**Boston Housing Authority RAB Meeting 10-5-17, at 125 Amory Street**

Family Public Hsg: *Members* Val Shelley, Concetta Paul, Phyllis Corbitt, Meena Carr, Aracelis Tejeda, Kassandra Ledesma, Arlene Carr. *Alternates* Alise Lewis (Alt 1), Ron Johnson (Alt 1), Janis McQuarrie (Alt 4): 10

Elderly/Disabled Public Hsg: *Members* Michele McNickles, Jeanne Burke Patterson, Marlena Nania, Modesta Ballester, Richard Gurney, Eugenia Smith,David Turney, John Maloni: 8.

Section 8: *Members* Edna Willrich, Lennox Tillet, Judith Frey, Stephen Tracey, Arlette Coleman, Yvette Moore, Lerona Diggs, Jung Wing Lee. *Alternates*: Karen Stram (Alt 2), Therese Browne (Alt 4), Robin Williams (Alt 5), Georgia McEaddy (Alt 6): 12

Absences excused: Betty Rae Wade, Tara Ruttle, Anita Morris Merriman

Others: John Kane, St. John Smith, Edna Rivera Carrasco, BHA; Mac McCreight, GBLS; Nancy Figueroa, CBPH; Arthur Alexander (Franklin Field); Sherdain Carter, W. Bruno (Washington Beech). [Were there others?]

The meeting was chaired by Edna Willrich with assistance from Therese Brown; Val Shelley was Timekeeper and Phyllis Corbitt was Sergeant at Arms. Minutes of prior meeting were approved. The Mayor wasn’t able to attend, but said would either attend or have someone on his behalf attend a future meeting (scheduling issues).

1/  **BHA Capital Spending for Federal Developments:** St. John Smith said that the RAB previously had these reports from Shirley Ransom, who retired, and he’s been working with Shirley for past 10 years at BHA. He distributed both a handout which presented what the overall amount of Capital Funds would be for FY 2018 and next 4 years, and a separate handout which listed specific work to be done at particular sites (as well as a bucket list of items that BHA thought were priorities but couldn’t yet be funded since money not identified). He also indicated that some unforeseen developments had thrown things out of whack, like expenses at General Warren where there had to be an evacuation due to problems with a building foundation. He noted that as in past years, a sizable portion of the Capital Fund is set aside to pay off past bonds ($6.7 million) and another is set aside to help cover development Operating expenses ($4.5 million), as permitted by HUD, as well as management improvements. This leaves a limited pool for actual physical improvements—BHA’s goal is to set aside 40% of that for elderly/disabled sites and 60% for family sites. St. John noted that capital work funded from other sources, like $3 million in energy improvements through ESCO, or weatherization work at Ausonia funded by ABCD, or the Administrator’s set-aside of $1 million from developer fees for some work (elevator at Hailey, and some improvements at elderly sites) aren’t on this report. He also clarified that the report solely focused on federal sites; BHA could schedule a future meeting with appropriate staff (Dana Dilworth) to focus on capital spending at state sites.

Mac asked if sites were converted to RAD, wouldn’t the projected Capital Fund dollars decrease (since Capital Fund is folded into the RAD budget)? St. John acknowledged this and also said that other conversions/redevelopment would do the same, but there might be Replacement Housing Factor funds. Mac suggested that it might be helpful to have a master list of all the capital work being done for each site (and funding source), so that the RAB (and task forces) can follow what’s going on. David and John talked about work needed at St. Botolph (building envelope, emergency generators); St. John acknowledged that at this and other sites, much needed work hasn’t been reached given limited funds. Phyllis asked what “repair PH locks” meant at Old Colony; St. John said this was the penthouse on the roofs, and improper access, and Phyllis said more focus needed to be on keeping the front doors locked. There was also debate about the “plumbing” item—there has been a mold problem, and not clear yet if it’s a ventilation issue, or pinhole leaks in pipes, etc.

2/**BHA Annual Plan Process/Calendar for FY 2018**: John K. noted that he was getting feedback from BHA Departments for the development of the FY 2018 Public Housing Agency (PHA) Plan, and of course this is the main business of the RAB. Members would get this on November 1 and comment period would run through December 15. Public hearing is slated for Mon. Dec. 11th. He noted that in past years, the RAB had moved its December and January meetings up a week so that the RAB was meeting before the public hearing and would have a chance to review BHA’s final PHA submission and response to comments prior to HUD submission (which will be Jan. 12th). It was moved, seconded, and adopted, to change the RAB meeting dates for Dec. 2017 and Jan. 2018 to the first Thursday (Dec. 7 and Jan. 4). Mac asked if there were going to be any amended PHA plans that might be happening on a slightly different schedule, as has happened sometimes in the past. John said it wasn’t clear yet on the BHA Grievance Procedure changes (discussed at last month’s meeting); this could be an amendment to the existing plan, but it might be just as easy to incorporate into the FY 2018 PHA Plan. It was also noted that in the past, there were Reading Committees where people volunteered to read the materials and share thoughts/concerns. A number of people volunteered: Janis M., Meena C., Robin W., Georgia M., Eugenia S., Concetta P., John M., and Val S. Dates for meetings and who wants to focus on what (Annual Plan or Progress Report) can be discussed between now and the November RAB meeting (on Nov. 9th, the 2nd Tuesday in November).

