

CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHARACTER HOUSING GRANTS PANEL

**Held in Committee Room No. 3, Civic Offices,
on Tuesday, 9 October 2007, commencing at 4.00 pm.**

- PRESENT:** Councillor Anna Crighton (Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board) (Chair) and Community Board members Jeremy Agar (Lyttelton/Mt Herbert), Faimeh Burke (Fendalton/Waimairi) (from 4.10 pm), Megan Evans (Shirley/Papanui), Bryan Morgan (Akaroa/Wairewa) and Megan Woods (Spreydon/Heathcote.)
- APOLOGIES:** Faimeh Burke apologised for lateness and an apology for absence was received from Carmen Hammond (Burwood/Pegasus Community Board.)
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Mike Theelen, Carolyn Ingles, Katie Smith and Peter Hines (Secretary.)

1 ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON:

Moved by Megan Evans, seconded by Megan Woods and carried unanimously: "That Councillor Anna Crighton chair this meeting of the Character Housing Grants Panel."

2 FEEDBACK ON THE 2006/2007 CHARACTER HOUSING MAINTENANCE GRANTS:

Katie Smith said that in 2006/2007, 63 applications had been referred to Community Boards, which had passed 43 on to the Grants Panel. One applicant withdrew and 42 grants were offered, totalling \$22,883. Of those, 24 applicants had completed the proposed work by the due date (1 June). 'Before and after' photographs were shown of the 24 properties where work had been completed.

Katie Smith reported the findings of a survey involving 35 of the 42 who had been offered grants in 2006/2007. Four applicants had finished the work on time but did not claim the grant, deciding instead to sell the property. Twenty-eight would recommend the Grants Scheme to others.

A few thought that the conditions (ie., re-paying the grant if the property was sold within five years and agreeing in writing not to apply for a Consent to demolish or remove the house for ten years) were too onerous, and some thought a grant of 10% was too small an inducement to accept such conditions.

ACTION:

3 CONSIDERATION OF APPLICATIONS FOR 2007/2008:

Twenty-eight applications had been received and Community Boards had recommended 26 for the Panel's consideration.

Applications were considered individually, with the outcomes shown below (unless otherwise indicated, the sum shown is 10% of the quote preferred by the owner. Local Community Board (abbreviated) is shown after the address.)

- 1 **16 Stratford Street, Fendalton** (F/W) - \$2,150.00.
- 2 **127 Merivale Lane, Merivale** (F/W) - \$3,622.37.
- 3 **2 Maidstone Road, Ilam** (F/W) - \$1,407.24.
- 4 **38 Charles Street, Waltham** (H/F) - \$1,138.67.
- 5 **110 Chester Street East, City** (H/F) - \$2,799.60.
- 6 **148 Tancred Street, Linwood** (H/F) - \$804.75.
- 7 **85 Nayland Street, Sumner** (H/F) - \$422.90.
- 8 **23 Havelock Street, Linwood** (H/F) - \$1,598.00 for painting and repairing the roof and exterior. The part of the application which related to double-glazing sash windows was rejected.
- 9 **136 England Street, Linwood** (H/F) – the owners' preferred quote was not identified and it was agreed that Katie Smith would discuss with the owners. The Panel granted 10% of whichever was the preferred quote, the sum in neither case to exceed \$1,263.00.
- 10 **5 Brockworth Place, Riccarton** (R/W) - \$1,420.30.
- 11 **58 Brockworth Place, Riccarton** (R/W) - \$586.78.
- 12 **84 Francis Avenue, St Albans** (S/P) - \$646.89.
- 13 **32 Courtenay Street, St Albans** (S/P) - \$1,314.44.
- 14 **396 Papanui Road, Papanui** (S/P) – after receiving confirmation that the House Insurance had been renewed to June 2008 - \$743.50.
- 15 **35 Forfar Street, St Albans** (S/P) - \$1,194.55. (NB: Megan Evans took no part in this decision, the owners being known to her.)
- 16 **102 Ranfurly Street, St Albans** (S/P) – the owner's preferred quote was for replacing slate roofing material with Gerard steel tiles. The Panel rejected that option as 'inappropriate and not representative of the age or architectural style of the house' (No 6 of the 'Selection Guidelines' in the Council Policy.) The Panel noted that the alternative quote was for re-roofing with Coloursteel Endura and felt this would be appropriate, since it was most likely that the original roof had been corrugated-iron. On that basis, the Panel approved a grant of \$1,557.50 if the alternative quote for re-roofing with Coloursteel Endura was accepted by the owner.
- 17 **130 Bishop Street, St Albans** (S/P) - \$1,686.70.
- 18 **26 Lindsay Street, St Albans** (S/P) - \$75.00.
- 19 **71 Spencer Street, Addington** (S/H) - \$1,456.62.
- 20 **84 Southampton Street, Beckenham** (S/H) - \$569.33.
- 21 **8 Whareora Terrace, Cashmere** (S/H) - \$1,058.50.

