

Approved: July 1, 2021

**MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF
THE LANCASTER AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST**

Meeting conducted via ZOOM internet conferencing
Thursday, May 20, 2021

Present: Victoria Petracca, Chair
Jay Moody, Trustee
Carolyn Read, Trustee

Absent: Frank Streeter, Secretary
Deb Williams, Trustee
Marilyn Largey, Trustee *ex-officio*

List of Documents (Meeting Materials):

32 Carter Street

- Request for Proposals 2008
- Lancaster Board of Selectmen Minutes of December 15, 2008
- Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan, May 17, 2021

Declaration of Trust

I. Call to Order & Administration

Victoria Petracca, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:03 P.M.

Zoom meeting link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86820008536> Meeting ID: 868 2000 8536

Meeting Materials: <https://www.ci.lancaster.ma.us/planning-board/pages/meeting-materials>

Meeting Recording: https://townhallstreams.com/stream.php?location_id=81&id=37853

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

February 4, 2021

Chair Petracca updated the Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) that the draft minutes were removed with Secretary Streeter's help, and only the approved minutes now appear on the Trust's webpage. This issue is resolved.

March 4, 2021; April 1, 2021 & April 22, 2021

Chair Petracca updated that Secretary Streeter has posted these three sets of approved minutes and thanked him.

April 8, 2021; May 6, 2021; May 12, 2021; May 13, 2021

Chair Petracca stated that these have not yet been circulated and thus no action can be taken. Trustee Debra Williams will be circulating the April 8, 2021 minutes since she was filling in for Secretary Streeter at that meeting. Secretary Streeter will be circulating the May 6, May 12, and May 13, 2021 minutes.

Chair Petracca confirmed the Trust was now caught up with the minutes from its first meeting in January 2021 through April (with the exception of April 8th, 2021) and that the minutes of May were in progress. The Trust is therefore in good standing regarding its meeting minutes.

III. Public Comment

None

IV. Scheduled Appearance(s)

None

V. Record Declaration of Trust

Chair Petracca reported that all of the AHT members have signed the Declaration of Trust with the Lancaster Town Clerk, and that the Clerk has duly notarized the document. Chair Petracca was informed by the Town Administrator that the Assessor's Office is able to file the Town's notarized documents electronically at the Worcester Registry of Deeds. The Town Clerk has delivered the notarized document to the Assessor's Office for this purpose. The Assessor confirmed she received the account information she was waiting for in order to include the submittal fee with the filing. Chair Petracca estimates the recording should be complete within a few days. She will circulate a copy of the recorded deed to the Trustees and also post this to the Trust's webpage for public access.

VI. Review Inclusionary Zoning Statement

1. Discuss Inclusionary Zoning implementation statement

Chair Petracca has not yet prepared a statement for review and tabled this item to the next meeting. As background, she explained the Working Group was aware of a few lawn signs urging residents to vote against Inclusionary Zoning. In order to better understand why, the Group posted some queries on social media, and was able to clarify misinformation. A statement specifically on the implementation of Inclusionary Zoning could be helpful.

2. Inclusionary Zoning endorsement for Annual Town Meeting

Chair Petracca asked if the Housing Trust members wished to formally endorse the Inclusionary Zoning Article included in the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. There was discussion.

Trustee Carolyn Read moved to endorse the Inclusionary Zoning Article; Trustee Jay Moody seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a 3-0 vote.

VI. Monitor Lancaster's Existing Affordable Housing Inventory

Note: This agenda item was misnumbered and should have appeared as VII, not VI, with the remaining Agenda items following sequentially.

1. Update on Adding 32 Carter Street to Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI)

Trustee Carolyn Read attended last evening's Select Board meeting to speak with the members about needing signature approval to add this existing, deed-restricted affordable unit to Lancaster's SHI. It was noted that the 3 Housing Trust members present at tonight's meeting were also present at last night's Select Board meeting. Trustee Read confirmed Chair Petracca's understanding that all marketing materials are required to be translated in Spanish, and that she is adding this into the Marketing Plan, as well as contacting several organizations that work specifically with minority populations. Trustee Read then confirmed she will be sending the documentation requiring the Select Board's signature to its new Chair, Jason Allison. She was given his town email address by Chair Petracca. She expected the subsequent approval process within DHCD may be long based on the Department's prior response times to this matter.

VII. Review New Affordable Housing Production Pipeline

Chair Petracca screen-shared a tracking sheet of potential affordable housing projects in Lancaster. There are currently four active leads: Capital Group's site in North Lancaster (Route 70), the former Jones Crossing 40B site (Deershorn Road), the vacant Memorial School site (Packard Street), and the vacant DCAMM site (Old Common Road). There was an update on the current status of each site. Chair Petracca also reviewed the current status of listed secondary sites Atlantic Union College, Kalon Farms, and Roll-On America.

