ST. LOUIS OFFICE FOR Developmental Disability Resources

St. Louis Office for Developmental Disability Resources
Minutes of the Housing Committee
October 14, 2026

Committee Members Present:
Mike Fitzgerald - Committee Chair
Bill Siedhoff
Pat Brennan
Nina Murphy
Selena Washington

Staff Members Present:
Shaelene Plank, Executive Director
Kelly Head, Executive Assistant
Nate Head, Director of Agency & Community Relations

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1. **Call Meeting to Order**
    a. **The meeting was called to order by Shaelene Plank, Executive Director 10:02am**

2. **Committee Charge and Board Direction**
    a. Shaelene Plank reviewed the strategic planning process that led to the creation of the Ad Hoc Housing Committee.
        - The committee was established to address the Board's housing priority and to develop recommendations for the use of approximately $830,000 in restricted housing funds.
            - The Board previously determined that restricted housing funds should be used for one-time, Board-approved purposes.
            - Potential uses will be evaluated based on housing models, financial and operational risks, scalability, and partnership opportunities before recommendations are made to the full board.
        - The committee's primary objective is to ensure the housing funds are expended, or a clear spending plan is in place, by the end of 2027.
        - The Board reaffirmed that DDR's role is to serve as an advocate, convener, and strategic funder, not a housing operator.
        - The Board also acknowledged that comparable surpluses are unlikely to recur and emphasized the need to spend the restricted housing funds conscientiously in ways that create a lasting impact.
    b. The committee discussed anticipated meeting frequency and agreed that regular meetings will be necessary through the end of 2027 to accomplish its goals.
    c. Committee Chair Decision
        - Mike Fitzgerald volunteered to serve as Chair of the Ad Hoc Housing Committee and was accepted by consensus.

3. **Current Housing Context and Resources**
    a. Nate Head reviewed current housing needs and barriers affecting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in the City of St. Louis. Challenges discussed included:
        - Limited availability of affordable and accessible housing.
        - Location and neighborhood considerations.
        - Accessibility requirements, including ramps and multiple accessible exits.

- Housing that meets Department of Mental Health (DMH) waiver standards.
- Adequate accommodations for support staff and caregivers.
- The need for housing options that allow individuals to remain connected to services and community supports.

b. Review of Prior Housing Investments
   - Nate provided an overview of DDR's recent housing-related investments, including:
     - Partnership with Promise Community Homes to secure and renovate a duplex meeting DMH standards.
     - Property preservation funding for Horizon Housing properties.
     - Renovation and development support for Hyde Park apartments.
     - Funding support for Tabernacle Community Development Corporation's accessible housing project.
     - Approval of pre-development funding for a tiny home project that ultimately did not proceed due to lack of additional funding.

c. Current Opportunities and Partnerships
   - Nate summarized conversations and partnerships developed over the past several years.
   - Committee members requested a resource document comparing housing models, developers, and providers to assist with future discussions and decision-making.
     - A request was made specifically for a spreadsheet that would allow the committee to compare housing strategies, target populations, and outcomes.
       a. Nate Head will compile a document for the committee.
   - Nina shared information about the Treasure House housing model in Arizona and will reconnect with the organization for additional information.

4. Housing Strategies for Committee Exploration

a. The committee discussed several potential housing models and areas for further exploration, including:
   - Fredericktown "Meadows" Development
     - Committee members reviewed and discussed the Meadows development in Fredericktown, a mixed-income and mixed-disability housing community developed through partnerships involving Missouri Inclusive Housing. The project prompted extensive discussion regarding:
       a. Long-term sustainability.
       b. Financial structure.
       c. Resident supports.
       d. Replicability within the City of St. Louis.
       e. Potential use of low-income housing tax credits
     - Several members expressed interest in seeing this model firsthand before making future recommendations.
   - Pocket Communities and Planned Developments
     - Nina and Shaelene shared materials outlining a pocket community concept previously explored by UCP Heartland under former UCP Executive Director.
     - The committee discussed models that create intentional communities combining affordable housing, housing for individuals with disabilities, community gathering spaces, and opportunities for peer support. The committee expressed significant interest in housing developments that promote inclusion while avoiding isolation.

