

Newton Housing Partnership
Meeting Summary from March 26, 2019 Meeting
Newton City Hall
6:00-8:00pm

Partnership Members in Attendance: Rev. Marc Caggiano, Eliza Datta, Chuck Eisenberg, John Hennessey, Lizbeth Heyer, Josephine McNeil, Kathleen Marchi, Marva Serotkin, Stephen Tise

Others in Attendance: Mayor Ruthanne Fuller, Barney Heath, Dana Hanson, Rachel Powers, Amanda Berman, members of the public

Introductions and Welcome

- Mayor Fuller welcomed the members of the Partnership and thanked the members for giving time and shared talent to the important work of the Partnership. Mayor Fuller explained that the work is daunting and difficult. The Partnership has a broad mission to advocate for creation of housing in order to promote an economically diverse City of Newton.
- Mayor Fuller introduced Lizbeth Heyer who she appointed as the acting chair until the Partnership agrees to vote on a permanent chair.
- Lizbeth introduced herself and asked each member to introduce themselves in terms of interests, experience. All present participated in the introductions.
- Lizbeth stated that because this was the first meeting, a focus of the meeting will be to begin the process of developing an agenda for the work of the Partnership.
- Amanda Berman explained the Open Meeting Law and Conflict of Interest Law. All Partnership members were encouraged to review these laws and complete the conflict of interest questionnaire.

Introduction by Barney Heath, Director, Department of Planning & Development

- Barney Heath welcomed new members of the Partnership and suggested that since this is a new group, we develop an orientation and training agenda, to be implemented over the next several meetings. As a first step in this process, Barney presented an overview of City

departments, boards, and commissions involved in housing that include Planning and Development Board (federal \$), Community Preservation Committee, ZBA (reviews/approves 40B), Fair Housing Commission, Human Rights Commission, City Council and its subcommittees, including the Zoning & Planning Committee and Land Use Committee. Barney also explained the Planning Department's role in administering Federal funds (HOME and CDBG), including the 13-member WestMetro HOME Consortium that Newton participates in as the lead entity and the policy work of the department, such as the current work to update the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance.

- Lizbeth facilitated a conversation among members to elicit ideas for training needs as well as potential priorities for the Partnership's work. Comments from the Partnership resulted in the following responses:
 - Need for definition of affordable
- It was recommended that the agenda for the Partnership include:
 - Influencing zoning and inclusionary zoning policy
 - How to utilize our affordable housing financing programs to maximize benefits for low and extremely low-income households
 - Documentation of need
 - Zoning issues
- Partnership members and staff recommended an orientation that should include the following:
 - Definition of affordable

Definition of affordable

Explanation of the current inventory of affordable housing in Newton, , including which are counted under the 40N requirement of 10%

- There is a 40B report that will be shared
- Housing programs and eligibility
- New projects at play40B training2016 Housing Strategy ReportMayor's goal for number of affordable unitsA training on the current zoning process and the impact of the inclusionary ordinance, including if/how the buyout process is utilized Housing authority waiting listHUD programs (CDBG, HOME, ESG)

Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance Update

- Amanda Berman, Director of Housing and Community Development, reviewed the current ordinance and staff's proposal for revisions. A handout that displayed the revisions was distributed and discussed. Key differences between the existing and staff proposal include doubling the number of categories of unit size and variability of percentage of units by income levels.
- Comments from developers and housing advocates include impact on land values and desire for increasing the number of required affordable units. Partnership members were interested in the report of the consultant, which analyzed the impact on land values. This report will be made available to the Partnership.
- The status of the proposed Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance is of particular importance as there are several large projects on the docket for special permits in June.

Summary of Immediate Next Steps

- Orientation and Learning. Staff will provide Partnership members with background material as listed.
- Proposed Inclusionary Ordinance. Hot topics include
 - What is the impact of increasing the percentage of affordable units? How to calculate fee in lieu of units? Where does middle income fall in the priority for affordable housing?

Next Meeting

- April 16th 6p

Respectfully Submitted,

Marva Serotkin