She then returned to the Capital Group's site which is currently the most active project. There was a lengthy discussion of the site plan with the Trustees focusing on the 40R portion of the site and its housing component. Trustee Read conveyed she likes the 40R concept containing both affordable housing and economic development. She was not a fan of the proposed 40B with housing at the rear of the industrial portion of the site. She would like to see different typologies of housing and price points, if possible. She expressed that the Housing Trust should focus on the 40R portion of the site, and not the project's adjacent industrial/logistics area. She further commented the Route 70 location is good as it offers convenient access to Route 2, and there is an important market for rental housing – although she is not a fan of the rental loophole allowing credit for 100% of all rental units when 25% are actually affordable.

Trustee Jay Moody spoke in favor of the 40R plan and compared this to the adverse impacts of the 40B site plan previously presented. Trustee Moody also spoke favorably of 40S funding that offsets impacts to local school budgets.

Resident Stephanie Stanton expressed concern relative to possible impacts of truck traffic on the housing. That said, she prefers the 40R plan over the 40B.

Resident Dick Trussell expressed that commercial and residential development can co-exist successfully when well designed. He cited the example of Eagle Ridge as a residential community which was placed sufficiently far away from the industrial corridor on Sterling Road, and stated the site composition is what matters in the case of the Capital Group site. He also spoke concerning the former sand and gravel excavation that has already altered the environment considerably.

There was a lengthy discussion of the siting of the housing as relates to truck traffic on McGovern Boulevard. After comparing with the adjacent landscape and uses, and using the distance calculation to White Pond as a point of comparison, the general consensus was the housing was sufficiently distanced from McGovern Boulevard to avoid noise and other impacts. There was also discussion of moving some of the housing units to the retail area using a two-story prototype. This could potentially reduce the proposed residential building height.

Resident Dick Trussell reviewed the number of units proposed versus the Town's current inventory, and how long Lancaster would remain in Safe Harbor with this project.

Chair Petracca asked participants for potential alternate locations for the housing component, and whether this made sense. There was a lengthy conversation of the pro's and con's of moving the housing behind the Dunkin Donuts parcel (however, not owned by Capital Group) and also diagonally across from the distribution center, which ultimately presents a variety of challenges.

The Trust reviewed a timeline of required steps for 40R approval and the housing delivery. The Town receives credit for the housing after the 40R District is approved and once when the units get permitted by the local permit-granting authority (to be named).

Resident Dick Trussell asked if there was a way to extend Lancaster's current Safe Harbor between now and when 40R units may be approved. Trust Members discussed the possible sale and re-start of the former Jones Crossing 40B as the most likely option, if any.

The Chair raised the presentation given at last evening's Select Board meeting regarding the disposal of the DCAMM site, and its possible acquisition by the Town. There are now "site tabs" for both the DCAMM campus and the Capital Group land on the Trust's public webpage with project information available thus far.

The Trust Members then discussed the presentation given by the State for the DCAMM property. It was generally favorably received by the Trust. There was a concern about the impacts of taking on such a large site, and how to gather feedback from towns who have done affordable housing conversion on a former state campus, such as Westborough and Medfield. The Trust also discussed the student proposal that won first place and had a general discussion of some of the pro's and con's of redeveloping the DCAMM site, such as whether the existing road network can handle the traffic from a full build-out and how to anticipate the right size project.

The Trust touched briefly on the Town's newly appointed committee to study the adaptive reuse of the Memorial School for senior housing.

VIII. New Business

None

IX. Communications

1. Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw “Q&A” hosted by the Working Group
Saturday, May 22, 2021 at 10 A.M. via Zoom
2. Joint Meeting with the Economic Development Committee to discuss the 40R Design Standards with MRPC.
Tentatively scheduled for evening of May 27, 2021 (time to be confirmed)
3. Next Regularly Scheduled Affordable Housing Trust Meeting
Thursday, June 3, 2021 at 7 P.M. via Zoom
4. Requests from Capital Group to Phil Eugene, EDC & Victoria Petracca, AHT
 - a. to attend a Zoom meeting regarding project website content conveying Lancaster’s goals for economic development & affordable housing - May 21 (morning)
 - b. to attend a Zoom meeting with legislative leaders concerning Lancaster’s economic development and affordable housing goals – May 21 (afternoon)

X. Adjournment

There being no further business to consider, Trustee Carolyn Read moved to adjourn the AHT meeting; Trustee Jay Moody seconded the motion, and the motion passed on a 3-0 vote.

The AHT meeting was adjourned at 8:51 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria Petracca, Chair (in the absence of the Secretary)