



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Department of Planning and Development
1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

Telephone
(617) 796-1120
Telefax
(617) 796-1142
TDD/TTY
(617) 796-1089
www.newtonma.gov

Barney S. Heath
Director

Newton Housing Partnership (NHP)

November 28, 2023 from 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Virtual meeting: <https://newtonma-gov.zoom.us/j/85742621867>

Meeting ID: 857 4262 1867

- 1. Review and Approval of October minutes, 2023 Meeting Summary**
- 2. Staff Updates**
 - a. Project Updates
 - b. Affordable Housing Trust and Community Preservation Committee Updates
 - c. Village Center Zoning
- 3. Real Estate Transfer Taxes**
 - a. Partnership Discussion
- 4. INI Mitigation Fees**
 - a. Partnership Discussion
- 5. Massachusetts Shelter Crisis**
 - a. Partnership Discussion
- 6. Coordination with Affordable Housing Trust and Fair Housing Committee**
 - a. Partnership discussion
- 7. Upcoming Meeting**
 - a. Next Meeting: December 26, 2023, 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm via Zoom

Attachments:

- October 2023 Meeting Minutes

Meeting Access Instructions

No in-person meeting will take place at City Hall.

The Newton Housing Partnership will hold this meeting virtually on November 28, 2023 at 5:00 pm.

Access the meeting audio and video on your smartphone:

- 1) Open your smartphone's app store. If the Zoom app is already installed on your smartphone, this step is not necessary
- 2) Download the "ZOOM Cloud Meetings" app
- 3) At the above date and time, open the ZOOM Cloud Meetings app, and tap, "Join a Meeting"
- 4) Type the following Meeting ID into the dialogue box: 857 4262 1867

It is also possible to open your smartphone's internet browser app, navigate to www.zoom.us, and join the meeting with the same Meeting ID: 857 4262 1867. Doing so would provide access to the meeting's audio and video.

OR

Access the meeting audio only on your phone or smartphone:

- 1) Dial +1-305-224-1968
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OR

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The location of this meeting/event is wheelchair accessible and Reasonable Accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities who require assistance. If you need a Reasonable Accommodation, please contact the city of Newton's ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, Jini Fairley, at least two business days in advance (2 weeks for ASL or CART) of the meeting/event: jfairley@newtonma.gov or (617) 796-1253. The city's TTY/TDD direct line is: 617-796-1089. For the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), please dial 711.

Newton Housing Partnership (NHP)

October 24, 2023

5:00pm – 8:00pm

Partnership members in attendance: Chuck Eisenberg, Josephine McNeil, David Rockwell, Mark Caggiano, Julia Malakie, Eliza Datta

City of Newton staff in attendance: Allison McIntyre, Housing Development Planner (and notetaker for this meeting); Shaylyn Davis-Iannaco, Housing Program Manager; Barney Heath; Planning Department Director

Chuck Eisenberg notes that the agenda does not include an item dedicated to discussing transfer taxes and proposes that a committee of two be convened to address the matter. David Rockwell advises C. Eisenberg to wait to speak on that topic until more members of the Partnership are present. Some conversation followed regarding the Highland Glee Club, which was established one hundred nineteen years ago.

Some members count everyone present to affirm that they have quorum. They do indeed have quorum. [Note: D. Rockwell is presiding as Chair this evening to accommodate a change in the usual Chair's schedule.]

D. Rockwell affirms that the transfer taxes item should be added to the agenda for this evening, provided all members agree. Mark Caggiano asserts that because the item was not noticed [i.e., It was not on the agenda posted in accordance with open meeting laws], it is permissible only for the Partnership to say that it wants to commit resources to study transfer taxes. Members agreed, therefore, that no forward movement nor discussion on the subject could take place during October's meeting and must instead go on next month's agenda to comply with open meeting laws.

D. Rockwell notes that Judi Barret's name is misspelled in the notes for the September 2023 NHP meeting, and suggested that, after that correction was made, the notes might be approved.

C. Eisenberg moves to approve the minutes for the September 2023 NHP meeting. Approval is unanimous. M. Caggiano abstains because he was not present at that meeting.

Project Updates

Barney Heath provided the following updates, focused on Comprehensive Permits and 40B applications before the Zoning Board presently and one we were made aware of this week.

