



1  
2  
3 **HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**  
4 **Thursday, December 13, 2012**  
5 Council Conference Room  
6 Palo Alto Civic Center  
7 250 Hamilton Avenue  
8 6:30 PM  
9  
10  
11

12 **ROLL CALL: Commissioners Present:** Ray Bacchetti, Theresa Chen, Claude Ezran, Diane Morin, Jill  
13 O’Nan, **Council Liaison:** Karen Holman **Staff:** Minka van der Zwaag, Amy Johnson  
14

15  
16 **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

17 None  
18

19 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

20 Commissioner Bacchetti made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected for November 8, 2012.  
21 Seconded by Commissioner Morin, AYES: unanimous. (Commissioners Savage and Verma absent).  
22

23 **AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:**

24 None  
25

26 **BUSINESS**

27  
28 **1. INFORMATION SESSION ON POSSIBLE CLOSURE OF BUENA VISTA MOBILE**  
29 **HOME PARK**

30 Mr. Curtis Williams, Director of Planning and Community Environment for the City of Palo Alto  
31 and Jason Nortz, Senior Planner for the City of Palo Alto, gave an overview of the mobile home  
32 closure process and reported that their department sent an informational report to City Council  
33 yesterday. The process takes six months to complete all the steps, which is the minimum time  
34 required by law. The process includes an application, the retention of a housing relocation specialist,  
35 an appraisal of the property, a resident questionnaire performed, and then all information gathered is  
36 provided in a relocation impact report. Recommendations are provided to the residents. A hearing  
37 is scheduled and led by a hearing officer, who considers complaints or disagreements. There is an  
38 appeal process to the City Council. The process focuses on making sure all residents are heard and  
39 reflected in the outcome. In this case, the earliest time possible to complete this process for Buena  
40 Vista is July 2013 and the relocation would occur around end of December or January 2014. The  
41 families with children in school will most likely be able to stay until end of the school year.  
42

43 The City has a preliminary application for a project by Prometheus for a 180 unit apartment building

44 on the site. An informational study session is to be scheduled for City Council because it would be  
45 necessary to rezone the property first.

46  
47 Staff has attempted to inform the residents so they understand the process. They conducted two  
48 informational meetings with the residents. They had a combined total of 150 people attend the  
49 meetings.

50  
51 Mr. Williams answered questions from the commissioners regarding the likelihood of City Council  
52 approving the zoning request. He explained that he does not know why the city would entertain the  
53 proposal without a below market rate (BMR) housing component. The city cannot require a BMR  
54 component on rental units, but the City Council can ask for it based on the discretionary rezoning  
55 request. Assistance to residents cannot be determined until the interviews are completed with the  
56 residents. Staff has spoken to various nonprofits that have residential facilities in the area such as  
57 Palo Alto Housing Corporation, but they currently have long waiting lists. If rezoning is not  
58 approved for the park owner, they would most likely sell anyway and hope that someone would buy  
59 and develop at the current zoning level.

60  
61 Public Comments:

62 Ms. Melody Chaney, a resident of the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park. She lives there because it is  
63 affordable and allows her to work full time and be a student. She has been a productive member of  
64 the community. There would be no where else to go that is low income in Palo Alto.

65  
66 Ms. Erica Escalante, a resident of the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park for 14 years. She currently  
67 works full time for the Palo Alto Medical Foundation. She attended PAUSD schools. Many  
68 members of her family own their own mobile homes in the same park. It has been a safe and very  
69 close community and they do not want to leave.

70  
71 Ms. Blanca Poinseca, a resident of the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park. She has become a source of  
72 help to the other residents; they all feel safe there and do not want to leave.

73  
74 Mr. Jeff Rensch, a resident of Barron Park community, shared his concern about relocating the many  
75 children who live at the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park out of the area, because they currently  
76 doing very well at their current Palo Alto schools. He asked that the relocation specialist pay special  
77 attention to the uniqueness of the community.

78  
79 Ms. Winter Dellenbach, a resident of Barron Park community spoke about the importance of the  
80 children who live at Buena Vista, to be able to stay in their PAUSD School as well as those who are  
81 receiving required local medical care.

82  
83 Mr. Martin Eichner, Project Manager for Project Sentinel informed the commissioners that Project  
84 Sentinel facilitated the public meetings. He stated that all parties have excellent legal advisors. He  
85 also informed everyone that mobile home parks have different laws that are unique to them and how  
86 they differ from other types of housing with regards to who governs them and that the state looks to  
87 local ordinances to provide protection to residents. It is local ordinances that will provide most of  
88 the framework for the sale of the mobile home park and that fair housing laws apply to the residents  
89 of Buena Vista.

90  
91 Mr. Williams was asked if park infrastructure was one of the reasons for selling. He explained that  
92 there is a trend to close parks because of the increasing land value.

93 Councilmember Holman asked if City Council considers a zoning change, what findings need to  
94 take place. Should there be consistency with the city’s comprehensive plan? What do staff and the  
95 HRC see as their role in this? If the owner or new owner closes the park without a zoning change,  
96 what options are available to the city, assuming the purchase is not feasible? Can the city look at  
97 funding sources to provide additional assistance like CDBG or HSRAP as a possibility?  
98

99 Ms. Dellenbach commented that no recent inspections have presented infrastructure problems.  
100

101 Commissioner comments:

102 Commissioner Bacchetti commented that looking out for the well-being of the children at Buena  
103 Vista should be a high priority for the city; and shared his concern about the diversity of housing in  
104 Palo Alto, that the HRC needs to be proactive. He asked that the HRC discuss the educational issue  
105 that was raised and asked if there was flexibility for the children to continue their education in Palo  
106 Alto. Commissioner Morin suggested that the role of the HRC could be to help with investigation  
107 and reporting back, if needed. Vice Chair O’Nan said that this item should be on a future agenda  
108 because there was a lot of information to process from tonight’s meeting and suggested  
109 commissioners schedule a site visit. Chair Ezran suggested asking council that if they accept the  
110 zoning change request, that the revenue be used to supplement the tenants.  
111  
112

