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Community Preservation Committee Funding Recommendation for Golda Meir House Expansion Additional Funding Affordable Housing

Date: August 24, 2020
From: Community Preservation Committee
To: The Honorable City Council

PROJECT GOALS & ELIGIBILITY This proposal requests \$1,244,857 to increase the affordability of the 68-unit expansion proposed by 2Life Communities at their existing Golda Meir House located at 160 Stanton Avenue in Auburndale. In December 2018, City Council approved the use of \$3.25 million in CPA affordable housing funds for the construction of this project. Since that time, 2Life has assembled all of its project funding process, including an award of HUD 202 funding, the only such grant in Massachusetts, which provides \$4 million in Capital Advance funds and 25 Project Rental Assistance Contract (PRAC) vouchers. 2Life Communities is now proposing to leverage the HUD 202 funds to provide a deeper level of affordability than was originally presented to the CPC and City Council in 2018. The overall number of units has not changed, but the level of affordability has shifted significantly as shown below:

Level of Affordability	1 Bedroom		2 Bedroom	
	2018	2020	2018	2020
Up to 30% AMI	7	18	1	2
Up to 50% AMI	20	25	2	0
Up to 60% AMI	18	2	2	3
Up to 100% AMI	8	8	2	2
No Income Restriction	4	4	4	4
Total Units	57	57	11	11

As noted above, the project will continue to create a total of 68 units, 57 of which will be restricted to residents who are 62 years of age or older. 60 of the units will be permanently affordable to households with incomes ranging from 30% to 99% of the federally defined Area Median Income (AMI), including nine units without age restrictions which are designated for individuals with disabilities who have experienced chronic homelessness.

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CPC Funding Recommendation for Golda Meir House Expansion Additional Funding

August 24, 2020

The increase in affordability has created a funding gap which 2Life Communities proposes to address with the additional \$1.5 million in combined Newton HOME and CPA funding. HOME funding of \$255,143 was approved by the Planning and Development Board at the joint public hearing with the CPC on August 11. The 60 new permanently affordable housing units developed through this project are all CPA-eligible under Creation of Community Housing. Those units which are not deed restricted and other site amenities to be constructed at this time are not eligible for CPA funding.

RECOMMENDED FUNDING At its monthly meeting on Thursday, August 11, the Community Preservation Committee unanimously recommended, with a vote of 8 to 0, the appropriation of \$1,244,857 in Community Preservation Act Funding to the control of the Planning & Development Department for a grant to 2Life Communities for the development and construction of 60 units of permanently affordable senior housing at the deeper range of affordability stated in the July 2020 funding proposal.

SPECIAL ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE CPC

Funding leverage & project costs: The CPC appreciates the tremendous leveraging of CPA funding achieved by this project, and recognizes the work that had gone into creating the funding package which includes state and federal funding programs, private philanthropic and foundation funding, local grants, private loans, and other funds. The project costs have risen to \$40,436,000 from the 2018 total of \$32,314,845, but the amount of CPA funding requested for the project has remained at 11% of total project costs. State and federal funding sources will cover approximately 57% of total project costs.

Community spaces & services: In their 2018 recommendation, CPC members pointed to the benefits provided by Golda Meir's recently renovated and expanded common spaces, strong supportive services, wide array of enrichment programs, and subsidized weekday lunch program. 2Life Communities' partnership with Newton-Wellesley Hospital will provide nursing-level care and geriatric care management through the new wellness center. Further, [Hearth, Inc.](#), a well-respected nonprofit dedicated to eliminating elder homelessness, will provide support services for the 9 formerly homeless tenants. This has not changed from the original proposal.

Accessibility: As noted in both project proposals, the expansion will accomplish a number of accessibility improvements for the Golda Meir House including creating an at-grade accessible upper entrance, four fully accessible units, two units adapted for residents with hearing impairments, and 65 units that are adaptable, with wide doorways, showers rather than tubs, existing grab bars plus framing for additional supports, and kitchens that can be reconfigured for roll-in use.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS *(funding conditions)*

1. The CPC assumes that all recommended funds will be appropriated within three years after the date of this recommendation. If this deadline cannot be met, 2Life Communities should submit a written request to the CPC to extend that deadline.
2. A grant agreement governing the phased release of both the current proposal and the 2018 CPA funding award should be executed following the City Council's approval of the CPA funding. That agreement's conditions should include, but not be limited to, those usual in other recent grants for CPA-funded affordable housing projects, including permanent affordability restrictions on all of the funded units, a final report to the CPC, and an independent "accessibility audit" to ensure as-built compliance with accessibility standards.
3. Any CPA funds appropriated but not used for the purposes stated herein should be returned to the Newton Community Preservation Fund.

CPC Funding Recommendation for Golda Meir House Expansion Additional Funding

August 24, 2020

KEY OUTCOMES

The Community Preservation Committee will evaluate this project based on its success in using CPA funds to create much needed deeply affordable senior housing units which are not only affordable in perpetuity but also provide residents with the supportive services described in 2Life Communities' 2018 and 2020 proposals.

ATTACHMENTS

- 2020 Proposal and selected attachments submitted to the CPC for the August 11, 2020 review
- Presentation to August 11 joint public hearing with the CPC and Planning and Development Board

Additional information not attached to this recommendation, including petitions and letters of support, are available on the CPC's website at:

www.newtonma.gov/gov/planning/cpa/projects/jche.asp