

Austin Housing Finance Corporation Meeting Transcript – 05/07/2020

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>> Mayor Adler: on May 7th at 3:03, we're going to convene the meeting of the Austin housing finance corporation. Everyone, all the directors are present. Does staff want to take us through our agenda?

>> Sure. This is Mandy de mayo, Austin housing finance corporation. We have six items on today's agenda which I will offer for consent. I will briefly run through them. Item number one is previous March and April ninth board

[3:04:35 PM]

meeting, meeting minutes. Item number two is authorizing the execution of a loan agreement with dma development for 2 million --

[background].

>> Mayor Adler: I think someone might have their phone on. Please proceed.

>> Okay. Item number two is a two-million-dollar loan agreement with dma development for a senior hoing development in district 6 to be known as Arbor park. Item number three is a loan agreement with Austin habitat for humanity for 1.053 million, persimmon at meadow lake. That is located in district 2. Item number four is authorizing the execution of a loan agreement with ascension day residence

[3:05:36 PM]

\$2.5 million for a cooperative housing community to be known as north Lamar mobile home park. That is located in district 4. Item number 5 is an approximate 1.4-million-dollar loan development for a

housing development to be located in district 7 known as Talia homes at lamp post. And item number six is the authorization to move forward with a loan agreement with foundation communities for 2.95 million for a multi-family rental development to be known as the Marietta. And that is located in district 6. I offer these on consent, and I'm happy to answer any questions. And in addition, should there be any questions we cannot answer, we do have folks on the line representing all of these developers.

>> Mayor Adler: Thank you. Is there a motion to approve the consent? Councilmember Casar makes the motion. Is there a second?

>> Pool: I'll second.

>> Mayor Adler: Councilmember pool seconds. And again, I can now see

[3:06:37 PM]

everybody on the -- when you raise your hands. Discussion on the consent agenda? Councilmember Casar, then councilmember Renteria.

>> Casar: Mayor, I've got those videos and stuff to show, and so if councilmember Renteria has a question or wants to handle that, I'll defer to him first.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Councilmember Renteria?

>> Renteria: Yes. I want to have a short comment. I really want to [inaudible]

>> Mayor Adler: Can't hear you, Pio. Can you get closer to the mic.

>> Renteria: Can you hear me now?

>> Mayor Adler: Much better, thank you.

>> Renteria: I want to thank the housing staff for what they brought to us today. You know, normally you will see a lot of district 1 and district 2 in these type of housing programs, but I really appreciate that, you know, it's being scattered around town now. There are all these different districts and I really want to say just thank you.

[3:07:39 PM]

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. Thank you. Any other comments?

>> Casar: Thank you. I really want to thank staff. I have a list of thank you years related to the item in district 4 and then the videos that were going to get played by the speakers during the citizen communication. But I really want to thank the housing staff and everybody involved in this. I really want to thank everybody on the keep Austin affordable team that got the bonds passed to get us here. And for the north Lamar mobile home community from district 4. I want to thank Basta, all the organizers

who made it happen. There are so many that it took, gabby, Alejandra, Andy, drew, Sophie, the UT law team, Frances Martinez that worked on this, all the interpreters that have been working on this for years, Susana, Howard. I want to thank Braden, Sophie and Stephanie on my team. Some of you have been

[3:08:40 PM]

working on this for over five years with me to get us to this point and show Shana and Basta for everything you've done for that entire organization and Robert Doggett for filing the initial lawsuit that got the north Lamar community saved and to this point where we can save in perpetuity. I want to thank the current and past boards of arnel. I want to thank margarita Sanchez, [listing names]. Jennifer, Felix and past boards Diane, Jessica,

[listing names]. So mayor, if you'll indulge me for a second, I think we want to play those two videos, that video that got sent over to us.

>> Mayor Adler: Sounds good, if staff could play those videos.

[3:09:47 PM]

>> Roberto Sanchez [speaking Spanish].

[3:10:53 PM]

>> Hello, my name is Felix and I live here at north Lamar trailer park. I just want to say thanks for the money that y'all provided for the community here. We truly appreciate it. And I'd like to introduce my sister's kids. She's not here, she's working and one of her older kids is not here.

