**AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST**

Meeting Minutes

January 24, 2018 – 6:30 pm

Town Library - History Room

**Present**: Nancy Chapman, Barbara Cox, Maura Curran, Stephen Irish (Chair), Ruth Wagner

Additional Attendees: Brad Washburn, Karen Joseph

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Acceptance of Agenda:** A MOTION was made by Ms. Cox to accept the agenda; SECONDED by Ms. Wagner; All in Favor

**Accept December 14, 2017 minutes:** A MOTION was made by Mr. Irish to accept the December 14, 2017 minutes as written; Seconded by Ms. Curran; All in favor

**Discussion with Brad Washburn, Director of Planning & Development:** Mr. Washburn explained that they wanted to meet to offer some background about what the Development and Planning department is doing and how they can work with the Trust.

Ms. Joseph said they often get calls – about one or two a month - asking about lotteries for affordable housing. She gave the board a Standardized Housing Inventory sheet listing of all affordable housing or subsidized units in the town, totaling 322. It will be updated in 2018. Ms. Joseph noted that some older 40B’s are not eligible for the list because they were not filed on time, adding that there is a time limit between filing for the building permit and the occupancy permit. Ms. Wagner asked about the affordability expiration dates on the list. Ms. Joseph said they may need to be renewed to keep the affordable status.

The group discussed the recent sale of 163 Stockbridge and Ms. Joseph said she would call the state to have it filed and added to the Town list. Ms. Joseph said she will need a copy of the deed for the property if it has not been filed. Mr. Irish said that he will confirm whether or not their consultant has already done that.

Ms. Cox noted that the four units at Harborside Village (91 Front St) are not on the list. The group questioned whether or not they are too old to be added. They also discussed units at Whitcomb Pines (10) and Fairway Village (1-2). Future units to be added to the list include the 30 units being built at Lawson Green apartments, Walden Woods (7) and 50 Country Way.

Towns are supposed to meet an annual production goal of adding 36 affordable units per year. Mr. Washburn said this is the number that has to be met for a temporary 40B moratorium. Ms. Joseph said that between the 30 units at Lawson Green and the units at 163 Stockbridge Road and Nelson Road, the Trust will be close to that number.

Mr. Washburn discussed the Master Plan for the Town and how his department can work with the Trust to come up with ideas and strategies to incorporate more affordable units through zoning and special permits. He suggested bringing proposals to the Trust that could put “meat on the bones.” The group discussed the 2015 Affordable Housing Production Plan; the Board noted that the Trust funded the update but had no input in the plan.

Mr. Irish explained there is not a lot of money in the Trust and therefore what they can do is restricted. He noted that the Trust, in conjunction with the CPC, has pledged funds to subsidize the Lawson Green Apartments project, and added that the Trust is not in the position to build or manage affordable homes or units. They can subsidize and support projects in some way, but the Board is not sure what the best way is.

Mr. Washburn said that working with developers by modifying their approach may offer a good way. The group discussed the second property at 163 Stockbridge Road that may offered to a developer as an incentive.

Mr. Irish said that they do not have the capacity to handle rental units; they had considered renting 11 Nelson Road but could not get a management company for the property. There was a general discussion about renting properties in perpetuity which would require hiring a management company. Mr. Washburn said that there are companies that do manage those properties. He cited the Drew project at the MBTA parking lot and said that they will be managing the properties there. There will be 75 units with 25% affordable.

There was additional discussion on the process when an affordable home/unit is sold such as: does it need to go through a lottery; if not, who qualifies the applicant; does the deed need to go to Mass Housing; and who covers the cost. Ms. Cox will call another realtor who just went through the process.

Mr. Washburn said that there will be a second public hearing on Lawson Green Apartments. The group also discussed the Herring Brook project which will have some affordable units and the 3A Bartlett Fields project that will be 100% affordable housing rental units. He added that the Master Plan should include all types of affordable housing to include seniors and young families, etc.

Ms. Chapman suggested that the Board could do community outreach to educate the Town about what they do.

Barbara will send information on Harborside units to Brad; he will follow up on the Herring Brook information.

Ms. Chapman discussed the rental unit option and said that hiring a property management will not come cheap and suggested that it may be better to not do rental units. Other Board members agreed.

Ms. Wagner asked when we can count Lawson Green as affordable – when permitted or when occupied. Ms. Sprague will ask for clarification.

**Trust Financial Update**: The Board reviewed the updated financial statements. The balance as of January 19th is $948,890.31; $600,000 is committed to Lawson Green which is not listed as an encumbrance because it is pledged, not spent. Mr. Irish noted that most of the spending has been to pay general expenses to manage the properties.

The Board discussed how the CPC funds are managed and how the Trust gets funded.

**Nelson Road...further discussion on disposition of property:** Mr. Irish discussed Nelson Road with Nancy Holt regarding the $20,000 work that needs to be done prior to selling. Ms. Holt said that they just need to follow sound business practice guidelines; projects that are $10,000 or less do not require RFP’s.

He said that he spoke to Paula Stuart and she has written up the new posting for the house; they do not need to post a lottery because they have exhausted that process. The Board agreed to give Ms. Stuart the go-ahead to post it once last time. If they don’t get anyone by a certain date, the Trust can do their own promotion on social media, Zillow and MLS. If they sell it on the open market, they can sell it “as is” without doing the $20,000 worth of work.

Ms. Cox will get new photos of Nelson Road prior to posting.

**Update on Lawson Green progress from Stephen Coulter**: Mr. Irish read the following statement: “We received the project edibility letter from DHCD recognizing Lawson Green as a 40B. This allowed us to submit the comprehensive permit application to the Zoning Board of Appeals which, when approved, will allow us to submit our financing application to DHCD for the LIHTC funding. I reached out to Karen Polito to get a nudge on the PELDHCD as DHCD has been a little more interested in our project as a result and has invited us to participate in the spring funding round.”

**Update from Nancy and Ruth on mission statement**: They can use the Affordable Housing Trust Production Plan. Also, they have reviewed mission statements from other towns that can be adapted.

**Review the signed letter of support to Sec Korengay** – The Board reviewed the Lawson Green Apartments letter of support from the Trust.

**Additional Discussion**: The Board discussed where the AHT documents should be filed and it was suggested that it be in the Planning office. Mr. Irish asked Ms. Chapman to reach out to Mr. Washburn regarding file space. Mr. Irish and Ms. Cox will look for their files. It was agreed that deeds, minutes, PO’s, etc., should be filed in a central place.

A motion to adjourn was made at 8:20 pm; all in favor.

*Submitted by:*

*Mary Sprague*

*Administrative Assistant*