

Charlottesville Housing Authority Moves Away from "Troubled" Status

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February 2, 2010
C'ville Weekly

The Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority (CRHA) has moved away from its "troubled" status list, given by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for underperforming public housing agencies.

Randy Bickers, CRHA's executive director, told City Council last night that the agency scored 14 out of 30 possible points in 2008, with 18 points required for a passing grade. The score is given based on the state of buildings and housing units.

Bickers explained that a low score affected the eligibility of the agency to receive additional stimulus funds. In 2009, however, CRHA improved its performance and scored 21 points.

The year also marked a second important step for occupants of public housing: The Residents Bill of Rights was adopted by City Council at the end of 2008. The bill, crafted by the Public Housing Association of Residents (PHAR), is a guide to help the public housing redevelopment process and protect its residents. The master planning process for the redevelopment of the city's public housing sites began early in 2009.

In related news, City Council voted to move the new affordable housing goal to 15 percent over 15 years, up from 10 percent. The vote, however, is not legally binding, and councilors will look at funding sources in the near future.