

Affordable Housing Trust
Joint Meeting with Economic Development Committee
April 22, 2021
Meeting held via Zoom videoconference

Roll Call

Present were:

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

Chair of the EDC Phil Eugene then called the EDC meeting to order and called the roll of the members. 7 PM

Roll Call:

Members Present:

Phil Eugene,
Roy Mirabito,
Rebecca Young Jones,
George Frantz,
Joe D'Eramo,
Mark Grasso

Chair Victoria Petracca called the AHT meeting to order over Zoom at about 7 PM and called the roll of the Trustees. Chair of the EDC Phil Eugene then called the EDC meeting to order and called the roll of the members.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

None

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Chair Petracca opened with a statement about emails being circulated in the community and a Facebook post with inaccurate numbers for the Town's SHI inventory and how many new units would be required to maintain the Town's 40B safe harbor status. These emails are apparently underestimating the gap between Lancaster's current inventory of affordable units and 40B's 10% requirement, as well as claiming there are currently a number of projects in process that will close that gap quickly. Chair Petracca urged those in attendance to try to correct any factual inaccuracies whenever possible.

Scheduled Appearance(s)

Capital Group's team, including Sam Gregorio, Capital Group's Traffic Engineer.

Capital Group's team presented an update on their plans for their land in North Lancaster. First they showed their updated site plans, including some affordable housing units.

This was followed by a presentation by Sam Gregorio of TEC, Capital Group's traffic engineer that covered both a number of improvements planned by MA-DOT that will affect the project. These included not only the new traffic lights on Route 70 and 117 that have been in process for years and should be constructed in the fall of 2021 but also improvements to a number of exits on Route 2 that will be constructed from 2023 onwards, including some that are still in the planning stage and may or may not be approved by MA-DOT. Once these improvements are complete they will provide better access to Route 2 for the truck traffic generated by Capital Group's planned project.

Sam then presented a number of roadway improvements that Capital Group plans to build as a part of their project in an effort to mitigate truck traffic from the project. However he also noted that the amount of truck traffic from the project would be dependent on the site's tenant mix and certain new tenants could add significant additional truck traffic to what is now proposed by Capital Group. He also addressed the roundabout at the intersection of Route 70 and 2, which he showed had been designed for trucks to drive on the center if needed to make turns.

Monitoring of Lancaster's Existing Affordable Housing Inventory

No updates.

New Affordable Housing Production

Karen Chapman of MRPC gave a presentation on 40R zoning. The Board asked how to set the standards required by that class of zoning. The Town must use the State's template with a local overlay specific to the land to be rezoned. Karen then explained the timeline for the State's approval of 40R projects.

Public Q&A

Members of the AHT and EDC posed questions to Capital Group, their traffic engineer, and Karen Chapman of MRPC. A number of members of the public then asked questions and expressed a variety of concerns about the Capital Group's current proposals. These largely concerned the traffic impacts of the project, as well as its impact on various environmentally sensitive areas, including the ACEC, and the impact of such a large project on the Town in general, including population growth.

New Business

None.

Communications

None.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Affordable Housing Trust will be held Thursday, May 6, 2021 at 7:00 PM via Zoom. Chair Petracca proposed another joint meeting with EDC once Capital Group's completed traffic report has been released.

Adjournment

There being no further business for the Board to consider, Chair Victoria Petracca closed the AHT meeting at about 9 PM and called the roll of the Trustees. Chair of the EDC Phil Eugene then closed the EDC meeting.