

**CITY OF NORWALK
FAIR HOUSING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 12, 2010**

ATTENDANCE: Rev. Jeffrey Ingraham; Barbara Hudgins, Nancy Burke,
Carol Frank

STAFF: Atty. Margaret Suib, Redevelopment Agency

CALL TO ORDER

Rev. Ingraham called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 15, 2010 MINUTES

- ** **MS. HUDGINS MOVED THE MINUTES OF MARCH 15, 2010.**
- ** **MS. FRANK SECONDED.**

The following correction was noted:

Page 1, under Attendance, change the first name for Rev. Ingraham from Lindsay to Jeffrey.

- ** **THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS CORRECTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Rev. Ingraham requested a suspension of the rules to change the order of items on the agenda to move the discussion of Impediments to Fair Housing as the first item.

NEW BUSINESS

DISCUSSION REGARDING IMPEDIMENTS TO FAIR HOUSING

Atty. Suib explained that an updated draft of the document called “An Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing” has been completed and is posted on the website. She then stated that she is not satisfied that the document has been prepared as required, adding that a public hearing will be held tomorrow evening as part of the Redevelopment Agency meeting, where public is invited to comment on any portion of the report.

Ms. Frank asked what could be done at this point, and Atty. Suib responded that she had written a fifteen page comment letter but the outside consultant had not provided a “red-lined” response highlighting where her recommendations had been incorporated into the latest revision. She added that there needs to be expanded recommendations to reflect City Ordinances and outlining the jurisdiction of the Commission and incorporating the Workforce Housing Plan and parking requirements for new construction.

Rev. Ingraham asked if everyone had read the copy of the draft as asked at last month’s meeting and if they had their comments or questions prepared for discussion. Atty. Suib said that her main concern was that the document is filled with data (40 pages) of mostly census data not related to Fair Housing. She added that the report contains no concrete conclusions or supportive data, and most importantly is missing a summary of the required action or role of the Commission. She added that based on the Westchester case, there had been a precedent set that now presents a situation where Norwalk could face a lawsuit and revised language should be considered in the Impediments to Fair Housing to cover the Commissions role.

Ms. Hudgins asked Atty. Suib if she planned on speaking, and she responded that she did not plan to speak, but wanted to present letter of comment. Ms. Burke asked if there was a risk to the City to accept the current draft of the Impediments to Fair Housing. Atty. Suib replied that she is concerned with a potential lawsuit and that to not take action on an incomplete document does not comply with due diligence role of the Commission.

Ms. Hodgins asked what the next steps in the approval process was, and Ms. Suib responded that the public hearing is before the Redevelopment Agency, and following their approval, it would be forwarded to the Common Council as part of the Consolidated Plan with the HUD guidelines. Rev. Ingraham suggested that Atty. Suib would draft bullet form summary comments from the 16 page summary report that she has already written, and e-mail it to the Commission members for their comments and approval. Ms. Frank stated that she would be willing to sign the report, and the other members agreed that it would be good for them to all sign the letter and have Atty. Suib present it at the public hearing.

DISCUSSION REGARDING ANNUAL EVENT

Atty. Suib provided update on the annual event and stated that she felt it was best to have a round table discussion event with key city officials and departments and committees about impediments to fair housing. She added that it was very difficult to research how much was spent last year, but that she was able to determine that approximately \$250 was spent, which included \$40 for refreshments. Ms. Frank suggested they look into the City Hall coffee shop operator had catered the Human Relations International Day celebration, and Mr. Bovilsky could provide the costs that they had spent for that event.

Atty. Suib stated that she had suggested inviting the new director of CHRO or a HUD staff member to speak, but that the Hartford person has not been replaced. Ms. Frank stated that obviously it would be critical to arrange for a speaker who would not charge a fee. Atty. Suib suggested to have Matt McClave, of the Epsom, Becker law firm, who has been involved with the Westchester case, and she would look into asking one of them at the upcoming conference at the end of April.

Mr. Frank asked what the timing was and Atty. Suib said that she would like to schedule this for during the week preceding Memorial Day, May 24 or the first week of June. Rev. Ingraham stated that he would not be available that week, and suggested the next week would be better, which would be during the second week of June.

OLD BUSINESS

Rev. Ingraham suggested to table other items on the agenda, the FHO's Monthly Report and New Business, until the next meeting, which would be May 17.

- ** MS. FRANK MOVED TO TABLE THE FHO'S MONTHLY REPORT AND NEW BUSINESS ITEMS ON THE AGENDA, UNTIL NEXT MONTH'S MEETING**
- ** MS. BURKE SECONDED**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

- ** MS. FRANK MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** MS. BURKE SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Marilyn Knox
Telesco Secretarial Services