

Joint Committee on Tax Credits Meeting

Wednesday, July 8, 2015 – 11:00am

Vermont Realtors Association, 148 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05602

Committee Members Present: Sarah Carpenter, VHFA; Angus Chaney, AHS (Governor's designee); Jennifer Hollar, ACCD; Gus Seelig, VHCB; and Richard Williams, VSHA.

VHFA Staff Members Present: Dave Adams, Maura Collins, George Demas, Joe Erdelyi, Victoria Johnson, and Josh Slade.

Public Present: Nancy Owens and Kathy Beyer, Housing Vermont; Amy Demetrowitz, Champlain Housing Trust; Cindy Reid and Kim Fitzgerald, Cathedral Square; Chris Holden, Rural Edge; Eileen Peltier, Downstreet Housing and Community Development; Elise Shunbaker, Addison County Community Trust; and Irene Nagle, Northeastern VT Development Association (via phone).

Meeting was called to order at 11:00am by Ms. Carpenter. A motion to approve September 29, 2014 minutes was made by Ms. Hollar, seconded by Mr. Seelig and unanimously passed. A motion to approve December 8, 2014 minutes was made by Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Chaney and unanimously approved.

Prior to reviewing the memo dated June 22, 2015 setting out Staff's recommended changes to the Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP), Mr. Erdelyi noted that staff received additional comments after the mailing from The American Lung Association; Kutak Rock LLP; Cathedral Square Corporation, and Downstreet Housing and Community Development. Copies of these were available for the public as well as a summary of 2015 VT Housing Needs Assessment findings as they relate to the QAP.

Mr. Erdelyi reviewed proposed definition changes in the QAP regarding Special Needs Housing; SASH (Support and Services at Home); and Supportive Housing. Staff's proposal is to remove the definition of Special Needs Housing substituting SASH (and similar service packages) which makes clear that Supportive Housing refers exclusively to housing for persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. There was a general discussion over this modification. Cathedral Square Corporation expressed concern that by removing Special Needs Housing as a "top tier" criteria, their projects would not be competitive with general occupancy projects. Mr. Chaney stated that AHS supported staff's proposal and that ending homelessness is their first priority. Ms. Carpenter agreed and stated that if the Committee wanted to create a top priority for senior housing with services it could, but that type of housing is not Special Needs Housing. Mr. Erdelyi noted that staff would still accept an application for a Special Needs development and will review these proposals on a case-by-case exception basis.

Mr. Erdelyi reviewed additional QAP changes for: Basis Boost; Senior Housing; and Threshold Criteria and Priorities which include a change in the minimum number of priorities required and the addition of Supportive Housing. In the current QAP, the sponsors are able to get the basis boost for serving Supportive Housing populations which are defined to include SASH. The proposed change clarifies that both groups will continue to qualify for the 130% basis boost, even though they are now defined distinctly. There was general discussion

regarding the need for a broader definition of Basis Boost and the method by which the requirement for supportive housing would be enforced.

Discussion also included Staff's recommended new language in the QAP which clarified that the 25% of allocated credit for senior housing was a "target" and not a "set-aside".

Ms. Demetrowitz requested that the Committee change the word "use" to "accept" in relation to the Common Tenant Rental Application. After brief discussion the Committee agreed.

Mr. Chaney moved that the Committee approve the following Staff recommendations for changes to the QAP:

1. Strike the Special Needs Housing definition and other references throughout the QAP
2. Add the definition for SASH
3. Add the additional language proposed for the Basis Boost
4. Change the requirement for three upper tier priorities and one lower tier priority to two upper and two lower

This motion was not seconded, and after discussion, it was determined that the Committee would schedule another meeting to determine what if any changes the Committee would recommend be made in the QAP by the Vermont Housing Finance Agency Board of Commissioners.

ADJOURNMENT

Staff confirmed that Minutes of the meeting had been kept and would be posted to the Vermont Housing Finance Agency website within five days.

Upon motion duly seconded and unanimously approved the meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.