(list continued)

- 22 **22 Macmillan Avenue, Cashmere** (S/H) - 1,290.00.
23 **5 Hackthorne Road, Cashmere** (S/H) - \$1,126.53.
24 **197 Waimea Terrace, Beckenham** (S/H) - \$667.66.
25 **4 Randolph Terrace, Lyttelton** (L/MH) - \$1,665.00,
26 **36 Canterbury Street, Lyttelton** (L/MH) – despite reminders, written quotes had not been received from the owner and the application could therefore not be considered. It was also noted that the application had included improvement to fencing, which could not be considered for a Grant (No 1 of the ‘Conditions of a Grant’ in the Council Policy.)

Having scrutinised and discussed all 26 applications on the table, the Panel unanimously confirmed its decisions, noting that a total of approximately \$32,500 had been allocated.

Letters would be prepared for signature by the Panel member representing the Community Board in whose area each property was located.

4 DISCUSSION OF THE POLICY ON CHARACTER HOUSING MAINTENANCE GRANTS:

It was noted that the Council Policy had been adopted on 4 May 2006 and provided that the review meeting of the Character Housing Grants Panel at the end of **year 4** shall report on the effectiveness of the programme and recommend whether the grant programme should be continued.

Whilst appreciating that the programme had been in operation for only two years and that any review would be premature, members of the Panel felt that it would nevertheless be valuable to have some of their thoughts, based on two years’ experience, recorded for future reference:

In the following bullet-points, references are to the Policy adopted by the Council on 4 May 2006, which is comprised of separate elements each of which is numbered from 1. To avoid confusion, the elements are identified here as follows:

(I) = Introduction; (SG) = Selection Guidelines; (CG) = Conditions of a Grant; (MA) = Management and Administration; and (MG) = Monitoring and Grant effectiveness.

- The intent of the Policy might be better identified by changing the name to ‘Character Housing **Incentive** Maintenance Grants’;
- SG1 states “The house was originally built as a single or two-family residence prior to 1945.” A number of former commercial buildings of character have now been converted to residences (eg several former shops in Lyttelton; and former corner-shops in various parts of Christchurch) and these ought to be included in the programme.

ACTION

- The various ‘qualities’ set out in SG4 were discussed. It was noted that (c) required “authentic use of materials and craftsmanship.” It was felt that “authentic use” was too high a test and that “sympathetic use” would be preferable. It was also felt that “materials and craftsmanship” should apply to both traditional and current materials and practise.
- CG1 excluding improvements to “fencing” might be amended so as to allow Grants for improving / restoring “original fences and character fences.” It was noted that some fences ‘mirror’ a feature or features of the house itself (eg a volcanic rock fence/wall and veranda posts mounted on plinths of the same material) and provided a visual tie-in which ought to be retained.
- CG1 also excluded “landscaping, garages or out-buildings” but the Panel had noted that a number of properties (especially in older suburbs with narrower sections), had a structure such as a car-port between the street and the house. The removal of such structures would enhance the character of the house (perhaps taking it back more to its original state) and improve the streetscape. A suggestion of what might therefore be eligible for a Grant was “Work to enhance the visual appearance of the principal building, eg the removal of a car-port located between the street and a house.”
- CG4 setting the grant limit at 10% might be reviewed from time to time to ensure that the level of Grants was seen as a real incentive.
- CG7 states “only one grant per property.” The Panel noted that some applications are for just one item of work (eg re-roofing) whilst others are for several (eg re-roofing, painting exterior, replacing spouting and downpipes.) Some of the multi-item work could not be completed in the timeframe established in the Policy. It was felt that the Policy should make it clear that “Staged projects over several years will be considered.” It was felt that this would indeed be an incentive for an owner to contemplate a virtual makeover of a rundown character property, rather than its replacement with a modern building.
- MA2 includes a requirement for the applicant to provide photographs “from the street and/or public area.” It was felt that in order to enable the Panel to better appreciate the property’s role in the streetscape, a further requirement should be “and a photograph taken from **across** the street.”
- The Panel felt the Council might be more pro-active in publicising the programme, perhaps by seeding news stories in local suburban newspapers and/or the Council’s ‘City Pages’ (with owners’ consent, of course.)

5 APPRECIATION:

The Panel expressed unanimously - and by acclamation - its appreciation of the knowledge, passion and drive which Councillor Crighton had brought to matters of heritage and character throughout her time on the Council and in other roles and in other spheres.

The meeting concluded at 5.45 pm.