it's not quite, I mean it's not great, but it's not quite as bad as like to go look at 106 where almost all of the median monthly rent is 30% of median income, am I reading that correctly?

Director Marchant

It's actually, almost flip it. So for example, in 107, the average renter can afford \$500.00 a month but the average housing unit is \$750.00. So they have a deficit of \$250.00 a month that they are paying above and beyond 30% of their monthly income. Versus 106, it's actually very close to the average rent to what 30% of their income might be.

Alderman Klee

Ok so I had it flipped, thank you very much I appreciate that. That's really all my questions. I appreciate the clarification, it helps a lot. Thank you.

Director Marchant

Yeah, no problem.

Chairwoman Kelly

Other questions from the Committee? I have a few if everyone else is all set. OK, so when I can't remember the name of the agency...

Director Marchant

RKG.

Chairwoman Kelly

RKG. Not EKG, RKG. I was close when RKG does their presentation will they be presenting to us so it's a two-way, we can get questions from them, are they going to give it to you and then you would be the facilitator?

Director Marchant

I believe that they will be involved as well but I honestly have not focused on that part of the contract since we originally looked at the scope and I don't remember. But I will find out and clarify for you, but certainly Ms. Schena, myself and Director Cummings will be available to present the results to you. But I do believe they will be available for the presentation for one presentation, I'm pretty sure that was included in the scope of their contract. I'll look while we are continuing to talk.

Chairwoman Kelly

I appreciate that. I can imagine some really good questions especially around strategies. So my second question and maybe you don't know the answer, but my second question was do you think they will include some of the like more recent housing strains, because we have talked about this a lot but I am concerned about what COVID has done to our housing market. I know a number of friends who are like, "We are moving out of the City, because we don't want to be in the City anymore". So I am really interested in how that is impacting our housing, you know, on a whole?

Director Marchant

So I think the short answer is yes that it won't necessarily empirical data, it's going to be more from the stakeholder interviews. That data is not available yet, it's happening as we speak, right? And so it's a little bit premature to have some of that data. But I do believe that the stakeholders that they've talked to in the community that they will get feedback about whether that is happening here or not and what kind of scale and scope they see to that.

Chairwoman Kelly

Perfect. I don't have any other questions; I am looking forward to seeing the report and strategies and I really appreciate you both coming in and prepping us for that.

Director Marchant

Yes.

Chairwoman Kelly

I want to make sure nobody else on the Committee has any questions. I think we can move on to communications.

Director Marchant

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you.

COMMUNICATIONS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS – RESOLUTIONS

R-20-062

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman June M. Caron
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman Thomas Lopez
Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright
Alderman Jan Schmidt
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman Skip Cleaver
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

RELATIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND APPROPRIATION OF \$37,903 FROM THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE INTO POLICE GRANT ACTIVITY-“2019 JUSTICE ASSISTANCE GRANT (MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL)”

MOTION BY ALDERMAN WILSHIRE TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE BY ROLL CALL

ON THE QUESTION

Chairwoman Kelly

Is there anybody here to speak to this?

Bill Adamson, Nashua Police Department

That’s me, Bill Adamson, Nashua Police Department. So this is through the Justice Assistance Grant. This will be a three-year grant, it actually expires in 2022. The funds are used for community-based events, our Citizens Academy, which is actually is going on now. It funds officers being able to be present at Citywide Block Parties, other community events, Touch a Truck, stuff like that. Also it supplements our training budget; when the training budget money runs out prior to the end of the fiscal or the start of the new fiscal year, we are able to have some extra money to send officers too much needed training. And it is like I said a Federal pass through and there is no match on this one.

Chairwoman Kelly

Questions? I actually have a question. So I know grants are very specific sometimes on how they can be used. If we are not having, you had mentioned a lot of community events, we are not currently having them. Will you just things for training or are there other ways you can use it.

Mr. Adamson

Yes, that’s a very good question. We actually have in all the different dynamics of this grant, we have equipment and conferences, so usually a lot of times if we can’t use the money for obviously community events, we will usually move it over near the end of the grant towards needed equipment or again the training aspect. So it doesn’t go unspent. Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you very much. Alright the Motion is for final passage, any further discussion?

