

**Affordable Housing Trust (AHT)**  
**Minutes**  
**November 9, 2015**

**In Attendance:**

**Members Present:** George Sibley, Chair, Michael Luster, Vice Chair & Treasurer, Mary John Boylan, Betsy Works and Ruth Pino

**Staff:** Deborah Laurie, Sr. Project Manager and Emily Freedman, Sr. Project Manager, via phone Tom Daniel, CD Director

George Sibley called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

**Item 1**

First order of business is the proposed project application of 206 Main Street.

George asked Mary John if she had time to read over the traffic study and summary of outreach for the project and does she have any comments or questions. Mary John reviewed the information that was provided. She would have liked to see the results of the outreach, not just the outreach that was conducted. She would have liked to see more 1 BR units vs the 2 BR and 3 BR units. She doesn't feel that Gloucester needs any more affordable 3 BR units, and even the Mayor commented in the paper regarding this issue. Committee told her that they have to include at least 3 BR units per State regulations. The applicants maxed out the number of 1 BR units that they can have and minimized the 3 BR to the required three.

Mary John still questioned the DHCD requirement. Emily explained DHCD sets priorities for the State and this year's priority is for family housing throughout Massachusetts. They are striving to get families out of hotels and allow them to get into affordable family housing. This requirement is a statewide need, not local. They want to gear funding towards family housing; "families first" is the State model. Mary John still feels that the need is for 1 BR units for aging population, not families.

George states that the applicants have met the minimum and maximum standards for DHCD. Minimum 3 BR units and maxed the 1 BR units. Mary John states that the Housing Authority can't give away their 3 BR units.

Ruth mentioned that she sold a 3 unit property to the Housing Authority and they will be converting it to five 1-BR units in one house. She added that she sees a huge need for 1 BR units, not 3 BR units.

Mike explained to Betsy since she was not at the last meeting that the applicant is looking for \$125K from the Trust and \$100K from CPA to leverage their application with the State. George added that they are up against a Dec 11<sup>th</sup> deadline so they committee needs to vote tonight so they can get on the City Council agenda in time.

Tom commented that this is approximately \$4,200 per unit for 30 units in perpetuity. This is a good deal. They have done lots of outreach, re-designed with community input, abutters etc. and the results are a good project. George stated that the \$125K would be used for the brick veneer siding.

Mary John asked why CDBG funds weren't being sought after. Emily stated that CDBG funds can't be used for "new" construction. Only for clearance, and the project would trigger Davis Bacon wage rates and the project would probably double in cost. Also it would have to be designated a slum and blight by the City Council and that takes time.

Mike said he is not concerned about the use of the funds and states that there is \$254,574.97 in the Trust Fund. Over the past several years they have funded the Central Grammar Apartments for \$50,000; 3 units at Taylor Street for \$30,000 and \$40,000 for Marsh Street project for a total of \$120K. \$125K is a lot of money, but not if you break it down/unit. He would rather give the money than having it sitting there. It's only half of what we have and it took seven years to spend \$120K.

MOTION: Mike made a motion to approve the proposal at their request of \$125K. Ruth Pino seconded the motion. All in favor, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

George did add that he does have reservations about children living at the development, but it is the application before us; would have liked to see more 1 BR units.

Tom asked Emily to speak about the Housing Production Plan. She stated that DHCD's "PATH" program is granting them \$15,000 for a \$20,000 housing study and the \$5,000 match is coming from MAPC. MAPC Planner Ralph Wilmer, is heading the study; they will look at what we need, how to obtain, zoning issues, how to further funding the Trust, and how CPA. Look at what has worked and what has failed. The City would like input, questions or feedback from the Committee. Email Tom, Deb or I your concerns, questions, etc.

Tom made a comment regarding his excitement for this Harbor Village project, as it meets a number of goals for the community and downtown in terms of affordable housing. Children did come up as a concern at the community meetings, but he feels that if a family is concerned with the area for their children, they won't choose to live there, as they would at looking at any rental unit. Again, we are gaining 30 affordable units in perpetuity. It will blend well into the landscape of downtown and will have efficient systems.

Tom would ask that the Co-Chair of the Trust write a letter of support to the ZBA and inform them that the Trust has awarded them \$125K towards the project. The letter should advocate the goals to meet affordable housing needs. George agreed to write the letter by the end of the week.

Other Business

Ruth wanted to explore the possibility of approaching Kirk Noyes and his project on Maplewood Avenue, instead of doing one or two affordable units at the site, that he give the Trust the money instead, before he spends money on condo documents. For example if the condos were to go for approximately \$275K to \$325, an affordable unit may go for \$225 and he could give the Trust the difference. She feels that 50% of market value units stand out in a small project like at the Wesleyan Church. So he could sell at market rate and give the Trust the balance.

George agreed that it is hard to sell off affordable units in a predominantly market rate project.

Ruth added that Haven Terrace, Babson School Condos and the Pond View Village worked because they were much larger projects. Just wants to get this idea across on the ground floor and should maybe start with the administration to approach Kirk.

Tom thought this may not be an option at this point; it may have been a contingency of the sale from the City. It would probably take too much time with going back to City Council etc. The project doesn't need any more delays.

Ruth just doesn't want to miss this opportunity. Tom feels that CPA funds will be the source of funding for the future.

MOTION: Ruth made a motion to request the Community Development Department to broach the subject for the Maplewood School project. George Sibley seconded; all in favor, yes. Tom will inquire and get back to the Trust.

Motion to adjourn by George Sibley and seconded by Mary John Boylan, all in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Deborah Laurie, Senior Project Manager

Items distributed at meeting:

1. Agenda
2. Traffic Study