

STAFF REPORT
Lancaster Housing Authority

HA NB 1
6/26/12
MVB

Date: June 26, 2012

To: Chairperson Kit Yee Szeto and Housing Authority Members

From: Elizabeth Brubaker, Housing & Neighborhood Revitalization Director

Subject: **Approve Lease Agreements between the Lancaster Housing Authority and Central Christian Church, Grace Chapel Church, Living Stone Cathedral of Worship Church, Antelope Valley Christian Church, Total Deliverence Church and Lancaster First Assembly Church to Promote Public Health, Public Services, Safe and Sanitary Housing Pursuant to Neighborhood Revitalization Plans**

Recommendation:

Adopt **Resolution No. HA 06-12**, approving the lease agreements between the Lancaster Housing Authority and Central Christian Church, Grace Chapel Church, Living Stone Cathedral of Worship Church, Antelope Valley Christian Church, Total Deliverence Church and Lancaster First Assembly Church.

Fiscal Impact:

Revenue from the lease agreements will be deposited into Account Number 306-3605-400.

Background:

In December 2004 the Lancaster Redevelopment Agency hired a consultant to do a Housing Needs Assessment to collect and analyze different types of data to assist in identifying areas in need of housing and other revitalization services, as well as those neighborhoods with the most potential for improvement. Using existing sources, data related to housing, economic and social environments of the City was obtained. The data was graphically depicted using Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Analysis of the data resulted in the identification of several primary and secondary focus neighborhoods, as well as neighborhoods of interest for further study.

The second phase of the Housing Needs Assessment involved the application of this data to create neighborhood revitalization plans to allow Agency staff to implement housing programs and projects to preserve and maintain affordable, decent, and safe and sanitary housing, improve the aesthetics of the neighborhoods, redevelop challenged housing, reduce crime, improve stability and promote wellness in the existing neighborhoods throughout the city of Lancaster.

On August 14, 2007, the Agency Board approved the implementation of the Neighborhood Foreclosure Preservation Home Ownership Program (the "Program") citywide. The goal of the

Program is to reclaim vacant, abandoned properties for affordable housing, to strengthen blocks and neighborhoods by eliminating the blighting effects of vacant properties, reduce crime, improve stability, and promote wellness in existing neighborhoods.

At the request of the City, a consortium of churches involved in the Neighborhood Impact program took on the challenge of trying to assist in reversing declining conditions in the primary and secondary neighborhoods. The program's initial goal was to beautify and strengthen the neighborhood by offering local residents assistance in making improvements to the property who otherwise could not physically or financially afford the required improvements on their own.

As program participation grew, Neighborhood Impact expanded the range of services offered to not only deal with property improvements, maintenance and repairs, but they also began working with the local schools to encourage neighborhood commitment to children and education and to focus on servicing residents wherever possible by improving the general conditions of the neighborhood through social service programs.

In early 2009, members affiliated with the Neighborhood Impact program approached the Agency about the potential for using one of the recently rehabilitated foreclosure homes as a way to establish a more permanent centralized presence within the neighborhoods. A cooperative partnership with the Agency would support the work program already started by Neighborhood Impact and would also help promote the City's interest of working with civic groups to connect with residents and local organizations to encourage positive changes within the neighborhoods.

The term of the original License Agreement was for a period of one year with the ability to extend the Agreement in monthly increments upon administrative approval. The Licensee agreed to pay the Agency consideration for the use and occupancy of the property in the amount of two hundred fifty dollars per month. The Agency entered into the original License Agreements with various local churches to provide a trial period to find out whether the Neighborhood Impact Homes would be viable within the neighborhoods and if the terms of the License Agreement would work with this type of project before entering into a more permanent lease agreement. The Neighborhood Impact Homes have been a great success in the neighborhoods. During the term of the original License Agreement, which was between the Lancaster Redevelopment Agency and the various churches, Redevelopment Agencies were eliminated through State legislation. On January 24, 2012, the Lancaster City Council, adopted Resolution 12-08 assigning the housing functions of the former Lancaster Redevelopment Agency to the Lancaster Housing Authority and made certain findings in connection therewith.

The continuation of Neighborhood Impact's service has been positive among residents and is consistent with the Housing Authority's programs for neighborhood revitalization. Collaborating with responsible civic groups and agencies through programs like Neighborhood Impact sends a strong message promoting good welfare among residents and a strong sense of community. By encouraging these types of partnerships, there are greater opportunities to make positive change with less liability and impact on existing resources, not only improving the neighborhood, but also creating a better quality of life for local residents.

At this time, Central Christian Church, Grace Chapel Church, Living Stone Cathedral of Worship Church, Antelope Valley Christian Church, Total Deliverance Church, Lancaster First Assembly Church and the Lancaster Housing Authority desire to continue their relationship through a more secure “long-term” commitment. The Authority and consortium of churches each have mutual interest and benefit in supporting the continued operation of the designated home within the primary and secondary neighborhoods and now seek Authority approval to extend the term of the Agreement. All terms and conditions of the original Agreement would remain the same except for the extension of time, which will include a one (1) year extension from the date of the Authority’s approval with one-year renewals upon written consent of the Director of Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization Department.

Attachments:

Listing of Properties

Resolution No. HA 06-12