The **Northland Charlemont 40B** project will be voted on soon, with conditions. That will be the final meeting. C. Eisenberg asks if the completion of that project puts Newton over the 10% mandated affordable housing stock. B. Heath answers that it does not. The shared use path was of interest to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). The crossing at Christina Street, the additional affordability that this group discussed, and the set-aside in mitigation funds were all topics of discussion. The city takes 25% of funds for mitigation, and the other 75% of funds are set-aside for litigation. These are the conditions that ZBA imposed on this project. C. Eisenberg criticizes what he perceives as increased mitigation fees. He expresses concern that growing fees will impact how projects are structured. There are project costs for both the affordable units and the market-rate units. Larger mitigation fees, he claims, will have the effect of making projects no more than 25% affordable. Deep affordability is impossible because of the fees the City is imposing, he says. C. Eisenberg declares that seven figure mitigation fees are of great concern. A developer could afford the fees in a larger project, of, say 200 units, but a theoretical 70-unit project would not provide adequate funds for the developer to pay for the fees inherent in such projects. B. Heath explains that there is some precedent for waiving mitigation entirely. C. Eisenberg replies that getting the fees waived is difficult. Public Housing, he says, gets an INI fee. He remembers using Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds to cover the further cost of construction for a project his company completed. M. Caggiano asks if it would make sense to connect the related fees with depth of affordability. If a project is 100% affordable, for example, there could be City policy allowing for those fees to be waived, with parameters. There would then be an incentive for greater or steeper affordability. D. Rockwell asks if the issue came up with the West Newton Armory project. Shaylyn Davis-Iannaco volunteers to look for that information. B. Heath replies that most of the fees for the Armory project were waived. D. Rockwell asks what the precedent is for waiving the fee. B. Heath agrees it is a legitimate concern. D. Rockwell expresses interest in raising the question or suggesting procedures along the lines of what M. Caggiano proposed. Leafy green states in Essex County have blocked developments using septic system laws, in one instance preventing a Habitat for Humanity Project from being 100% affordable, M. Caggiano recalls. D. Rockwell suggests that he and C. Eisenberg could discuss further and put it on the agenda for November's meeting.

C. Eisenberg clarifies that he is interested in supporting City intra-departmental communication.

Toll Brothers will come back on October 25, 2023 with a project update, according to B. Heath. The focus of that update will be the redesign of the project, and the meeting itself will include a conversation about storm water. B. Heath says that the City's consultant and Jennifer Steel, the City's Chief Environmental Planner, will speak about the conservation aspect of things. C. Eisenberg asserts that these areas do flood. M. Caggiano asks if the project is boarded by a stream. Yes, by Paul Brook on one side, B. Heath answers. In terms of flooding and storm water, the current situation could be improved, and B. Heath speculates that this project might support such an improvement. D. Rockwell asks if there is a new proposal. B. Heath says that yes the peer reviewer will respond. That will likely result on a new meeting on the same topic. C. Eisenberg replies that if the City contributed money, the situation could be improved greatly. B. Heath says that is possible.

41 Washington Street, the 16 unit condo project in Newton Corner, had its initial meeting, and the next one is in December. B. Heath believes it energized the neighborhood. There is a lot of attention being paid to this project, in part due to issues with storm water, he reports.

B. Heath says that **Boylston Properties** filed a project yesterday. It is for a piece of land **behind Court Street** that has been talked about for a little bit. The issue so far has been access to the site. Parcels near MacGuire Court off of Craft Street acquired recently by the developer have provided a new access point. There is car storage there, and an engineering company at present. D. Rockwell explains that it is West of the Whole Foods. It is family housing. Josephine McNeil asks how many units. Eliza Datta says she was reminded of a development proposal the NHP saw for the bus depot behind Whole Foods. She says she's lost track of it and would like an update. B. Heath says the developer requested an extension of their Special Permit for 2 years, and it got 1 year. M. Caggiano is asking if this is the mixed ability living location. He observes that the extension request might have something to do with the market. D. Rockwell points out that if these 2 projects are built, they will be near to each other. E. Datta thanks B. Heath for the update.

City funded projects. S. Davis-Iannaco tells the group that the Armory project is on track for construction starting Summer 2024. They are in the design phase currently. S. Davis-Iannaco reports that JKS is the contractor for this project, in response to C. Eisenberg's question from the previous meeting. Haywood House,

a Newton Housing Authority (NHA) project with 55 units for seniors, has a scheduled walk-through taking place soon. 2Life: Golda Meir (68 for seniors, 9 for homeless/disabled) and Coleman House projects. Golda started April 2023 and we are getting close to scheduling a walkthrough. CH was a rehab of 146 units and that is moving along. The last project is the Nonantum Village Place location. We are starting to request final bills from City departments. Closeout will happen soon. D. Rockwell thanks Shaylyn and asks if Haywood House is fully occupied. It is. Cascap Realty is the developer there. C. Eisenberg points out that this project is not 100% affordable. I mention this because it was a big deal to CPC. D. Rockwell asks for questions. There are none.

