

TOWN OF STOW
STOW MUNICIPAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST (SMAHT)

Minutes of the January 20, 2016 SMAHT meeting

SMAHT members: Mike Kopczynski, Quince Papanastassiou, Cynthia Perkins, Jim Salvie, Laura Spear

Housing Consultant: Leonardi Aray

Guests: Nathan Robinson, Metro West Community Development

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM.

1. Meeting Schedule

February 17

2. Minutes Review & Approval

Quince moved to accept the minutes of the December 15, 2015 meeting, and Jim seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Correspondence, Bills and payments

Jim moved to pay an invoice from our consultant, Leonardi Aray, for \$980, and Quince seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

We received correspondence from Metro West Community Development, which inherited the role of monitoring agent for Villages at Stow. Discussion about the Elm Ridge Road unit that is facing disclosure is captured later in the minutes.

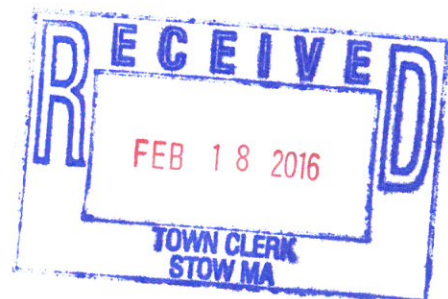
The other correspondence referenced Villages of Stow, 32 Cortland. The unit in Villages at Stow that previously faced foreclosure due to nonpayment of condo fees is now clear. Now 32 Cortland and 45 Orchard in this development have issues.

For 32 Cortland, the second owner apparently purchased it for cash and has not been paying the condo fees. The owner has not been responsive to the legal firm for the condo association although she has been in touch with Metro West CD. The condo association is ready to foreclose and serve the owner with an auction date. Mass Housing's legal department is aware of this issue. The unit could be sold at auction with the deed restriction to a buyer who does not meet affordability requirements. However, the deed restriction would remain in place after the sale. The mortgagee is not the foreclosing organization, so there are questions about the condo association following the foreclosure procedure for mortgagees as detailed in Section 7 of the deed restriction. Jim will follow up with the town social worker to contact the home owner.

45 Orchard has unpaid utilities for Hudson Light & Power for November. Nathan will follow up.

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4. Trustee Reports

a) Intra-Municipal Agreement

The Trust reviewed the latest draft of the agreement. Mike met with Community Preservation Committee (CPC) last week, and a couple of changes resulted. The previous draft had originally included repairs and renovation, which are not supported with Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds. The language was changed to reference "rehabilitate and preserve," which are supported under the CPA. Additionally, the CPC requested that we add a section where SMAHT will provide CPC with an annual report. At the end of 10 years, the two organizations will meet to decide whether to continue the program. This agreement is in lieu of having to get approvals from the CPC to release funds for every bill. The account will be set up so that SMAHT can use the account for related expenditures without requiring additional permission with one exception. Our bylaws require that we get an advisory vote from the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee to purchase property.

Laura moved to approve the edited draft agreement and authorize the Chair to sign on behalf of SMAHT, and Cynthia seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

b) 323 Great road proposal report

The Board of Selectmen voted to put a park at 323 Great Road with no affordable housing. Lessons learned for SMAHT:

- We need Planning Board support for affordable housing proposals.
- We should do outreach to people who live in affordable housing for support, realizing that many people may not want to reveal that they are in affordable housing.
- We need affordable housing supporters from the Stow Housing Authority, Stow Community Housing Corporation, Habitat for Humanity, state legislators, and other housing organizations as well as residents who are supportive of affordable housing to support a proposal in public. Support can be in the form of email or letters.
- We need to share a vision for affordable housing and how the proposal fits.
- The argument that small projects will help give the town more control over larger 40B developments does not work.

As alternatives to 323 Great Road, we should further investigate the two small parcels that we have control over and get support.

The reality is that the affordable housing we are going to get will likely be from private 40B projects rather than from smaller projects. We may also get some housing as part of a mixed-use development in the Gleasondale mill.

5. Housing Production Plan: Timeline review and Approval

Survey: The goal is to understand better local housing needs, cost burdens, and perceptions about affordable housing. Metro West Community Development will distribute the survey via online Doodle and hard copies. They will draw a sample from the Town's assessor list and do a hard copy mailing, asking people to return the completed survey by mail. Nathan was asked to include a press release with a link to the Doodle survey and have hard copies available at the Town Building, COA, and library.

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A lot of new development is coming, so there is a sense of urgency. We need an approved Housing Production Plan to have new affordable units count towards "safe harbor" from 40B development.

Comments on the survey:

- Should we add ranges instead of asking for flat response for gross annual income? (salary relates to cost burden)
- Do you know someone who would like to work in Stow, live in Stow?
- Test attitudes and what respondents would like to see for affordable housing
- If you work in Stow, would you like to live here?
- Do you know someone who would like to live in Stow but can't afford it?
- Do you know someone who lives in Stow now but can't afford it? Do you know someone who needs a more affordable place to live in Stow?
- Do you have adult children who would like to live in Stow? Parents?
- How do we approach people who work in Stow (teachers, fire, police, other town employees)?
- Can we distribute hard copies at the Food Pantry?
- Should we use the Master Plan update to determine what housing is needed?

Edits were made to the cover letter for the survey. It was proposed that we hand out copies at the upcoming Special Town Meeting and include a slide on Stow TV. If people are interested in affordable housing, they can contact the Chair by email.

Distribution will be multi-pronged. Mike and Cynthia will create an outreach plan.

Timeline: Cynthia moved to approve the edited affordable housing timeline, Quince seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

6. Elm Ridge -- Next Steps?

Nathan provided an update on 323 Great Road. He spoke with the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), which indicated that the unit will be a short sale, sold for less than what the loan was for. The current mortgage was \$165K in 2006, which was not approved by DHCD as required. Nathan estimated the debt to be around \$145K at this time. Nathan has a call with DHCD on Friday and will look into the process and get more information. Because the mortgage was never approved, the short sale may be an agreement between DHCD and the bank with a new universal deed restriction that would go into effect in perpetuity, regardless of who buys the unit. In this scenario, the town would not have to purchase the unit in order to have it remain on the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) even if a buyer does not meet affordability requirements. The town has first right of refusal on the old deed restriction.

7. Adjourn

Cynthia moved to adjourn, Quince seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Spear, SMAHT member

Laura Spear
February 17, 2016

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