

Affordable Housing Trust  
May 12, 2021  
Meeting held via Zoom videoconference

Roll Call

Present were:

Victoria Petracca, Chair  
Frank Streeter, Secretary  
Jay Moody  
Carolyn Read  
Debra Williams  
Marilyn Largey, ex officio

Chair Victoria Petracca called the AHT meeting to order over Zoom at 7:08 PM after a few technical issues and called the roll of the Trustees.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

After a brief discussion,

**Trustee Moody moved to accept the minutes of the Trust's April 1 and April 22, 2021 meetings; Trustee Read seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a 5-0 vote.**

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**Scheduled Appearance(s)**

There were no scheduled appearances.

Chair Petracca reminded the Trustees to contact Lancaster's Town Clerk and sign the AHT trust documents.

**Monitoring of Lancaster's Existing Affordable Housing Inventory**

The Board reviewed 32 Carter St., which is a Habitat for Humanity property. Trustee Read is in the process of filing the forms for a Local Initiative Petition/Local Action Unit (LIP/LAU) with DHCD. This will require a marketing plan and regulatory agreement, as well as Town approval. Trustee Moody will bring the issue up at an upcoming Select Board meeting to start the process for eventual approval.

**New Affordable Housing Production**

Chair Petracca updated the Board on the status of the proposed inclusionary zoning bylaw. Chair Petracca explained the benefits of the proposed bylaw to those members of the public who were attending the meeting, as well as addressing some of the arguments against it. She announced dates and times of some Q&A sessions sponsored by the Inclusionary Zoning Working Group. Secretary Streeter asked what the Trust could do to better explain the proposal and how to reach out to those opposed to it. Trustee Williams agreed and put forth some ideas on how best to do it.

The Board discussed how to explain to voters what happens to any payments in lieu made under the proposed bylaw, especially the process leading to the development of more affordable units from those funds. Comments expressed the need to give examples of how it a payment in lieu would work for a local builder, who would hold any payments received, and how and when would they be spent to create affordable housing.

Chair Petracca updated the Board on the status of various affordable housing projects in Lancaster, specifically the former Memorial School and the former Jones Crossing 40B. The Board discussed possible scenarios for both the Capital Group project in North Lancaster and the DCAMM site on Old Common Road. Chair Petracca noted that 40R zoning requires a residential component of greater than 50%, including affordable housing units.

The Board diverged slightly from housing production to discuss its joint meetings with the Economic Development Committee (EDC) relating to Capital Group's project in North Lancaster. Chair Petracca is in favor of continuing the joint meetings as Capital Group's project has a housing component. Secretary Streeter disagreed, noting the project is a large distribution center and that the past meeting had been largely about traffic studies relating to truck traffic from it. Trustee Read felt it was appropriate for the Trust to sponsor meetings related to 40R zoning, but not for the rest of the project, including its traffic impacts. Trustee Largey agreed and asked if Capital Group considered the 40R section of their project separate from the rest. Secretary Streeter said their fates are probably linked and Trustee Moody agreed, stating that Capital Group's proceeding with any 40R plan is totally dependent on the zoning change for the rear of the property.

Trustee Williams stated that the AHT should be concerned about its mission related to the 40R component of the project, which has retail and market housing components, not just affordable housing. Chair Petracca discussed the process for approving 40R zoning. As this zoning is project specific, the project must first be approved by the Town's Select Board and then by the Commonwealth's department of Housing and Community development. Once those approvals have been obtained the Planning Board will hold a public hearing and write up a warrant article for Town Meeting. The Trust would write up an explanation of the article and associated "marketing materials". Because 40R zoning increases housing it only needs a 50% +1 vote to pass, not the usual 67% for zoning articles.

EDC member Mark Grasso spoke to the issue of joint meetings and stated that he feels the roles of the AHT and the EDC are intertwined, especially on projects like this one, and that joint meetings are essential. Secretary Streeter noted that the Trust would take on affordable housing projects but the EDC should take the lead on large commercial ones.

Chair Petracca updated the Board on the status of the DCAMM site on Old Common Road and explained the reasons for some delays in the process of transferring the property to the Town for redevelopment. Trustee Williams noted that the Trust had made

a good start to the process but it would be difficult to proceed much further with an RFP without gaining control of the site.

Trustee Largey asked about the timeline for adopting 40R zoning. Chair Petracca laid out the process with various milestones leading to a vote at the Town's usual fall Special town Meeting. Trustee Moody noted this vote would only take 50% +1 to pass, but the rezoning of the back of the Capital Group's land would require a 2/3 vote to pass, which could be difficult to achieve.

Finance Committee Member Dick Trussell commented on Capital Group's history of successful project development and encouraged the Trust to be aggressive in pursuing the Town's housing goals when working with them. Secretary Streeter commented on the Trust's role, as did newly elected Select Board member Alix Turner, who encouraged the Select Board to provide clear direction on the two committees' roles.

Chair Petracca noted there would be a joint meeting of the AHT and the EDC on May 13 to discuss Capital Group's project, focusing on the affordable housing component.

#### **New Business**

Chair Petracca enabled subtitles for this and future Zoom meetings.

#### **Communications**

None

#### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Affordable Housing Trust will be held Thursday, May 27, 2021 at 7:00 PM via Zoom. Chair Petracca noted there would be a joint meeting of the Trust and the EDC on May 13 to discuss Capital Group's North Lancaster project. The Board reviewed the schedule for June and July and confirmed meetings on the regularly scheduled first and third Thursdays of the month, specifically June 3 and 17, and July 1 and 15. No plans were made for August.

#### **Adjournment**

There being no further business for the Board to consider,

**Trustee Read moved to adjourn; Secretary Streeter seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a 5-0 vote.**

The Board adjourned at 9 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Frank S. Streeter, Secretary