

WAYLAND HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Minutes – October 18, 2016

Submitted by Rachel G. Bratt

Unanimously approved: Dec. 13, 2016

Attending: Mary Antes, Joanne Barnett, Kathy Boundy, Rachel Bratt, Chris Di Bona, Pat Harlan, Armine Roat

Absent: Stephanie May

Also attending, Jennifer Steel, WHP representative to Municipal Affordable Housing Trust

At 7:37 Rachel called the meeting to order.

Minutes of September 13: Several corrections were made. Mary moved to accept as corrected. Kathy seconded. Unanimously approved.

Jennifer Steel's possible appointment as a member of the WHP: Mary indicated that Jennifer's appointment as the WHA's representative on the WHP is due to be discussed at the WHA's next meeting, later this week. We are looking forward to Jennifer becoming a full voting member of the WHP.

Consultant report on Housing Organizational Structure: There was discussion about the process used in hiring the consultant and in her scope of work. This report was commissioned by the Town Administrator, Nan Balmer, in order to better inform her about the various groups in town that work on housing issues.

- While the consultant met with various people, including committee chairs, she did not schedule meetings with each of the full committees.
- Kathy indicated that the report could have been laid out better, with more clarity about the exact statutory responsibilities of each committee. Overall, she noted that there could have been more specificity about the baseline of each organization, including exact roles and obligations.
- WHP members were unanimous in their enthusiasm for the hiring of at least a ½ time professional staff person. Mary noted that Brian Boggia was exploring whether the part-time housing planner in Needham may have ideas for Wayland's staffing needs. The report outlines a fairly extensive and ambitious list of tasks that this person would be expected to fulfill. Mary recalled that the Town had rejected the idea of joining the Regional Housing Services Office, since the sharing of a professional did not seem like a good idea.
- Mary also reported that the WHA is interested in continuing to do monitoring.
- WHP members were open to the idea of a merger with the Housing Trust, but the pros and cons of such a move would need to be carefully evaluated.
- Jennifer noted that we need a clear vision of our priorities and a brief set of action steps that the Town can use as a real blueprint for moving the housing agenda forward. While the HPP was recently submitted and approved by the state, WHP members acknowledged that this does not provide the needed guidance. Mary also noted that the goal of producing 25 units/year is not realistic. It is not clear how many market rate units are produced each year. Jennifer offered to draft such an outline for discussion at our next meeting. She will send it out in advance of that meeting.
- Another task for the WHP may be to review and update the 40B guidelines. Mary said she would send the electronic version of the last update.

- WHP members were eager to make sure that there will be a clear process, going forward, for reviewing the various recommendations. Rachel agreed to write a letter to Nan indicating her desire for group input before any decisions are made. The Joint Housing Committee may be a good forum for that to occur.

Habitat update: Mary mentioned that the problem regarding the assessment of Habitat homes has been resolved, with the units being assessed for the actual sales price, rather than the market value. Since all property has to be taxed at the assessed value, the recent policy of Habitat International to use the market price for the assessment price was a major problem for all MA properties. Apparently, MA was being used as a test case and, clearly, it did not work for us. The third family is due to move into their home in a month or two and the last family will not move in until the sweat equity requirement is met.

River's Edge: Chris noted that a developer has been identified by the River's Edge Committee: Wood Partners. This recommendation has been sent to BOS. There are quite a few steps that need to be gone through before a contract can be signed.

Next meeting of WHP, if needed: November 29 @ 7:30
Final meeting for 2016 scheduled for December 13.

At 9:05 Chris made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Pat.