

MINUTES
HOUSING AUTHORITY OF COVINGTON
CITY HEIGHTS RESIDENT MEETING - SESSION 4
Wednesday, June 24, 2020 7:00 P.M.

A Resident Meeting regarding the Possible Sale of City Heights was held on **Wednesday, June 24, 2020** from 7:00pm-8:00pm in the City Heights Community Room.

Video Link: <https://youtu.be/YZAxhymIkNs>

The Housing Authority of Covington Staff Panel consisted of Steve Arlinghaus, Executive Director; Chris Bradburn, Deputy Director/Jobs Plus Grant Coordinator; Jon Adkins, Director of Resident Services; Shannon Wilson, Senior Housing Manager; and Lakitha Pearl, City Heights Housing Manager

7 residents and community members were on the sign in sheet.

AGENDA:

PRESENTATION- (See Attachment A, on page 7)

Slide 1: (Title Slide) Proposed Sale/Disposition of City Heights

Slide 2: Staff Introductions

Slide 3: Before We Get Started

Slide 4: Before We Get Started (continued)

Slide 5: Background

Slide 6: Disposition Plan

Slide 7: HUD Review

Slide 8: Upon Application Approval

Slide 9: Benefits

Slide 10: Questions/Comments

Slide 11: Please Give Us Your Input

Steve Arlinghaus presented: **Proposed Sale/Disposition of City Heights** in the following topic order (not all topics are referenced in slides or in numerical order):

- The Housing Authority Staff Panel were introduced to the attendees. All sessions will be videotaped and available online, and minutes will be recorded and distributed to City Heights residents and others in attendance who request copies.
- These meetings are to inform and discuss the future of City Heights. Attendees were asked to complete a 7-question survey to help determine where they would like to move.
- City Heights is 65 years old with 66 buildings (63 dwelling) and 366 apartments and approximately 1 thousand residents. As City Heights deteriorates, the repairs become more

challenging. The Housing Authority of Covington does not have enough funds for a big enough maintenance crew or repairs.

- In August 2019, HAC commissioned a study by Creative Housing Solutions from Cincinnati, to conduct a Physical Needs Assessment (PNA) to determine what is needed to maintain/upgrade City Heights. It was determined that to bring City Heights up to modern standards, it would cost an excess of \$50 million dollars. HUD is not going to give HAC \$50 million dollars.
- Based on the Physical Needs Assessment there are many expensive items that HAC will not have the funds to repair. Unlike other rental properties, the Housing Authority of Covington not only owns the buildings at City Heights, but also the utilities; the power lines, water lines, sewer lines and the streets. In the past couple of years, many gas & sewer lines had to be inspected and replaced. There is a sanitary sewer line that is slipping off the hillside. If that were to happen, 2 or 3 buildings would have to be immediately taken down.
- In May 2020, HAC signed a contract with a consultant to help facilitate the Demolition/Disposition process. (Section 18) The process will require compilation of paperwork and documentation will be submitted to the Special Applications Center (SAC) in Chicago. SCA will review the information which may be approved, or additional documentation may be requested.
- One on one meetings with City Heights residents will be held to go through the process step by step.
- The City of Covington / Housing Choice Voucher Program will be requesting additional vouchers to help facilitate this process. These vouchers will give the residents many options on where they can live. More information will be provided by the Housing Choice Voucher/Section 8 team soon.
- Residents will be provided with funds to move. The amount of funding a resident will receive will be based on how many bedrooms their apartment has. HAC will put out a bid opportunity from a local moving company to help the residents move or residents may use the funds to pay for family and friends to help with the move.
- Some discussion has been to use the funds from the sale and develop that into another new community either in the city of Covington or elsewhere outside the city of Covington. Different options are being explored.
 - Residents are encouraged to enroll in the Jobs Plus Program as an opportunity to help residents.
The Brighton Center staff at the Jobs Plus/City Futures Office located at 2522 Todd can help residents with this transition by:
 - Helping to clean up credit which will open your options for housing
 - Find better job opportunities, higher paying jobs while rent stays the same. The difference will be put into a savings account.
- The Jobs Plus Program has now been in session for approximately 1 1/2 years. It is a 4-year program scheduled to end on December 31, 2022. Residents should use the remainder of this time to take advantage of this program.
- The goal is to have this process completed by December 2020 and to have approval from the federal government in early 2021 to sell or demolish City Heights. The residents and community will continue to be informed of the progress through meetings and various forms of communication.
- Attendees are encouraged to watch the different videos that will be posted on the website since there were different questions asked at previous meetings consequently different information was provided.
- A contract for approximately \$650 thousand dollars for a new camera security system for City Heights, Latonia Terrace, and Golden Tower was recently signed. The current camera system