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

I just have a question. I saw where, I think it stated it had something to do with the overtime, can you hear me ok?

Mr. Adamson

Yes.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

This not for the overtime or is it for the overtime?

Mr. Adamson

It is for overtime associated with officers you know going to those community events. So if we have you know specialty units or in addition to on duty officers it goes to those officers going to the block parties. It goes towards Crime Watch Meetings for myself to attend those, because it's not budgeted, overtime for those meetings. So that's where the overtime comes and then our presenters for the Citizen's Academy. Not all of the presenters are on overtime, but some of them do come in off duty.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

Ok but I think in the fiscal note it is not for the pension and that type of thing, right.

Mr. Adamson

Oh correct, yes, no fringe benefits are in this, we absorb that in the budget.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

Strictly the hourly, ok.

Mr. Adamson

Yes.

Alderman Harriott-Gathright

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Any other questions or comments? Ok can the Clerk please call the roll?

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Klee, Alderman Caron,
Alderman Wilshire, Alderwoman Kelly 5

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

R-20-063

Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
Alderman June M. Caron
Alderman Patricia Klee
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman Thomas Lopez
Alderman Jan Schmidt
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

RELATIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND APPROPRIATION OF THE SUM OF \$37,500 FROM THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, DEPARTMENT OF SAFETY, “STATE HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT PROGRAM”, INTO POLICE GRANT ACTIVITY, “2019 HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT PROGRAM”

MOTION BY ALDERMAN WILSHIRE TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE BY ROLL CALL

ON THE QUESTION

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you. Motion is for final passage; Mr. Adamson, are you here for this one as well?

Mr. Adamson

Yes, I am. So this one is through Homeland Security, the Department of Safety. Money was left over in their funds under their 2019 program and it was allocated to all the tactical teams in New Hampshire, all the members of the NH Officer’s Tactical Association. So Nashua PD Swat Team was given that amount, \$37,500.00 and it is going towards night vision technology. The night vision technology that we have now is almost 20 years old so we needed to upgrade that and obviously this was great because it doesn’t come at a cost to the City. It’s through the grant. And also the majority of our Special Operations via the Swat Team, they take place usually between the 3:00 to 11:00 shift so depending on what time of year it is and 4:00 in the afternoon and officers are out there, it’s pitch dark. So it is much needed technology and the time is now for the upgrade because the monoculars that they are using now are, like I said, almost 20 years old. And that’s a Federal Pass Through as well, there’s no match required.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you; are there any questions for the Committee. I don’t see anyone; would the Clerk please call the roll?

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Klee, Alderman Caron,
Alderman Wilshire, Alderwoman Kelly 5

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

R-20-068

Endorsers: Alderwoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
Alderman Thomas Lopez
Alderman Richard A. Dowd
Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright
Alderman Jan Schmidt
Alderman Skip Cleaver
Alderman-at-Large Brandon Michael Laws
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

RELATIVE TO THE USE OF U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM FUNDS FOR ACQUISITION AND REHABILITATION OF 82-92 AMHERST STREET

MOTION BY ALDERMAN WILSHIRE TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE BY ROLL CALL

ON THE QUESTION

Chairwoman Kelly

The Resolution is for final passage. Discussion on that motion? Ms. Schena are you here to talk about that? Is the potential Developer, is he here as well?

Ms. Schena

Yes this is, we talked a little bit about the HOME Program in the presentation that Sarah and I just gave and this is one of those projects that come before the Committee for funding. I will let the Developer talk a little bit about the project as a whole and then I am happy to answer any technical questions related to the HOME Program and anything to do with the underwriting on that side.

Kyle Worth Well thank you both Director Marchant and Carrie for answering 1,000 questions for me already relating to the HOME Program. I am very excited about this property. I actually worked on a fairly similar property behind the Shaw's Plaza on Main Street last year. We built five brand new units and we have 10 additional units at 49 Harbor Avenue and by "we" I mean my wife and myself took on this project.

