

Affordable Housing Trust
February 2, 2023
Meeting held via Zoom videoconference

Roll Call

Present were:

Victoria Petracca, Chair
Frank Streeter, Secretary
Jason Allison
Carolyn Read
Debra Williams
Kelly Dolan, ex officio

Chair Petracca called the Affordable Housing Trust's (AHT) meeting to order over Zoom at 7:03 PM and called the roll of the Trustees. Chair Petracca welcomed Select Board member Jason Allison, who has replaced Steve Kerrigan as the Select Board representative to the Board.

Reorganization of the Board

After a brief discussion,

Trustee Allison moved to re-appoint Chair Petracca; Trustee Streeter seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a 5-0 vote.

Chair Petracca accepted the position.

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

Secretary Streeter accepted the position.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

After reviewing the minutes from the Trust's September 2, 2022 and December 1, 2022 meetings,

Trustee Read moved to accept the minutes; Trustee Williams seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a 4-0-1 vote with Trustee Allison abstaining as he was not yet a member of the Board for those meetings.

Scheduled Appearances

None

Bylaw Amendments for ATM

The Board reviewed several proposed bylaw amendments/modifications for the Annual Town Meeting to be held in May.

Accessory Dwelling Units

Chair Petracca reviewed what an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) is and how it compares to units that are on the Town's official subsidized housing inventory, (SHI) and the benefits to the Town of these accessory dwelling units. Trustee Read gave a PowerPoint presentation on the subject based on one by Massachusetts' Pioneer Group. Trustee Read gave her recommendations on possible changes to the Town's existing ADU bylaw. The Board reviewed the existing bylaw section by section.

For Section 1 the Board's recommendation was to cut the five-year time requirement to simply existing buildings and to delete all references to requiring a special permit.

For Section 2 the Board felt that it was important to maintain the owner occupancy requirement.

In Section 3 the Board felt it was appropriate to delete specific references to square footage of the accessory unit, and instead to simply state that the ADU should be of subordinate size to the primary unit.

In Section 4 the Board recommended cutting the last two sentences and leaving just the requirement that the ADU have a separate outside entrance.

In Section 5 the Board recommended deleting the limit on the number of occupants, so the section should just refer to the State's guidelines.

The Board recommended retaining Section 6 as is.

For Section 7 on parking the Board recommended modifying it to reduce the requirement to three parking spaces and cutting the language after the first sentence.

The Board recommended deleting Section 8 entirely, and deleting Section 9 after the first comma.

Chair Petracca will write up a version with the changes and review it with Town Building Inspector Brian Gingras for his comments.

Trustee Read moved to accept the proposed changes to the ADU bylaw as discussed and forward them to the Planning Board; Trustee Williams seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a 5-0 vote.

Lancaster resident Kendra Dickinson (402 Oetman Way) commented that she was concerned about a circumstance where the addition of an ADU might make an abutting property non-conforming. Lancaster resident Dick Trussell (15 Burbank Lane) asked if a special permit to build an ADU could be obtained so the ADU could be constructed along with the primary residence and not later. Trustee Read said that should be possible through a variance from the ZBA. The Board discussed if changes to the ADU

regulations might conflict with other Town bylaws or state regulations, especially relating to the maximum number of occupants.

Inclusionary Zoning

Chair Petracca read Town Building Inspector Gingras's recommended changes to the current language of the Town's inclusionary zoning bylaw to make clearer when renovations to an existing building would trigger the requirements of the bylaw.

Trustee Read moved to add Building Inspector Gingras's proposed changes to the bylaw as discussed and forward them to the Planning Board; Trustee Williams seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a 5-0 vote.

Updates to Lancaster's Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI)

Chair Petracca reviewed the active projects list as compared to the SHI list. The Board discussed how best to order this list to make it useful and when to add currently inactive projects. The Board agreed that this information would be useful and would yield a more efficient and holistic way to monitor the Town's housing.

Developer Tyrone Jones emailed Chair Petracca about a potential four-family conversion project. As part of this project, Jones offered to create a deed restricted affordable unit that could be added to the Town's SHI. The Board appreciated this gesture but noted that any zoning variance would be a matter for the ZBA, and not the Trust.

Chair Petracca noted that there was an SHI unit for sale at Blue Heron and the Town has a right of first refusal. She explained the various options and recommended that the Town not exercise its right of first refusal and instead allow the homeowner to sell the unit as restricted. CHAPA would serve as the monitoring agent in this instance.

Secretary Streeter moved that the Trust recommend to the Select Board that it not exercise its right of first refusal on the SHI unit at Blue Heron; Trustee Read seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a 5-0 vote.

Public Comment

Lancaster resident Kendra Dickinson of 402 Oetman Way asked that the Trust be engaged with the meetings of the Memorial School Reuse Committee (MSRC). She noted that the MSRC will be making a presentation to the Select Board with their recommendations for the redevelopment of the site of the former school.

New Business

Chair Petracca pointed out that there are presently 30 people on the waitlist for the apartments at Bigelow Gardens. State-wide there are over 2200 people on waitlists for housing that is limited to seniors and the mobility impaired. Trustee Read gave a brief update on the status and activities of the MSRC. She also noted that there is an upcoming vacancy for Director at Bigelow Gardens, and that the job description has been posted.

Communications

None

The next regularly scheduled Affordable Housing Trust Meeting will be on Thursday, March 2, 2023 at 7 P.M. via Zoom.

Adjournment

There being no further business to consider,

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Frank S. Streeter, Secretary