- Committee members expressed strong interest in the pocket community model because it could provide individuals with disabilities a built-in support network while allowing them to live in an integrated neighborhood.
    a. Members discussed whether the concept could be revisited by UCP Heartland or adapted by another provider or developer, potentially using available land within the City of St. Louis.
    b. The committee identified the concept as one of the housing strategies it would like to explore further.

b. Community Need
- Committee members emphasized the urgency of addressing housing needs for aging caregivers and adults with IDD who require varying levels of support.
- Discussion focused on creating opportunities that allow individuals to live in integrated community settings while receiving appropriate support and avoiding institutional placements.
- Shaelene will set up a tour of Fredericktown "Meadows" Development

5. Governance Guardrails and Evaluation Criteria

a. The committee discussed considerations that should guide future funding recommendations, including:
- Alignment with the needs of individuals with IDD.
- Maximizing community impact and outcomes.
- Leveraging outside capital and funding sources.
- Partner capacity and experience.
- Long-term affordability and sustainability.
- Risk management.
- Maintaining DDR's role as funder, advocate, and convener rather than operator.

b. Members agreed that a formal scoring and evaluation tool should be developed to assess future proposals consistently.

6. Summary of Decisions and Next Steps

a. The committee summarized its next steps and identified the following priorities:
- Develop a spreadsheet outlining potential housing options, organizations previously consulted, and the services or development models each organization provides.
- Identify possible dates for a site visit to the Fredericktown development and arrange a presentation for committee members.
- Follow up with Cynthia Duffe and other community partners that can share relevant information, lessons learned, and experience working with the City of St. Louis.
- Notify current and prospective partners that the committee is willing to consider presentations on housing projects that could be undertaken in the near future.
- Develop guidelines for the timing and conditions under which restricted housing funds may be released.
    - The committee discussed the need to determine appropriate funding milestones, such as whether funds should be released during pre-development, at the start of construction, after specific construction milestones, or upon project completion.
    - Members also noted the financial risks associated with pre-development funding, including the possibility that a project may not secure necessary approvals or additional financing.

- The committee agreed that future funding decisions should consider a project's financial stability, readiness, and likelihood of successful completion.

- Additional City and Development Outreach
  - The committee discussed other city government and development professionals who may provide relevant guidance.
    a. Bill recommended reconnecting with the St. Louis Development Corporation (SLDC), including staff with experience in land reutilization and development projects.
       i. He noted that SLDC has new personnel who may offer useful perspectives and suggested reaching out to Steve Westbrooks, with whom DDR had previously met during his time at IFF.
       ii. Bill also recommended contacting Don Roe, the City's longtime planning director. Although Don is retiring, Bill noted that he has extensive knowledge of City government, planning, and development processes, as well as connections to the Mayor's Office.
  - The committee agreed that these conversations could provide valuable information about available land, City development requirements, partnership opportunities, and lessons learned.
  - Members also discussed completing the Fredericktown site visit and presentation before reengaging some City partners, as the visit may help the committee clarify which housing models and development opportunities it wishes to pursue.

7. Announcements

a. Selena announced that the Starkloff Disability Institute will host its Universal Design Summit from November 18–20 at Saint Louis University's Busch Student Center. The summit will feature workshops addressing universal design, housing, home modifications, accessibility, and inclusive environments.

b. Starkloff Disability Institute has provided 50 complimentary admissions for community partners. Committee members and other interested individuals within the organization were encouraged to attend some or all of the summit's workshops.
   - Selena shared the registration link: *https://starkloff.org/universal-design-summit/*
   - She will share the conference agenda with Board members when available.

8. Next Meeting: Plan for 1st week in December – December 1st– 3PM

***9.* Call for motion to adjourn – Committee Chair Mike Fitzgerald adjourned the meeting at 10:58am**



Sarah Sims, Secretary

11/19/26

Date Approved