Village Center Zoning

- a. B. Heath tells the group that the new set of zoning requirements is out of committee. They went through proposed amendments, the map, and other details. There was nothing momentous to report, B. Heath says. Nonantum, according to B. Heath, has one tweak. Specially, Watertown Street East of Adams Street. The Ward One councilors moved VC2 zoning along Watertown Street East of Adams keeping the MRT in place on everything West of Adams Street. That side has auto dominated businesses. That might be an appropriate redevelopment area at some time. B. Heath reports consensus around investigating the manufacturing areas behind Watertown Street for housing in the future. The only other amendment B. Heath details is an amendment around adding a parking requirement - .5 spaces for new developments in the MRT zone. Therefore, the max development in a MRT zone is 4 units, and the parking requirement would be .5 parking spaces per unit. So, 2 spaces for a 4 unit building. C. Eisenberg says it still has to go through the ZBA. B. Heath concurs and says that this 3.1 Version will go to the council on November 6th, followed by a special November 15th meeting to take this up again. C. Eisenberg notes the enormous effort undertaken by the City Planning Department. It has been six years, at least. B. Heath replies that this particular VC effort has taken place over the last 3 years. C. Eisenberg says that many people have had the opportunity to be involved. He talked about the curveball of the MBTA Community Act being passed midway through that effort. B. Heath says that after it is passed the department will keep it moving. D. Rockwell asks if the commercial components are still as they are shown in the most recent memo? B. Heath confirms they have not changed. There was a proposal to require parking for that, but it didn't pass. D. Rockwell asks for the upcoming dates again. B. Heath repeats that the fifteenth of November

will be an important meeting. D. Rockwell asks if the one-story incentive is in the proposal. B. Heath says that it has survived. S. Davis says that J. McNeil's hand is raised, and D. Rockwell calls on her. J. McNeil asks if there was some strategy to having the Nov. 6th meeting the day before the election. B. Heath says no, it's just the normal meeting time.

Family Aid Proposal

- a. B. Heath: The Administrative Site Plan was approved by the ISD Commissioner, so the building permit can be pursued. The timeline is slightly pushed out as the details of the building and the site emerge. The developer has all the permits it needs. Now, B. Heath says, it is a question of pulling together the design aspect of things and getting everything else lined up. D. Rockwell asks for a projected completion date. B. Heath says that there is a goal for February 2024 occupancy. J. McNeil asks what can happen in the 30-day period before construction begins. Is that an appeal period, she asks. B. Heath says that the building permit could be appealed but does not believe that the developer will do that. It is occupied with design. D. Rockwell asks if there will be any appeals. B. Heath says the developer is working very closely with the neighborhood and has been incredibly responsive.

EMPath

- a. B. Heath: The plan was to enroll 50 households. Forty-two are enrolled, with ten or eleven in the pipeline. They are close to full enrollment and have had good initial meetings with these households. D. Rockwell decides to skip over the next item while the NHP waits for Ann Houston to arrive. J. McNeil asks that, for the MCAS mentor program if there will be training. B. Heath does not know. He responds that the mentors – J. McNeil explains that there is a model for mobility mentoring and that people need to be trained in it. There were 3 people being trained by EMPath in this at that point. B. Heath volunteers to follow up on that. D. Rockwell says there is data collection work that the staff and Judi Barret are putting together sometime soon, and that is the precursor to any work of coordination between the NHP, FHC, and AHT. B. Heath says that E. Datta did great with the CPC convo. The second year of funds were allocated to the Trust. E. Datta said it went quickly. J. McNeil asks for further clarification of the numbers in the document. There were two figures in particular: Two different numbers. One was the amount requested by the Trust, and then

there was a second number, and she was not sure what had already been allocated. So, would the two indicate the total? E. Datta says that the CPC recommended to approve 1.9 funds or 35% of annual budget for CPA funds to go to the Trust. The Trust's budget would increase then to 4 million. There is IDP money, too. D. Rockwell asks how that compares to the demand for the funds. E. Datta says that they did not present in much detail the list of projects under consideration and says A. Houston could speak to this better. There will likely be several more in the pipeline. Demand exceeds what they have. That supports the FY24 allocation of CPA to be completed. E. Datta believes that they are expecting applications in the coming weeks. J McNeil says that the public doesn't know what is going on with the Trust. Where was it announced? B. Heath says that there is a website for folks to access the application. There has been discussion about that at the Trust – getting the messaging out and agrees that is a good point. He points to not being a lot of money to offer. Now that has changed, and B. Heath says we could do a better job of messaging that the money was available. A Houston could speak to this. B Heath says they are focused on priorities and want to home in on priorities. Part of that would be assessing the demographic situation and using that to focus their funds. J. McNeil says this sounds like incompatibility. How do they accept applications without having a focus. B. Heath says that the money is there for projects, and it is up to the Trust to decide what they want to do. D. Rockwell decides to defer item 3 and says that we are at the end of the agenda. J. McNeil makes this statement: I think this organization should respond to the governor's declaration that the right to shelter will no longer be available to families in the Commonwealth. D. Rockwell says that they could prepare something more formal. S. Davis-Iannaco says she will add it to the agenda. D. Rockwell and J. McNeil agree that it is a scary prospect. D. Rockwell thanks J. McNeil and asks for questions. He then adjourned the meeting. D. Rockwell asks for the INI mitigation fees discussion to be added for the agenda for next time. C. Eisenberg asks the question: Will they discuss and vote on the zoning, at the ZBA meetings - They won't hold another public meeting? B. Heath says no there will be discussion and amendments on the floor. Everyone expresses their confidence in those proceedings.

The next NHP Meeting is Tuesday, November 28, 2023 at 5pm