ATTENDED: [23]

The meeting was called to order at 3:15.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Don Summerfield led a discussion of issues faced by CHA residents who are persons with disabilities. Residents may petition Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) for policy changes as well as for Reasonable Accommodation (RA). CHA does no outreach on this. Few residents know what a RA is or are afraid to ask for one.

Example of snow removal, The lease states that all handicap ramps must be clear of snow at all times. City ordinance requires daytime snow removal within 12 hours. Snow falling at night must be removed by 1 PM next day. Jefferson Park management refuses to remove snow. Roosevelt Towers management thinks they don’t have to comply with ordinances. DPW—Public Works—complaint number is 617-349-4903. There aren’t enough lawyers to help so all the more important that ACT become informed and involved.

CHA ignores State Attorney General’s ADA requirements, doesn’t refuse compliance but uses delays. January 20 is Legal Services lobbying day at the State House. Besides CASLS—Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services—other legal aid places include: Cambridge Community Legal Services (West Street), Harvard Legal Aid, Disabilities Law Center (Boston). ACLU—Civil Liberties Union—can help with civil rights issues (under ADA—Americans with Disabilities Act), CHA has to check in with ACT during 2010 to fulfill HUD ADA requirements, an opportunity for ACT to raise ADA issues.

SRO (Single Room Occupancy)

Hasson Rashid led a discussion of issues faced by CHA residents who live in SRO homes. Every YMCA resident gets a handbook. [A copy was passed around. Also a 2006 Mass Union (MUPHT) booklet, “Our Homes, Our Communities.”] YMCA and Caritas Communities signed a contract for repair and rehab of the 124-unit facility. Caritas negotiated agreement as “service provider,” they manage some units. Some are CHA, some Cambridge Multi-Service Center, some private, others subsidized by CHA—six different programs. YMCA is planning to bring in LIHTC—Low Income Housing Tax Credit—investors. Caritas went to Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust Fund (CAHTF), loan not yet granted. ACT should have a voice in CAHTF decisions. YMCA badly needs repairs, but they aren’t consulting the residents. We will form an SRO subcommittee. Will the continued financial crash reach nonprofits? Many agencies involved, understanding the organizational structure is the first step. Check the Licensing Comm to see how YMCA is licensed.

NOVEMBER BOARD MINUTES

Some corrections were offered but some felt they had not had time to read the minutes. Suggestion that recording secretaries make tapes for later transcription, and that the Board use a standard format for minutes. Transcription is difficult and takes a long time. The bylaws state that meetings may be taped at the discretion of the chairs.

A number of comments were made that did not concern the November minutes. Mention that since the last Board meeting the CHA decided without Tenant Council input that space in the former health center at Jefferson Park will be a police “reporting station.”

MOTION: DS to accept the November minutes, second by JW(1) MOTION FAILS 9 –8 – 1

MOTION: CAPZ to vote on acceptance of November minutes at January Board meeting, second by JW(2) MOTION PASSES 13 –2 – 3
REMOVAL OF ELECTED MEMBERS OF BOARD

The Chair read from the bylaws concerning removal of elected Board members for cause. One Board member has been absent since the first meeting. Another has never attended a Board meeting. They have not responded to repeated efforts to contact them. Members IP and ND will be removed at the January meeting unless they have responded by that time with reasons acceptable to the Board.

CHA BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS VACANCY

Councilor Craig Kelley informed us that the City Manager (CM) has placed two CHA BOC appointments on his agenda for Monday. One seat was vacant over two years. The CM reappointed Gerard Clark and appointed Anthony Pini to fill the Labor seat. ACT has urged that a tenant fill the vacancy. Law: CM with city council approval appoints 4 members, the State appoints one. One must be from organized labor, one a public housing resident. Jim Stockard is the state appointee. Clark—a law professor—has long been the labor rep. Jackie Adams is the tenant rep. As many of us as possible should go to city council Monday. Lengthy discussion of this. Does ACT have leverage to change the decision? Would we want to? Should we go without knowing what we are going to say and how we are going to get a different result?

MOTION: ST to attend city council to register protest about the appointments. Second by CAPZ. MOTION PASSES 15 - 0 - 3

MOTION: JW(2). to ask that city council support collaboration with the board of existing officially recognized tenant association in the selection of a candidate to fill the existing vacancy on the C.H.A. B.O.C. Second: KW. MOTION PASSES 11 - 4 - 3

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) CAPZ: Committee has discussed and will continue to come up with understanding and positions on the MTW report and plans.

Finance Committee LV: Our finances are not in our control right now. Until we finish with the MOU we won't have a real budget. Committee will be meeting to discuss policies and procedures. If ACT needs money we go to CHA or MUPHT. MOU committee needs a global budget for the negotiations with CHA

Memorandum of Understanding Committee (MOU) CAPZ: MOU's next meeting is set for Jan 12 at Manning Terrace Room [NOTE: this was later reset for December 29]. Greg Russ originally had a different idea about workshops before negotiations begin, now has switched to more agreeable position. MOU committee meetings are open to all, show up if you want to be involved.

Tenants Assistance and Outreach Committee (A&O) BC: Voucher and Tenant Council subcommittees are permanent. The Tenant Union subcommittee plans to contact activists and officers in the developments and try to bring them together to exchange ideas and information. CEOC and CHA Tenant Liaison like the idea. KW Voucher subcommittee met and decided to start out by identifying and contacting people who live in some of the larger private buildings

Meeting adjourned at 5:30.