

CITY OF NEWTON

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ZONING AND PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

MONDAY, APRIL 26, 2004

Present: Ald. Yates (Chairman), Ald. Baker, Lappin, Hess-Mahan, Sangiolo, Johnson, and Lennon; absent: Ald. Mansfield

City officials: Mark Gilroy, Commissioner of Inspectional Services; John DeToma, Zoning Enforcement Agent; Stephen Gartrell, Associate Director for Housing and Community Development; Dee Spiro, Senior Planner; Mike Kruse, Director of Planning and Development; Mike Rourke, Chief Administrative Officer; Linda Finucane, Chief Committee Clerk

Appointment by His Honor the Mayor

#166-04 GLORIA GAVRIS, 21 Monadnock Road, Chestnut Hill, appointed as a member of the ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION, for a term to expire on June 7, 2007 (60-day Board action 6/5/04).

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: Ms. Gavis was present. A real estate attorney, who has lived in Newton for seven years, she knew Mayor Cohen when he was a state representative and she was a lobbyist on Beacon Hill. She asked the Mayor to recommend a board on which she could serve. She is particularly interested in the revitalization of Newton Centre and other village centers and agreed to pass along Ald. Yates' suggestion that the EDC look into the Main Streets Program of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The committee thanked Ms. Gavis for her willingness to serve and approved her appointment 7-0.

REFERRED TO ZONING AND PLANNING & FINANCE COMMITTEES

#192-04 HIS HONOR THE MAYOR requesting Board of Aldermen authorization to submit to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) the FY05 Annual Action Plan for the City of Newton COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) and EMERGENCY SHELTER GRANT (ESG) funds and the WestMetro HOME Consortium. This Plan must be submitted to HUD by May 14, 2004.

ACTION: APPROVED 7-0

NOTE: Mr. Gartrell and Ms. Spiro presented the FY05 Annual Action Plan, the last year of a five-year consolidated plan for housing development, access for people with disabilities, economic development, and human services. (Development of the FY06-10 Consolidated Plan, which involves eight advisory committees, the EDC, neighborhood input and a round of public hearings, is in process.) Mr. Gartrell noted that next year the West Metro HOME Consortium will include three other communities, Framingham, Lexington, and Sudbury. (The three new

communities were previously in the Balance of State HOME area and chose to affiliate with the Newton-led group.) The committee reviewed the proposed projects. Ms. Spiro said they received three times the number of requests for funding and it is difficult to pick and choose. Over the course of the contract each program is carefully evaluated for its efficacy. When asked about the School Administration Building Access improvements and if ADA/architectural access to schools might be funded, Mr. Gartrell explained that disabled adults meet federal guidelines because they are presumed to have limited incomes, but the federal definition precludes children. For example, ADA funds could be used for benches or walkways for disabled to use or access parks, but not for play equipment, etc. Ald. Yates noted an apparent overlap in home services to elders. Mr. Gartrell said that the JCHE provides home visits to frail elders at a low co-payment; the Health Department provides visiting nurses; and, the NCDF CareConnections provides visits to its elderly and disabled residents. Ald. Baker asked about the Mediation Works Incorporation Eviction Mediation Program, with which he is familiar. Mr. Gartrell said this is the first year the ESG funding has been used to contract this agency. It will train up to twelve mediators to help low-income tenants reach agreements with their landlords to prevent eviction. Both Ald. Baker and Yates asked to see the contract. Ald. Yates noted that three to four years of development monies have been provided for housing projects described in the budget narrative (attached). Some of these funds have been tentatively earmarked for projects but have not been formally released pending environmental and historic review. Ald. Baker moved approval, which carried 7-0.

The Inspectional Services and Planning and Development budget discussions will be reported out separately.

All other items were held without discussion, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately at 10:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Yates, Chairman