

Affordable Housing Trust

Meeting Minutes – 9/13/2011

Members present: Robert Barrell, Anna Mary Kraemer, Patricia Halpin, Marc Frieden

Absent: Steve Quist

Guest: Anita Sullivan

The meeting convened at 6:06 pm.

Motion by Mr. Frieden to approve 8-3-2011 Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Ms Kraemer. All in favor.

Ms. Halpin distributed Population and Housing (Chapter 4) report from the Town-Wide Master Plan and the Proposed Amendments to the Affordable Housing Trust Articles of Incorporation. A motion was made by Mr. Barrell to change the name to West Boylston Affordable Housing Trust/Housing Partnership Board of Trustees. The motion was seconded by Mr. Frieden and approved by all.

The Members discussed the Conflict of Interest Law. Every one present took the test.

Ms. Halpin suggested and all agreed to table the 40B Regulations discussion for a future meeting..

Community Housing Specialist

The proposed position of Community Housing Specialist was discussed. This person will have the competence and knowledge to assist the volunteer and elected officials in the town to implement housing policy and guide the town's approach to housing projects whether put forth by a developer through a Comprehensive Permit (40B) or by local agencies under a Local Initiative Program. Among the duties of this part-time consultant will be to monitor the rental/sales agreements to be in line with income level eligibility, to insure the town's rights are preserved and that should profit from the sale of home exceed what is allowed by statute that such income will be brought back to the town as "windfall". This position will be funded through a grant. As soon as the state releases the guidelines for application to receive grant monies for regional projects, Mr. Gaumond will submit the grant application.

Ms. Barrell moved, and Ms. Frieden seconded, and all approved the motion to support the position of Community Housing Trust. Ms. Halpin will draft a letter to the Town Administrator indicating our support. .

Orchard Knoll

Anita Sullivan, director of the Housing Authority, discussed challenges and opportunities at Orchard Knoll, the state sponsored affordable housing project under the auspices of the Housing Authority. The Housing Authority is an independent agency and part of a state-wide network of 689 dwellings. The West Boylston Housing Authority currently has 36 units of elderly, 1 bedroom walk ups, 92% of which house former West Boylston residents. There are also 18 Town Houses with 2 bedrooms, and 2 units are adapted town houses. Eligibility is based on % of income. The selection regulations have two classifications; priority and preference. Priority overrides the preference. Preference goes to people who are displaced by fire, domestic violence, or are homeless.

Operating budget is made up of rents plus subsidy. Lack of funding from the state for the past few years has forced the Authority to defer much needed capital improvements. The Housing Authority does expect \$137,000 from the state over the next 3 years.

The town provides fire and police protection to Orchard Knoll and occasional sanding of the streets in the winter. Sewer costs are approximately \$13K. They are paying the Water District for individual water meters. It would be less costly if they were all on one meter. New roofs were made possible through a grant from the Community Preservation Act.

Some additional needs would be:

- help with snow removal from town, volunteers, boy scouts
- \$\$'s for outdoor landscaping and maintenance
- additional first floor housing for seniors

Through discussion an idea for a senior center located at Orchard Knoll in an elevated building which would have housing on the floors above. In an elevated building all housing is first floor housing. There are 12 acres on 87 Maple Street with a right away on Temple Street contiguous to the present site. Ms. Sullivan noted that when the Senior Center was located temporarily at Orchard Knoll more her clients attended the programs and lunch.

There is also land on Tivnan Drive that we own which may be appropriate for senior housing and senior center.

Mr. Barrell offered to take Mark Brodeur, building inspector, to walk both properties to see what might be feasible to build.

Ms. Halpin noted that for FY 2012 we have \$75K funds available from the CPA. There was discussion on how to use these funds for elderly housing.

Membership

Members discussed adding other members to our Board especially someone with a financial background. Another suggestion would be to elect someone from the Housing Authority to join our Board. The Town Administrator will be informed of this request.

Future meetings will be on the First Monday of each month:

- October 3rd
- November 7th
- December 5th

The Trust's next meeting is scheduled for October 3rd @ 6:00 p.m., conference room #1 at Town Hall. Motion to adjourn at 7:37 pm by Mr. Frieden, seconded by Ms. Barrell. All in favor.

Minutes prepared by: Anna Mary Kraemer