Chairwoman Kelly

I'm sorry, can I interrupt you for just a moment, can you just say your name and address for the record.

Kyle Worth Kyle Worth and my address 443 South Baboosic Lake Road in Merrimack New Hampshire. I am going to screen share real quick, just showing a picture of the other project that we recently completed. And you can Harbor Ave. is a very similar project to what we are looking at - 82 and 92 Amherst Street. We purchased the building with bullet holes through the windows, vandalism all over the outside and there were multiple squatters living on the first floor. After about a 9-month renovation we completely re-did up and downstairs, everything from new utilities coming in and out the building, siding, windows, really remodeled the entire place.

Here's an interior before picture, and the same space after. I just share that to show prior to applying for HOME Funds I had already got the passion for affordable housing in Nashua and I also work with seniors, many of whom have been forced out of their current living scenarios because of the increase in housing costs. So really, I am all about trying to increase the amount of very low-income housing that's available. So that brings me to 82 – 92 Amherst Street. This property is currently for sale and on the listing it specifically states, "Because of its proximity to downtown Amherst Coach Apartments are a prime opportunity for significant rent increases if all units are renovated". So essentially it is a building that is moderately affordable now and it has been marketed to a lot of developers to jack the rents up to make

them luxury apartments. The reason I am here tonight is if I can utilize some HOME Funds I would like to do a renovation and keep all of the units, 7 of them specifically HOME restricted and then keep the remaining 15 still very close to HOME levels around.

Alderman Wilshire

I can't picture or visualize where this project is? Amherst Street.

Mr. Worth It's right across from Holman Stadium, they are long 2 to 3 story townhouse style units.

Alderman Wilshire

Near Cumberland Farms?

Mr. Worth Yes

Alderman Wilshire

I'm familiar with the property, thank you so much.

Mr. Worth You're welcome. And inside does need mostly cosmetic things but it needs a significant amount of work. Its last update was in 1975. So lots and lots of deferred maintenance and I am a strong believer that just because they are horrible units, doesn't mean they have to be substandard. I would prefer that they were actually updated safe and clean units for people.

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Chairman. Mr. Worth, when you referenced it you said that several of the HOME price would be close to HOME price. For those that are listening can you kind of explain what you mean by that?

Mr. Worth Exactly. So for studios, the HOME Rental Units, we would have those about \$885.00 a month for a renovated space. The non-subsidized we would have at \$950.00. One bedroom we have listed at \$1,025.00 for the HOME units and \$1,150.00 for non HOME units. Two bedrooms were \$1,225.00 for HOME units; \$1,295.00 for the non HOME units. So compared to the charts that Director Marchant showed at the beginning especially for Tract 4, they were significantly lower than other rents in the neighborhood.

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Madam Chair, just a quick follow up, more of a comment. That area is Ward 2 which really abuts Ward 3 so I am very familiar with that area. And I'll tell you a lot of the people that live within that area you know you often saw flowers hanging down. So they really care about where they live and so I guess my next question would be when you are doing this renovation, there are currently occupied are they not?

Mr. Worth There's three vacant units that we would renovate immediately and the intentions would not be to displace anyone who currently lives there.

Alderman Klee

Ok I appreciate that and as I was saying, I mean I see people that they hang their flowers down there, they have that like an elongated porch type of thing and so on. So I appreciate what you are doing here, thank you.

Mr. Worth Thank you.

Alderman Caron

Yes, thank you. First of all I want to thank you, for 9 months I've watched the renovations being done on Harbor Ave and I thought you did a fabulous job. If you can do as well on Amherst Street as you've done there, this is well worth the time and effort that you've put in and I want to thank you personally since that's my Ward.

Mr. Worth Thank you very much, I appreciate that.

Chairwoman Kelly

Are there other Committee members that have questions for Mr. Worth? Alderman Wilshire?

Alderman Wilshire

It's not actually for Mr. Worth, it is for Carrie Schena. So of the \$294,000.00 of HOME Funds, will that leave us a balance of HOME Funds or is that using up what was already allocated?