has a low-quality viewing span and rarely works and only covers approximately 10%. The new cameras will have a 360-viewing span and will cover approximately 90% of City Heights with day and night vision.

- TANK captured video/pictures of youth throwing rocks and breaking the windows on buses in route through City Heights. TANK may discontinue the bus service to City Heights if the attacks continue. The Housing Authority of Covington is asking help from the City Heights Residents to identify the perpetrators.
- Once the application is approved, all the resident will receive a written notice with steps on how to proceed.

Resident & Public Questions and Comments (answered by Steve Arlinghaus unless indicated otherwise)

Q. Is the mayor on the Housing Authority Board of Commissioners?

A. Yes, the mayor is on the board of commissioners.

Q. Did the Mayor appoint you as executive director?

A. I was appointed by the board of directors.

Q. Yesterday the radius the moving company will move the residents was 100 miles, today it was 75 miles. Which one is it?

A. We don't know the actual radius the moving company can move residents yet.

A resident stated that this process is called gentrification and she has witnessed the Housing Authority do this before with Jacob Price. The objective is to move low-income families and people of color to bring in a higher tax-base community and market rate housing in. He is saying how great this is going to be, and you can move closer to your families. She asked "What are the downsides this will be to the residents?".

Steve Arlinghaus asked the resident, "You tell me?"

The resident stated that people will be moved away from family and communities they know and continued "They wish us the best, they really do, but they want us somewhere else, out of sight, so they can build a wealthier community that can bring them tax dollars, the beautiful people." She advised the residents get together to protest this movement because she doesn't feel there was enough research on alternatives and the study done was to come up with the results that they wanted. She stated that the cameras are not for the safety of the residents but to watch the residents so they can come up with more reasons why this should come down. "Folks, get it together, legal talent, people that are good at fighting this sort of thing and stand up for yourselves. Don't be steamrolled."

Steve Arlinghaus stated that everybody has an opinion and out of a thousand there will be 800 different answers.

The resident stated that out of those thousand residents, most are not educated enough to understand the political system that's rolling over them.

Steve Arlinghaus expressed that he understands her frustration and he wouldn't like it if at some point someone told him that he was going to have to move. Nobody wants to hear that. But there is no choice in the matter. But what can we do, how can we assist you, that is what we are here for. We want to partner with you to help you make the best decision.

Mr. Arlinghaus explained that he agrees that it wasn't fair that public housing wasn't created in a cleaner, neater, fashion 40 years ago and also questions why major renovations weren't done 20 years ago. He stated that finger pointing is easy but he's only been with HAC for 2 years. But he knows this program will go through and he wants to be there the best he can.

Q What is the difference between Section 8 and privately owned places (homeownership)?

A. Chris Bradburn answered that the difference is that Section 8 is a program where residents rent from a private landlord and the other option is where the Section 8 subsidy can be used to put toward a mortgage. Those programs will be researched and be discussed at future meetings.

There are different types of voucher that will also be explored and explained to the residents at future meetings.

The HAC panel thanked the residents for coming to the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Steve Arlinghaus, Executive Director adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:49 pm.