

Affordable Housing Trust
Minutes - Meeting 4 - December 16, 2008

Attendees:

Members of the Trust: George Sibley, Chair, Ruth Pino, Mary John Boylan, Sarah Buck, CD Director.

Absent: Betsy Works, Michael Luster, Carolyn Kirk.

Guests: John Dugger, consultant on the Maplewood Avenue School renovation.

Meeting called to order 4:15 p.m.

Presentation by Mr. Dugger:

He has been working to design a pre-approved development plan for the Maplewood Avenue School so that the City could issue a Request for Proposals to dispose of the property more profitably.

He met with the neighbors and received positive and constructive comments and revised plans accordingly re location of parking and dumpsters and such.

The plan is for eight 1000 s.f. studio apartments with bath and kitchen. The plan requires variances.

Ms. Boylan asked Mr. Dugger about his background. Mr. Dugger stated that since 1984 he has been the principal of a small architectural firm. His practice is split between his Gloucester home and an office in Andover. He taught at the Boston Architectural Center for many years and has served on historic, conservation, and planning commissions and was the Chair of the Affordable Housing Coalition in Gloucester. He specializes in getting small businesses started and designed.

Mr. Dugger spoke of the projected costs of the renovation. He has been soliciting costs from builders for the various items. It will cost \$600,000 just to remove asbestos and to rehabilitate the shell of the building. This includes \$220,000 for the replacement of the slate roof. He estimates about \$400,000 for the interior build-out.

Sale prices are estimated to be approximately \$200,000 per unit, but these prices are not firm in today's market. He would anticipate a sale price of \$300,000 in response to the city's request for proposals.

Other possibilities to the eight studio apartments are artist lofts or assisted living, although the latter would be 20 units rather than the currently planned eight. Ms. Pino noted that the studios could be smaller and still fit the Gloucester market.

Mr. Dugger stated that a letter of endorsement from the Trust or support from individuals at the zoning hearings would be helpful.

Other Business:

Ms. Buck distributed the subsidized housing inventory to members.

Following a brief discussion, the members thought it useful to meet with Mickey Northcutt, Executive Director of the Beverly Affordable Housing Coalition, recommended by Ms. Pino. The Trust would be interested in hearing about effective affordable housing projects/programs and uses of Trust funds in other localities. Ms. Buck will call to invite Mr. Northcutt to the next meeting.

Members also thought a meeting with the Treasurer regarding foreclosed properties would be helpful. Ms. Buck will invite Mr. Geoffrey Towne to the next available meeting.

Approval of the Minutes:

Motion to approve the minutes as written: Ms. Pino/Ms. Boylan, 4-0 in favor.

Next Meetings:

The following meeting dates were set:

1/20/09 (Ms. Boylan will be away)

2/17/09

3/17/09 (Ms. Pino will be away)

4/21/09

All meetings will be at 4:00 p.m. in the third floor conference room, City Hall.

Meeting adjourned 5:40 p.m.