

Affordable Housing Trust  
August 5, 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 Affordable Housing Trust's (AHT) meeting to order over Zoom at 7 PM and called the roll of the Trustees.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

After a brief discussion,

**Trustee Williams moved to accept the minutes of the Trust's July 1 and July 15, 2021 meetings; Trustee Moody seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a 5-0 vote.**

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

Trustee Read updated the Board on the status of 32 Carter St., noting that she had not heard back from DHCD yet.

Chair Petracca briefed the Board on the Harbor Homes project now being built at 2038 Lunenburg Road and confirmed that 2 of the homes will be deed-restricted affordable units. This project still needs a Local Action Unit application and Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan, but as of July 15 no materials had been forthcoming. AHT is pleased to review all materials for compliance. Chair Petracca reported that the builder's attorney is Peter Campobasso.

**Scheduled Appearances**

Karen Chapman, Planning & Development Director of MRPC  
Representatives of Capital Group

**Continued discussion of 40R zoning in North Lancaster**

Ms. Chapman opened by reviewing the current proposed text of the 40R zoning proposal with the Board and noted new terms. The Board discussed various potential commercial, retail, and office uses that could be allowed in the 40R zone. The Board then reviewed the existing use regulation schedule from the Town's current Zoning Code and discussed which options would be appropriate for the new 40R zone.

The Board reviewed Area Median Income (AMI) standards for the proposed 40R district and how many units of differing percentages of AMI should be required. The default for being declared an affordable unit is for it to be deed restricted to no more than 80% of AMI. The Board discussed the mix of various AMI units to be required, including those at 80% AMI, 60% AMI, and 50% AMI. For a rental project such as proposed for the 40R district a minimum of 25% of the units must be affordable.

[for the below paragraph the percentages of affordable units are of the whole 100% of the units, not of the 25% that will be affordable, so 10% means 10% of all the units, not 10% of the affordable units]

Given comments at previous meetings Secretary Streeter advocated for 10% of the units being restricted to 50% AMI with the other 15% at 80% AMI. Bob Depietri of Capital Group pushed back on the 50% AMI units but said he would be glad to substitute 60% units. After further discussion the Board agreed to set the AMI requirements as 7.5% of the whole shall be 60% AMI units and 17.5% of the whole will be 80% AMI units. For a project of the size of Capital Group's proposed 152 units of rental housing these percentages will yield an estimated 11 60% AMI units and 25 units at the 80% AMI level.

The Board then discussed dimensional requirements, including building heights and setbacks. The Board agreed that a 40' building height would be appropriate given the site, but there was further discussion about how much additional height would be allowed for things on the roof like air handlers. The Board was not willing to have this additional non-buildable height be more than 10'. Capital Group asked to be able to consult with their engineers about this requirement and if the equipment they planned to use will comport with this limit, and the Board said they would revisit the issue if needed.

The Board further discussed the permit granting authority and the application process.

### **New Affordable Housing Requirement for MBTA Communities**

The Board discussed the Commonwealth's new MBTA community requirements. Despite the lack of commuter rail in Lancaster there is a bus stop by D'Ambrosio Eye Care that links to the MBTA commuter rail system in North Leominster, so Lancaster is officially a MBTA community for purposes of the statute. The DHCD regulations require a multi-family zoning district near the MBTA stop, but this district is not required to contain any deed restricted affordable housing units. Ms. Chapman indicated that it is possible to have a MART bus stop at the intersection of McGovern Blvd. and Lunenburg Road that would serve the 40R development.

### **Public Comment**

Bob Depietri of Capital Group updated the Board on the status of various aspect of their development work.

- The DEP has approved their application for a sewage treatment plant.
- A Notice of Intent (NOI) has been sent to the ConComm in reference to the project's water line extension from Leominster.

- The Planning Board is holding hearings on McGovern Blvd.
- The ConComm is holding hearings on the culvert needed for McGovern Blvd. to go over McGovern Brook.
- Capital Group needs to complete their grading plan before filing with MEPA, which is expected to be done at some point in the fall.
- Capital Group has received TEC's updated traffic study with 40R impacts based on the currently proposed zoning.
- TEC has finished its analysis of the traffic at the intersection of Routes I-290 and 117.

Trustee Moody recommended a survey presently being conducted by Police Chief Moody about what is good and bad about Lancaster today.

### **New Business**

Select Board Trustee Alix Turner is setting up a site walk at the DCAMM property on Old Common Road for 0830 on Friday August 6. (tomorrow) Trustees Petracca, Streeter, and Williams will attend. Trustee Moody will also attend, but in his role as a Trustee of the Select Board. Given the possible presence of a quorum at the site walk attendees were reminded that no sort of deliberations could occur outside of a posted meeting.

Chair Petracca noted that "40B reform" legislation has been proposed at the State House. She will distribute copies of the proposed legislation to the Board.

### **Communications**

The next two scheduled Affordable Housing Trust Meetings will be held on Thursday, August 19, 2021 at 7 P.M. via Zoom, and on Thursday, September 2, 2021 at 7 P.M. via Zoom.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to consider,

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Frank S. Streeter, Secretary