Affordable Housing Trust (AHT)
Minutes
February 13, 2020

In Attendance:

Members Present: George Sibley, Chair, Ruth Pino, and Mary John Boylan.

Absent: Michael Luster, Vice Chair & Treasurer and Joe Bertolino.

Staff: Jill Cahill, Community Development Director; Jaimie Corliss, Grants Administrator.

Guests: Lisa Day Copeland, Cape Ann Local Action. City Councilor Jen Holmgren. Several members of the public were also in attendance.

George S. called the meeting to order at 5:06PM.

Item #1 Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Mary John B. moved to approve minutes of September 12, 2019 as written. Seconded by Ruth. No discussion. 3 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstained. Motion passes.

There was discussion regarding the Open Meeting Law.

Item #2 Discussion of Trust

Jill C. discussed the need for this group to meet regularly in order to manage the short term rental tax and housing zoning that will be coming through the City. MJ stated it did not make sense to meet if there are no projects in front of the Trust. Jill C. asked if they see their role as being only passive and not looking for projects to take on or invest in. Ruth P. stated the HPP has had the benefit of working with a consultant. There was discussion regarding incentives for landlords to put affordable housing restrictions on rental units. Jill C. discussed having a consultant come and discuss the concept of incentives for landlords with the Trust and CPA to start evaluating potential ways to invest funding or assess rental units that currently qualify as affordable but do not appear on the SHI. Ruth P. stated that it was eye opening to hear from Judi Barrett about what other Housing Trusts are doing. There was further discussion about what the future of the Affordable Housing Trust should look like. MJ would like to see what other communities are doing and just take that work because it would be less work. *Request plans from Judi and invite her to attend next meeting or schedule special meeting.*

There was discussion regarding increasing Trust Members. Jill C. asked if any members had suggestions for new members.

There was discussion on whether or not the City is looking to institute rent control. Jill C. stated accessory dwelling and inclusionary housing are the two items being considered by the Planning Board. They are expected to have them come out in March. MJ requested a copy of these two items to review. Jill will keep an eye on timing for these items to schedule a meeting to discuss.

George S. stated there would be more excitement to being creative if there was more money.

Jill C. stated another item the Planning Board is looking at is multi-family by right in certain districts, but is not gaining momentum. Ruth P. added that 3 family by right is also part of the changes in front of the Planning Board.

Ruth P. asked what the pros or cons were of recording the Declaration of Trust. George S. asked if this could be put on the City's website. Jaimie C. will have this posted.

Funding Sources

Jill C. stated that there may be revenue coming from short term rental taxes. There was further discussion of the details of how this will look and the anticipated funding. The State will be collecting the tax and redistributing to localities.

There was discussion about streamlining applications for CPA and AHT. MJ Boylan stated that the Trust has been referred to as "Do nothings" in the past and feels the Trust has been limited because they do not have access to funds. Jill C. stated that the Mayor does not want volunteers to never feel unappreciated. She asked the Trust to consider why that is the image of the Trust and what is the messaging. MJ Boylan stated they have to be careful about getting on the bus with everyone else. There was discussion about the process of Harbor Village when it was before the Trust.

MOTION: Ruth P. moved to adjourn. Seconded by Mary John B. No discussion. 3 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 abstained. Motion passes. Meeting adjourned at 6:15PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jaimie Corliss