



Town of West Boylston
140 Worcester Street, West Boylston, Massachusetts 01583

The Affordable Housing Trust Meeting Minutes January 24, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT: Robert J. Barrell, Marc Frieden, Anna Mary Kraemer, Patricia Halpin, Marsha Cairns

ALSO PRESENT: David Femia, Chris Berglund

The Chairperson opened the meeting at 6:02

The minutes of the August 9, 2021 were reviewed and approved on a motion by Ms. Kraemer and seconded by Mr. Frieden. This motion was approved by all present. The minutes of the November 22, 2021 were reviewed and approved with the following corrections: that Ms. Cairns be listed as a member of the Trust and that Mr. Beardsley's name be correctly spelled. With corrections these minutes were approved on a motion by Ms. Kraemer and seconded by Mr. Frieden and unanimously approved.

Mr. Berglund discussed the use of bonding Community Preservation Funds as a tool to finance affordable housing projects. Mr. Berglund outlined this process in a paper prepared for Trust members. There is \$400 million available for housing, however, most of the funding will be made available to rehab existing public housing and housing vouchers.

It was noted that the Trust must preserve the documents and information generated for and by the Trust. The members of the Trust believe that all the paper work which include property surveys, conservation and engineering studies copy should be accessible in hard copy or if possible, in a Microsoft account.

Ms. Halpin shall contact Mr. Hill to obtain a list of profit and nonprofit developers interested in creating affordable senior housing in town.

Mr. Barrell has been unsuccessful in contacting Mr. Beardsley with regard to possible development of Crescent Street. He will continue this effort. It was reported that Mr. Beardsley is presently very busy with his business. Mr. Beardsley may not have the capacity to build affordable units without the benefit of a consultant. A limiting factor is the number of units on the Crescent Street site which may render the project not feasible for lack of scale.

Ms. Halpin surveyed the sites that the Trust has examined for affordable housing, including the Pines, 87 Maple Street, the former animal hospital, and the municipal land adjacent to the jail. Regional housing is being encouraged by the State; however, it is thought that this would be unacceptable by the town. Present tenant selection regulations do not give town residents a first preference.

The Trust has two problems that prevent the Trust from successfully developing housing, the lack of an adequate funding source and the lack of a suitable site.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation has not made a site available. Perhaps the Trust should attempt to contact DCR again. The most viable site seems again to be 87 Maple Street, despite the wetland issues and resident objections. Some incomplete studies have been done for the Maple Street site. The Trust will revisit the 87 Maple Street site.

The Trust will contact the Mass Housing Partnership to seek technical assistance. Another source of assistance maybe the MetroWest Development Collaborative.

The next meeting of the Trust is scheduled for February 7, 2022 at 6 PM.

Mr. Barrell moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m. This motion was seconded by Mr. Frieden and approved by all.

Respectfully submitted:

Robert J. Barrell