>> All right. He's the second oldest, Stephan. And he's the third, juanita. And jayle is the youngest, and these are our two dogs. We live in lot 71. I've been living here for eight years, I think, maybe a little more. We also have two birds. But, you know, I just want to say thanks for the help.

[3:11:55 PM]

We truly appreciate it.

>> Hello. My name is Jennifer Salazar and I am the secretary here at arnl. I have lived in this community for about 17 years. And I wanted to make this video just to say thank you to the city of Austin for helping us with this grant, with this money that is going to be put to work purchasing our own community. We feel very grateful that we have been able to have the support of Mr. Greg Casar. He has always been here to help us and he's very involved with us as a community. So I just want to say thank you and that we hope that you will continue to help communities like ours. Thank you.

[3:14:12 PM]

>> Thank you, city council, for all your help and support. Thank you so much.

>> Casar: Mayor, if you'll indulge me for some last comments here. This is a really important vote for my district. It's something I've been working on for many years and I think it's an important moment for all of us. So I've reflected on it some and when we think of investing bond dollars and big city dollars, we used to thinking of big civic projects, bridges, courthouses, airports, and that's one kind of civic infrastructure. That's one important piece of city legacy, but we leave a different kind of legacy when we invest public dollars in working people like this. We're permanently making Austin better by having

[3:15:14 PM]

saved this community, and they couldn't do it without what the city is stepping up to do today. For decades working class and working poor people have grown newspaper this community. I know some of our own Austin firefighters that grew up here. I know some of our own civil rights champions and nurses and educators that have grown up here in this place that we're voting to invest in today. It's a hub not just for the people who live there, but from people all around that go there for pasadas or go there for children's parties. It's just an amazing place and it was a place that was under threat in 2015 when some outside investors purchased it and started raising the price of living there against lease terms, and that's when Texas Rio grande legal aid sued, residents came together and they got a chance to stay. And I was looking back at those old articles and the article right after that lawsuit was won, Amy camp at the Austin chronicle wrote, the lawsuit may keep people in their homes until November of 2015, but what

[3:16:15 PM]

then? We've been trying to answer that question for years. How do we not just have these places wiped out that are affordable, near the central center of our facility. And this council has come together in amazing ways on so many issues and so many of those things have helped us get to this point. We helped fund Texas Rio grande legal aid and helped support the creation of Basta so that tenants can have advocacy that they need all over the city. We brought in partners like rock and chia and brought in

organizations and brought them here and I'm grateful for their participation in this. We rezoned mobile home properties from BAC to mobile homes so they wouldn't have to get developed into something else and we passed the largest affordable housing bond ever so far in this state. And whenever I got tired of making hundreds of phone calls and I was going to put down the phone for the night to pass that bond, I envisioned this vote.

[3:17:18 PM]

I envisioned a vote where I could then after voting for it run off the dais and hug every single person that had done so much to save this community. I didn't envision that we would be voting this way, but I should have known that even a global disastrous pandemic could not stop these residents from having achieved their goals. And these organizers who have done so much. So this vote will make sure that this community can actually purchase their land, these homeowners can stay and run it as a cooperative run by working people and staying affordable for good. And it's just a really powerful and special part of legacy of what this council has been able to do by working together. So thank you. I also directly want to talk to those folks at north Lamar.

[Speaking Spanish].

[3:18:33 PM]

>> Garza: Virtual hug.

>> Casar: Virtual hugs.

>> Tovo: I also wanted to just thank you, Casar, for your leadership. And I've forgotten who did this earlier, but hats off to you and advocates and all of the residents who have worked together on this. This is a huge deal.

>> Casar: Thank you, councilmember.

>> Mayor Adler: Okay. So on the consent, let's take the vote. Those in favor of this please raise your hands. Those opposed? The consent agenda passes unanimously. Those are all the items we have on our agenda here, so at 3:19 we're going to adjourn the remote meeting of the Austin housing finance corporation.