Ms. Schena

Right, I think I do know what you're asking. So we currently have just about \$771,000.00 in HOME Funds available so this is using a portion of that. There are a couple of other HOME Applications, one that has been submitted, but is not quite ready for underwriting just yet; that's the Bronstein Apartment Redevelopment. And then we have some other potential ones with Neighbor works. And Neighbor works typically comes in and acts as a, call it a CHODO, Community Housing Development Organization and they have a separate set aside under the HOME Funds to do work for that program. So this is using a portion it will still leave a balance and then noting that we have those other projects in the pipeline and wanted to ensure that we had enough HOME Funds to assist all of the good projects that are coming in.

Alderman Wilshire

Well this is a good project and thank you, Mr. Worth and thank you Carrie.

Ms. Schena

For the record I wanted Mr. Worth to just speak a little bit about the total project cost including purchase price, because I think it's important to note that the HOME Funds going into this are about 7% or 8% of the total cost and the balance will be through private sources that Mr. Worth brings to the table.

Mr. Worth Sure, so my intention is I would be putting in about 10.5% of my own funds, the HOME Funds would be close to 11% and the remaining roughly 80% would be financed through St. Mary's Bank. In total, I am including about \$250,000.00 of rehabilitation funds, its \$2.65 million would be the total project cost and that is for 22 apartments.

Chairwoman Kelly

If the Committee is all set, I have a list of questions but I want to make sure there is no one else out there. Ok so I have a few questions. First, I want to thank you as well, this is you know great work and you seem to have a very nice approach to how you do this. And I thought that the apartments that you did on Harbor Ave. that looks beautiful. So thank you for taking on that project and for working so diligently to keep them at an affordable price. Obviously, we know have a very, very high need for affordable housing in Nashua.

So I appreciate that. A couple of questions, I wanted to know if your previous is fully rented now. I'm assuming the answer is yes.

Mr. Worth We kept at rents at \$750.00 to \$950.00 a month and we got roughly 90 to 100 applicants in a 3 to 4-day period so it actually was full way before we were done.

Chairwoman Kelly

Wow that's crazy.

Mr. Worth We could easily charge \$200.00 a month more and rent it out but that really wasn't the intention initially.

Chairwoman Kelly

No, I appreciate it. The other question I had was that you talked about not wanting to displace that's important too, right. So you may not have a full answer but I am interested in how that works. Like are you working with the Mayor, are you going to shift them into vacant units while you work on theirs? Like how do you do such a big project with people still living there?

Mr. Worth Harbor Ave. was very tricky that was with everyone living there as well. We have yet to find someone who not taken a brand new, fully updated the apartment for the same cost as their old 1975 apartment. So the intention would be to complete three of them, all of the common areas and then offer those units to anyone who would qualify income-based wise, within the building itself. So we would give them the opportunity of that first but me and Carrie do need to go over ensuring that we are meeting all of HUD's requirements when we are transitioning tenants.

Chairwoman Kelly

Great thank you, that answered my question, I kind of figured it was something like that, but I was just interested in how that works. I don't have any other questions and I appreciate you as well, I really appreciate this project and thank you for bringing in forward. OK. You can call the roll if you're ready, Alderman Wilshire.

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Klee, Alderman Caron,
Alderman Wilshire, Alderwoman Kelly 5

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

R-20-070

- Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
- Alderman-at-Large Brandon Michael Laws
- Alderman Richard A. Dowd
- Alderman Skip Cleaver
- Alderman Thomas Lopez
- Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
- Alderman June M. Caron
- Alderman Patricia Klee
- Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright

Alderman Jan Schmidt
Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

RELATIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND APPROPRIATION OF \$294,676 FROM THE NEW HAMPSHIRE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION INTO PUBLIC HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES GRANT ACTIVITY “COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKER SUPPORT TO VULNERABLE POPULATIONS”

MOTION BY ALDERMAN WILSHIRE TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE BY ROLL CALL

ON THE QUESTION

Chairwoman Kelly

The Motion on the floor is final passage, Director Bagley are you here to speak on this?

