

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
HOUSING COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS**

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, November 5, 2025

MEETING LOCATION: Council Chambers, City Hall, 1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park, IL

CALL TO ORDER

At 6:30 p.m., Chairperson Fernandez Sykes called an on-site meeting of the Highland Park Housing Commission, Peers Housing Association, Ravinia Housing Association, and the Sunset Woods Association to order. Each of the Commissioners also serves as Directors of each of the Housing Associations. Public comments may be emailed to city@hpil.com or phoned into at 847.432.0867. The City web site is www.cityhpil.com. Staff was asked to call the roll.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Fernandez Sykes; Commissioners Beasley, Bernstein, Farris, Gonzalez, Rosen, & Shapiro Kopin

Councilmember Present: Tapia

Student Council Present: Posner

Staff declared that a quorum was present.

Staff Present: Coleman, Markle

Guests Present: Irina Leykin, Regional Property Manager/ERES
Rob Anthony, President/CPAH

Others Present: Gale Cerabona, Recorder

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

There was no Business from the Public.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting of the Housing Commission – October 8, 2025

Commissioner Gonzalez moved to approve the October 8, 2025, regular meeting minutes. Commissioner Bernstein seconded the motion.

On a voice vote:

Voting Yea: Chairperson Fernandez Sykes; Commissioners Bernstein, Farris, Gonzalez, Rosen,
& Shapiro Kopin

Voting Nay: None

Chairperson Fernandez Sykes declared that the motion passed unanimously.

Councilmember Tapia arrived at 6:32 p.m.

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SCHEDULED BUSINESS

1. Items for Omnibus Vote Consideration

- Payment of Invoices
- Ratification of Payments

Senior Planner Coleman advised there is nothing outstanding.

2. Peers, Ravinia, Sunset Woods Associations, & Housing Trust Fund

- Consideration of ERES Management Report and Financials

Ms. Leykin addressed future capital improvement needs. Peers & Ravinia have the same owner, the City of Highland Park which Senior Planner Coleman confirmed. She explained Ravinia has two loans on the property. There are 19 units, and there would never be enough cash due Ravinia's inability to keep reserves. Any monies in the account go toward regular monthly expenses. Grounds need to be maintained, etc. The owners are responsible to fund repairs, improvements, etc.

Commissioner Beasley arrived at 6:36 p.m.

Ms. Leykin shared that roof replacements will be required in 2029. She summarized the HC needs to decide where to deposit the cash.

Commissioner Rosen said it would be helpful if the HC is aware of/understands its options.

Chairperson Fernandez Sykes asked, and Ms. Leykin said the reserve is depleted annually. Reimbursements need to happen. Rent revenue is enough to satisfy regular operations. For extenuating circumstances like pumps, etc., monies need to be found. Auditors have advised what is to be requested. She reiterated there is not enough of a cash surplus. A contribution has to be made to Ravinia Housing.

Commissioner Bernstein said an option is to borrow money from Peers and give it to Ravinia Housing. Ms. Leykin advised there would be no repayment.

Senior Planner Coleman said Staff will figure this out. Monies shouldn't be taken out of the Housing Trust Fund/HTF, as that fund creates affordable housing. He identified this is why Staff requested Ms. Leykin to provide a 5-year Capital Improvement Plan.

Commissioner Bernstein recalled Sunset Woods borrowed money in the past.

Commissioner Gonzalez asked that the options align with the law. Senior Planner Coleman will attempt to provide options to the HC.

Commissioner Rosen appreciates this being raised, as there is a fundamental need to keep these buildings running.

Ms. Leykin asked if the budget was approved. Senior Planner Coleman advised it is being reviewed.

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- Sunset Woods Financials

Senior Planner Coleman advised there is nothing outstanding.

- Housing Trust Fund (HTF) Financials

Senior Planner Coleman advised there is nothing outstanding.

- Other Association Business

Senior Planner Coleman advised there is nothing outstanding.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Peers & Ravinia updated 5-year Capital Improvement Plan

Discussion took place above.

2. Resolution Approving a CPAH Operating Grant Q3 Drawdown

Mr. Anthony said they are working on the completion of 3 single-family homes. Photos are in the packet. If anyone wishes to view these homes, he asked that Staff be advised, and a tour can be arranged.

Mr. Anthony announced that the townhome development on Deerfield Road closed with IDHA. A groundbreaking ceremony took place last week. He provided background and noted, the development is called the Betsy Lazar Place to honor this long-time Highland Park advocate.

Mr. Anthony advised, regarding inclusionary units, there are 780 households on the wait list.

Commissioner Rosen moved to approve the CPAH Operating Grant Q3 Drawdown. Commissioner Shapiro Kopin seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote

Voting Yea: Chairperson Fernandez Sykes; Commissioners Beasley, Bernstein, Farris, Gonzalez, Rosen, & Shapiro Kopin

Voting Nay: None

Chairperson Fernandez Sykes declared that the motion passed unanimously.

3. Sunset Woods Insurance Informative Item

Senior Planner Coleman referred to the document in the packet from Deputy Director Later which indicates, the City of Highland Park will not provide reimbursement for insurance costs to renters. Insurance broker contact names will be extended.

Commissioner Shapiro Kopin shared she was approached by the Sunset Woods' Board President. She stated the issue is affordability – not just the 14 units the City owns.

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Senior Planner Coleman explained there is often strife among residents at Sunset Woods. He stated the City does not interfere with rental units, claims, etc.

Commissioner Shapiro Kopin recalled the HC incurred an increase in insurance costs on the City's buildings, so when she heard there was an increase at Sunset Woods, she wasn't surprised.

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Next Housing Commission Meeting, Wednesday, December 3, 2025

The next HC Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 3, 2025.

It was asked, and Senior Planner Coleman advised that City Council approved a Preliminary PUD for the former Solo Cup site. Councilmember Tapia said everyone is excited about it. Developers should be encouraged to develop sites like this. He stated there are old buildings waiting to be purchased that would accommodate middle-income residents. Luxury buildings and large footprints can cloud diversity; trying to diversify the housing stock. With this site being developed, this could increase other development, foot traffic to businesses, etc.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Beasley moved to adjourn at 7:07 p.m. Commissioner Shapiro Kopin seconded the motion.

On a roll call vote

Voting Yea: Chairperson Fernandez Sykes; Commissioners Beasley, Bernstein, Farris, Gonzalez, Rosen,
& Shapiro Kopin

Voting Nay: None

Chairperson Fernandez Sykes declared that the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gale Cerabona
Recorder

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING ON OCTOBER 8, 2025, WERE APPROVED WITHOUT CORRECTIONS.