

**RANGE READINESS HOUSING TEAM**

January 6, 2009

St. Louis County Richard Hansen Maintenance Garage, Duluth

**Meeting Summary**

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Mary Ives welcomed everyone and asked Randy Lasky to provide an overview of the results of the last meeting. Randy highlighted the following items covered and actions taken in November:

- Heard a presentation by Dick Walsh, Grants Specialist with Iron Range Resources on the last round of the Community Infrastructure Grants approved by the Board and he highlighted the projects the Expeditor Team will need to work with to position for implementation this spring/summer. He also covered the expected timing of the next funding cycle and addressed a number of questions about criteria for selection, openness toward rental project funding and leveraging housing rehab projects, and covered the demolition program and pipeline of future projects. Dick was invited to join the group as an ongoing member of the Work Team.
- The subcommittee responsible for planning the agenda and logistics for a series of sub-regional stakeholder meetings reported on an approach involving three meetings with dates planned for the later part of January. They described the proposed objectives and outcomes. Details were discussed, additional ideas shared and ARDC agreed to further develop input and estimate costs to implement the approach. It was agreed to reconvene in early January to further plan and coordinate roles and responsibilities.
- Chair Mary Ives commented on the upcoming RRI Strategy Team meeting and the items she will be reporting on.
- The Expeditor Team contract was extended with funds remaining in the first year budget. It was agreed we would take up this topic at the early January meeting.
- Members agreed to reconvene on January 6<sup>th</sup> and detailed an agenda focused on the sub-regional meeting planning, an assessment of the 2008 work plan and 2009 funding and scope of work finalization and other related topics.

**II. Agenda Review and Changes**

Chair Ives reviewed the proposed agenda and then added a discussion of the Itasca County Comprehensive Planning effort. No other changes were made and the agenda was accepted.

**III. Sub-Regional Stakeholder Meetings – Final Plans and Implementation Responsibilities**

ARDC staff and sub-committee members shared a draft agenda for the work sessions and briefed the team on the status of work on the invitations, final meeting logistics and remaining tasks to be finalized and key assignments made. The sessions will be held from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm on January 27 in Grand Rapids, the 28<sup>th</sup> in Hibbing and the 29<sup>th</sup> in Virginia. All locations have meeting rooms reserved and can accommodate upwards of 80 people. Lunch will be provided. Mailings have gone out to 275 stakeholders following the criteria developed at the November meeting. The objectives and expected outcomes were revisited and finalized, and each part of the agenda was reviewed, discussed, finalized and assignments completed. Facilitators will be needed to assist with small groups of communities and additional supporting information including maps

and fact sheets will need to be prepared. A news release will be prepared and reviewed with Mary Ives and IRR will handle a release to the media a week in advance of the first event. We will attempt to get both newspaper and TV coverage. A locally focused resource panel was organized to highlight case study projects by various types consistent with key sub-regional goals and needs. Key assignments were set and handouts will be developed on projects presented. We agreed to be consistent with the terminology being used and will explain that usage at the sessions. Equipment and onsite logistics will be coordinated by ARDC. Materials will be provided to ARDC and placed in RRI folders to be provided by the RRI Communications Team. We plan to invite and identify all agency and organization representatives attending each session and name tags will be available for each session. Ellen Pillsbury will continue to be the key contact and coordinator for the events. Any questions and materials should be directed to her. Final assignments were reviewed and set.

#### **IV. MOU Status Report**

Chair Mary Ives called on Andy Hubley to report and clarify the status of the Memorandum of Understanding to be executed by all key partners involved in this housing initiative. Andy reported that the MOU has been signed by everyone and would be sent out to all participants. The MOU was established to cover both 2008 and 2009.

#### **V. Work Plan and Funding 2008 and 2009**

Steve Griesert provided a handout from the Expeditor Team which highlighted current and future activities to address housing needs across the Iron Range. The focus is in three priority areas including new owner occupied workforce goals, new workforce rental unit goals, single family housing rehab goals and multi-family rehab goals. Steve walked through the work plan and key activities addressing questions and detailing expected outcomes. Members discussed the federal stimulus package and possible implications for our projects as well as timelines. Following considerable discussion it was agreed that we would revisit the accomplishments and work plan to date, assess the proposed 2009 work plan after the sub-regional work sessions and determine our budget needs at our next meeting. It was also agreed to extend the contract with the Expeditor Team until March 15<sup>th</sup> to provide more time to assess 2009 work plan and budget needs and commitments. We may need to seek additional funding support to accomplish our objectives.

#### **VI. Information Resource Matrix Update**

Andy Hubley and Ellen Pillsbury reported that the information matrix was updated and is online at ARDC Regional Planning website. It was suggested that the information be placed or prominently linked with the Range Readiness web site. Members were encouraged to visit the site and provide any feedback or additional information to fill any gaps.

#### **VII. Housing Team Chair Terms**

Chair Mary Ives brought up the notion of considering another person to chair the Work Team. Members expressed their support for Mary's capable efforts and pointed out that she was appointed by the IRR Commissioner to lead this team. She asked members to think about it.

#### **VIII. Other Business**

Two topics were brought up for discussion including the Itasca County – Community Comprehensive Planning Project and a request by NAHRO to identify projects in the pipeline.

## **A. Itasca County Community Planning**

Andy Hubley reported ARDC staff has met with four of five communities to be involved. They have limited project funding and will try to work through both a group and individual community planning approach to maximize resources and results. The group process will be a facilitated visioning process to build regional awareness and assess and coordinate opportunities as a group. They will then follow-up with individual communities based on this framework. They expect to complete the plans by mid May. The communities are Keewatin, Calumet, Bovey and Marble.

## **B. Projects in the Pipeline**

Tarry Edington received an email from NAHRO to provide a list of potential housing projects that would be in the development pipeline over the next 24 months. He asked if members were interested in assembling a regional list. Tarry will provide the email to all members and they will respond individually. Steve Griesert asked that those lists be made available to him when they are sent in to NAHRO.

## **IX. Next Meeting**

The following agenda items will be covered at our next meeting:

- Sub-regional meetings debriefing
- 2008 work progress (accomplished and remaining to be completed)
- 2009 Work Plan changes to the Expeditor Team proposed work plan
- Budget status, 2009 needs and sources and uses
- Sub-regional action plan - next steps to complete
- Other?

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 17<sup>th</sup> at this same location from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

## **X. Adjourn**

There being no other proposed business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:00pm