Bobbie Bagley Director of Public Health & Community Service

Yes, I am Madam Chair thank you. This is funds that are being granted to the Division of Public Health & Community Services to bring on additional support for the activities that we are doing with COVID related work, as well as to support other public health activities that we are doing in the community which include our Asthma, Lead, HIV, STD and Immunization work.

The Charitable Foundation actually responded to the report that was written by the Governor’s COVID Response Team, which I was a part of with four other individuals. We put together a report that went out for recommendations to be implemented across the State to enhance some of the activities that need to be done to reduce the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color. In response to that report that was released, the Charitable Foundation called the Division and asked us what we needed and I readily provided the information of the use of that particular work force to help enhance some of what we are doing. These individuals will be hired on to work not only with us at the Health Department but also to help us partner with some of our partnering agencies that help individuals, we are talking about the housing piece because we are looking at social determinates of health, addressing that as one of the issues with maintaining and sustaining their ability to stay housed.

Community Health Workers bring a value to the work that we do because they connect with the community, come from the community and can speak to community members as liaisons with the agencies that they will be working with. So I am really excited about this opportunity; it is a two year grant proposal that pays for their salary as well as all of their benefits and all of the supplies that they will need for the work that they will do in that two year period. It is only for two years, there’s no additional funding that is required from the City to support this work at all. I’m not sure if anyone has any questions?

Chairwoman Kelly

Any questions from the Committee? I have a question Director Bagley, so is this the first time we have ever had this money come in and had these Community Health Liaisons as you were talking about or have we done this before?

Director Bagley

So this would be the first time that we are getting this amount of support from the NH Charitable Foundation, they have helped us with other grants. But this is very specific to full time employment for two Community Health Workers. We currently have two Community Health Workers in the Department; the Community Health Department at the Division has always had Community Health Workers for as long as I’ve worked in public health so over 20 some odd years. Each of those Community Health Workers have been very specific to different programs. The City hired one of our Community Health Workers full time to

go across all of our programs and even work across different departments. But this is the first time that we've received this amount of funding from the Charitable Foundation for this type of work.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you. Ok I don't see any other discussion, so I think we can call the vote please.

Director Bagley

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you.

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea:	Alderman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Klee, Alderman Caron, Alderman Wilshire, Alderwoman Kelly	5
Nay:		0

MOTION CARRIED

R-20-072

- Endorsers: Mayor Jim Donchess
- Alderman Jan Schmidt
- Alderman Linda Harriott-Gathright
- Alderman Richard A. Dowd
- Alderman Skip Cleaver
- Alderwoman-at-Large Shoshanna Kelly
- Alderman-at-Large Brandon Michael Laws
- Alderman Patricia Klee
- Alderman-at-Large Michael B. O'Brien, Sr.
- Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire

RELATIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND APPROPRIATION OF \$356,046 FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION, AND \$26,828 FROM THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION INTO TRANSIT GRANT ACTIVITY "LOW OR NO EMISSION GRANT PROGRAM"

MOTION BY ALDERMAN WILSHIRE TO RECOMMEND FINAL PASSAGE BY ROLL CALL

ON THE QUESTION

Chairwoman Kelly

The Motion is for final passage; is there discussion on that Motion. Director Marchant are you the lead on this?

Director Marchant

Yes, thank you. This is a nationally competitive Federal Grant that Camille and her team worked on and pulled off, I must say in the middle of the COVID disaster in May. So massive kudos to her and her team for pulling this off. And so we have been awarded a NO/LOW Grant in the amount you recited and it will

go towards buying two electric hybrid vans and also to adding electric charging stations over at the transit center. And so it is a great opportunity for transit. The matching funds are provided in the escrow process.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you. Alderman Klee?

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Madam Chair. I just had a really quick question. When we purchase these via the grant, will be retiring any or are these going to be in addition to what we currently have?