113 **2. DISCUSSION OF FOLLOW UP ITEMS FROM HUMAN SERVICES NEEDS**  
114 **ASSESSMENT**

115 Commissioner Bacchetti discussed the report that summarizes the responses to the Finance  
116 Committees questions regarding the Human Services Needs Assessment. In the report, it discusses  
117 four issues raised by the Finance Committee. Commissioner Bacchetti led a discussion of each of  
118 the issues and the recommendations that will be presented to the Finance Committee. He asked for  
119 discussion and/or comments that will improve the report.  
120

121 Bill Blodget, a representative of the La Comida nutrition program. He expressed appreciation for the  
122 effort and that the issue is taken seriously. He commented on new and emerging needs, there is a  
123 broad range of skills and capabilities. He suggested including in the area of collaboration, a section  
124 for emerging needs.  
125

126 Vice Chair O’Nan made a motion to approve the budget recommendations, with discussed changes,  
127 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Bacchetti, AYES: Unanimous. (Commissioners Savage and Verma absent).  
128

129 Vice Chair O’Nan made a motion to approve the collaboration and cooperation recommendation  
130 with changes, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Chen, Theresa, Ayes: U (Commissioners Savage and Verma  
131 absent).  
132

133 Ms. van der Zwaag led a discussion regarding the possible addition of Adolescent Counseling  
134 Services and Youth Community Services and others to a special category of HSRAP recipients. She  
135 reported that Councilmember Shepherd knew of the long term relationship that these agencies had  
136 with the city and for staff to look into adding a special category so that they would only reapply  
137 every 6 years. She summarized the information in the packet and provided a history HSRAP funding  
138 and multi-year contracts. She asked for any adjustments or comments that the commissioners want  
139 to make or to clarify the criteria for multi-year contracts.  
140 |  
141

142 There was discussion about losing flexibility and diminishing the funding to other HSRAP grantees  
143 by adding ACS and YCS to the list of sole source providers who only reapply every 6 years, instead  
144 of every 2 years as other agencies have to do.

145  
146 Mr. Leif Erikson, Executive Director of YCS was asked to provide background of an MOU  
147 agreement.

148  
149 Commissioner Bacchetti made a motion that the HRC not make a recommendation to change the  
150 HSRAP status of Youth Community Services (YCS) and Adolescent Counseling Services (ACS).  
151 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Morin. Discussion: Vice Chair O’Nan asked about other funding cycles  
152 besides 2 years or being locked into a 6-year contract, and asked for other alternatives. Ms. van der  
153 Zwaag explained that any alternatives would have to comply with contract policies and procedures.  
154 Chair Ezran agreed with Commissioner Bacchetti that he would like to keep with the status quo.  
155 Commissioner Bacchetti said he appreciated Vice Chair O’Nan’s comment and thought her  
156 suggestion made sense, but felt it would need further study because of purchasing requirements.  
157 Commissioner Bacchetti withdrew his motion to allow staff to do further research.

158  
159 Vice Chair O’Nan expressed concern about establishing criteria. There was discussion about moving  
160 those on a 2-year cycle to a 3-year cycle.

161  
162 Chair Ezran made a motion to have staff report back and to keep Avenidas and Palo Alto  
163 Community Child Care on the current 6-year cycle and all other agencies currently on a 2-year cycle  
164 to a 3-year cycle. Motion failed.

165  
166 Vice Chair O’Nan made a motion that ACS and YCS continue to stay on a 2-year cycle and staff  
167 will review the option of moving all 2-year cycle recipients to a 3-year cycle. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner  
168 Bacchetti, Ayes: Unanimous (Commissioner Savage and Verma absent).

169  
170  
171 **3. SELECTION OF REVIEW DATES FOR HUMAN SERVICES RESOURCE**  
172 **ALLOCATION PROCESS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT**

173 Commissioners we asked to respond to a doodle poll to reschedule the February meeting.

174  
175  
176 **4. SELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES TO HSRAP/CDBG SELECTION COMMITTEE**  
177 **FOR NEXT CYCLE.**

178 Ms. van der Zwaag discussed the meeting schedule. Vice Chair O’Nan and Commissioner Morin  
179 volunteered to serve on the committees. Chair Ezran asked that staff contact Commissioners Verma  
180 and Savage to see if they are interested.

181  
182  
183 **5. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:**

184 **A. Commissioner Reports:**

185 None

186  
187 **B. Council Buddy Reports:**

188 None

189  
190

191 **C. Council Liaison Report:**  
192 Councilmember Holman reported that February 2<sup>nd</sup> has been chosen as the date for the City Council  
193 Retreat and it will be held at the Palo Alto Art Center. Each Council Member submitted 3 proposed  
194 priorities, with HSRAP Funding being one of the topics of discussion.

195  
196 **D. Staff Liaison Report:**  
197 Ms. van der Zwaag reported that the Citizen's United Resolution is being reviewed by City  
198 Attorney.

199  
200  
201 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

202 None

203  
204 **CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

205 Update from Palo Alto Police Chief on subjects of: Community Relations, Police Community Advisory  
206 Group, Parent Project and staffing issues.

207 Follow up on Buena Vista Mobile Home Park

208 Follow up on Human Services Needs Assessment

209

210 **ADJOURNMENT**

211 The meeting adjourned at: 9:25pm