3/ **Reports from NARSAAH Conference in Baltimore**: John M., Phyllis, Michele, Arlene, and Lenox gave reports about the recent NARSAAH conference that they attended on the RAB’s behalf in Baltimore. John M. provided 10 copies of his report, and liked the piece that was done on community partnerships in Birmingham AL, identifying and pulling in more resources and programs for the site. St. Botolph has been doing this for a while, but always interested in others’ ideas/experience. Phyllis discussed the ROSS and Jobs Plus workshops, as well as Energy Matters (a little too Baltimore focused) and kids learning how to build own computers. Michele said she had gone to the RAD workshop (and there had been a presentation on this at St. Botolph by BHA today). Unlike prior NARSAAH New Orleans workshop on RAD, where everyone seemed to focus on how bad it was, this one was focused more on getting what residents need, keeping in place, protection plan, participating in design of improvements, getting in place solid affordable housing for the next generation. Arlene ended up attending a certificate course, and an open forum on hot topics in housing. She went on the bus tour, and noticed there was not as much homelessness as in tours elsewhere, but a lot of abandoned housing. There was a discussion of getting STEM programs for young people in public housing, and how to foster that locally. Lennox attended the 501(c)(3) workshop, and also went on the bus tour. He and several others mentioned the speech by Robert Woodson. Concetta asked that Arlene get her notes to John K. to share.

4/**Committee Reports.:**

a. *Policy and Procedures:* There was no meeting since the Joint Committee meeting in early September. David noted that several tabled matters hadn’t yet been taken up: (a) use of obscenity or disparaging remarks at Board, committee meetings, or conferences; and (b) language/use of emails. John M. noted that people should watch their language, keep it clean, matters of common courtesy. Concetta said that disrespect is an issue at Committee meetings, that a member was called “an animal” at the Joint Committee meeting. Arlene said that others were using foul language at the Committee meeting. John K. noted that when RAB members attend RAB-funded functions, they are there as RAB representatives, and use of profanity or vulgarity reflects on the RAB, and there were similar issues with email. Mac said that for email, there are some more complicated issues about where line is drawn between what’s expression covered by the First Amendment and what crosses the line, and before anything were done on that, he would want to be sure that BHA Legal Department was comfortable with it. Others said that for RAB funded events, sometimes it was hard to know what happened, since you just had the versions of events from those who attended and the whole Board wasn’t there. On the other hand, for the RAB Board meetings, everyone would know. John M. moved, and it was seconded, to say that if there was use of profane, vulgar, obscene, or disparaging remarks, the individual would be asked to leave the RAB meeting by the sergeant at arms. Mr. Lee said, what do you do then, if the person doesn’t leave and doesn’t stop? Mac pointed out that the existing bylaws provide for the sergeant at arms to ask persons who are disrupting meeting to step outside so that concerns can be discussed and solutions reached (and chair could ask for brief recess, or talk with the person after the meeting, etc.) Janice noted that sergeant at arms aren’t present for committee meetings, so this would only be realistic for Board meetings. The motion was adopted.

b. *Tabled Issue Regarding Computers in RAB Office*: It was pointed out that the RAB had failed to take up the tabled item from last month’s discussion—i.e., what would be the appropriate action to be taken regarding matters that were discussed at the September Joint Committee meeting on computer passwords being changed, etc. in RAB office. Mac noted that he had prepared a summary for Val of what the RAB bylaw provisions are regarding options for termination of a RAB member or other disciplinary action, and this was circulated in advance of the meeting. For termination, the bylaws require the issuance of a notice at least 7 days in advance of a meeting to discuss the issue which states the reasons for the action; the Board would need to have decided to send such a notice, although the Board would only need to decide that there was enough to warrant the meeting (and not to have decided the matter prior to the meeting). If the person facing proposed termination wanted to, he/she could request in writing, at least 2 days in advance of the meeting in a notice given to the chairs, a hearing/informal review. If such a notice was received, the Board would NOT vote on the proposed termination at that meeting, but would pick people to serve on the committee. The people picked would need to be people who were neutral and weren’t involved in the particular issue (i.e., neither those pushing for the termination nor those defending against it). The committee would gather information and interview all involved and would report back to the Board with recommendations. It would then be up to the Board to decide what action to take. If no hearing was requested, the Board would vote at the original meeting time. Mac noted that the bylaws were silent about other types of disciplinary action, but there were examples of lesser action (such as barring people from going to RAB-funded events or running for officer if they hadn’t attended a conference without good cause or didn’t account for funds); it was likely that if such lesser action was taken, it could be done simply at a meeting without the extra steps required by the bylaws if termination was considered.

Richard noted that Betty Wade had sent an e-mail letter requesting David’s termination about an hour before the meeting; some members had seen that e-mail, and some had not (and some do not have e-mail). He moved, and it was seconded, that this letter serve as the basis for the Board to issue a notice of proposed termination, with the 7-day notice & opportunity to request a hearing, and the record would reflect that no judgment had been made yet on the merits of the allegations. Concetta said that she thought Betty’s letter needed to be revised, as it didn’t reflect all the reasons why removal should be considered. Given both the limited time and that Betty couldn’t attend the meeting, it was acknowledged Concetta could put something in writing and it too could be forwarded, but with the understanding that this wasn’t anything seen by the Board at the Oct. 5th meeting. Val agreed to do a cover letter that would explain this, and particularly how this was being done in the context of the bylaws; other information would include the bylaw provisions and Mac’s summary, as well as the portion of the Joint Committee notes that concerned the computer, etc. discussion. It was voted to do this. Meeting was then adjourned.