Director Marchant

That's a great question. These are planned replacements of very old vans that we had. We had started, I don't know if you remember about a year and a half ago we entered in contract with Champion to replace a chunk of our vans because they are all over 14 years; they are passed their useful life. So that was a grant that we got at that time. But now we are, now we have gotten this grant to replace a couple more and we are trying to really diversify and not just be diesel or gas based at this time. So this was a great opportunity through the no or low emissions national competitive grant to do so.

Alderman Klee

One more follow up question, Madam Chair?

Chairwoman Kelly

Of course.

Alderman Klee

Thank you very much. The other question I have is do you know off hand how many vans we have in our inventory at the moment that we use.

Director Marchant

That's a great question, I believe, let's see, my cheat sheet is right here. I think we have a total of 20, I believe we have 21 or 22 vehicles at the moment. That would be the combination of the fixed route fleet, and the paratransit vans. It also includes the two just regular vehicles that we use for many different types of things so yes.

Alderman Klee

Thank you very much and I definitely am very in favor of this so thank you.

Director Marchant

And we will sell the vans that we are retiring and those proceeds go back into buying new vans. They don't make much, they've got a lot of miles, but every bit helps.

Alderman Klee

Thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

I just have a comment. I just wanted to say thank you, you said Camille? Thank you to her team.

Director Marchant

Camille Pattison, yes, the Transportation Manager.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you for going above and beyond and getting this done. I know as an Energy & Environment Committee Member I know that we are trying to closer and closer to zero emissions as a City and this is one small part of it. So I really appreciate that and I am obviously going to support this. Ok if nobody else has any questions, then we can call the vote.

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea:	Alderman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Klee, Alderman Caron, Alderman Wilshire, Alderwoman Kelly	5
Nay:		0

MOTION CARRIED

NEW BUSINESS – ORDINANCES - None

TABLED IN COMMITTEE - None

GENERAL DISCUSSION - None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairwoman Kelly

I don't see anyone from the public, double checking quickly.

REMARKS BY THE ALDERMEN

Alderman Wilshire

Thank you, I want to thank Director Marchant and Carrie Schena for working on the housing study; I think it's really important right now. And we all know that rents are so high in this City and we have no vacancies. So I appreciate the work they are doing and that they want to set some goals and I am interested in how this turns out because we certainly need low-income housing. Thank you.

Alderman Klee

Thank you, Madam Chair. And I want to echo what President Wilshire had said and that is true, I think this study is going to give us some really good information and I'd like to thank Mr. Worth for what he has done with this City to help create some affordable housing. The fact that we have such a low vacancy rate really is going to push all of those costs up because it is supply and demand and that's kind of how our economy works. But we are going to get to the point where we are going to push ourselves out of the market altogether. So I think this gives us an even balance and I appreciate all that he is doing for that. And Director Marchant and her team are just incredible, Carrie Schena, I can't thank any of them enough. This

is really a priority for our City, so thank you.

Chairwoman Kelly

Thank you, Alderman Klee. Is there anyone else that would like to provide remarks? Alright I am going to also throw in my comments along with the previous ones. Affordable housing is a critical issue for us here in Nashua and the State-at-Large but especially here with our vacancy rates. And I know I've had multiple conversations with Director Marchant and Carrie Schena around what are we doing, how can we help them? I am really looking forward to that study as a jumping off point to see how we can continue to promote affordable housing, find more Kyle Worths in our City who are willing to put that at the forefront and not just develop and extremely high rates; which we need both but affordable housing is really hard to find. So I am looking forward to seeing that and I appreciate both of you for coming and getting us a little bit primed and ready for that report.

POSSIBLE NON-PUBLIC SESSION – None

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY ALDERMAN HARRIOTT-GATHRIGHT TO ADJOURN BY ROLL CALL

A viva voce roll call was taken which resulted as follows:

Yea: Alderman Harriott-Gathright, Alderman Klee, Alderman Caron,
Alderman Wilshire, Alderwoman Kelly 5

Nay: 0

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was declared adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Alderman-at-Large Lori Wilshire
Committee Clerk

49 Harbor Ave, Nashua – 15 residential apartments
Exterior Before



Exterior After



Interior Before



Interior After

