

Newton Housing Partnership Meeting  
Notes from July 21, 2020 Meeting  
Conference Call Meeting  
6:00-8:00 pm

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

Others in Attendance: Amanda Berman, Dana Hanson, members of the community

Approval of June 16, 2020 Meeting Summary

It was moved and seconded to approve the meeting notes.

Newton Housing Partnership Initiatives

- Housing's role in diversity, equity and inclusion—leading change to make Newton more accessible and welcoming to all. The discussion focused primarily on the current language in the Inclusionary Ordinance that mandates a 70% preference for Newton residents. Since the Black and Brown population in Newton is very low, the 70% preference restricts increasing diversity.

It was moved by Lizbeth Heyer and seconded by Chuck Eisenberg and voted unanimously to recommend to the Land Use Committee elimination of the preference for Riverside.

It was agreed that at the next meeting of the Partnership, there would be a discussion of eliminating the preference language in the Inclusionary Ordinance. Chuck Eisenberg and Josephine Mc Neil will work with Amanda Berman on revised language. The Partnership will work with the Fair Housing Committee as well.

- Extremely low-income housing strategy.

The subcommittee on services (Mark Caggiano, Kathi Marchi, Josephine McNeil, Marva Serotkin) presented a statement outlining services for extremely low and low income individuals and families. Suggestions were made to include additional services. Observation was made to add other populations, e.g. seniors, in a separate statement. There was interest in the concept of a community foundation that will be pursued at an upcoming Partnership meeting.

- Zoning redesign.  
Subcommittee presented draft goals that will guide the Partnership's evaluation and recommendations regarding specific changes to the code throughout the zoning redesign process. The members revised the draft language in real-time. The updated goals include:
  - Create zoning that allows for a greater diversity of housing types. The Partnership supports a diverse housing stock for Newton with a mix of options that includes both rental and ownership, multifamily and single-family, and smaller homes and apartments that offer lower price points.
  - Create zoning that supports more housing in locations that offer greater and more equitable social and economic opportunities for low- and middle-income households. This includes in locations that have access to transportation, jobs, and services.
  - Create zoning rules that provide predictability, simplify the approvals process, and reduce the cost of housing production, including reducing and eliminating special permit requirements in certain districts to allow for more as of right multi-family development.

It was moved by Chuck Rosenberg and seconded by Marva Serotkin to adopt revised language of the goals for zoning redesign presented by Eliza Datta. The vote by the Partnership was unanimous.

### Project Updates

Staff provided the following project updates:

- Armory. Affirmative Investments has been selected to conduct the feasibility analysis of the Armory project. The consultancy is expected to be completed in 3-4 months, submitted to the JAPG with a final report to the Reuse Committee. Affirmative Investments will present to the NHP.
- Riverside. It is expected that the Land Use Committee will present a Board Order to the Council in September. There are 103 affordable units and a \$7m mitigation package.
- Dunstan East. Has been approved by ZBA.
- Riverdale. Has been approved by ZBA.
- Newton COVID-19 Emergency Housing Relief Program. 143 checks were issued totaling \$186,000. Funds remain available.

### Golda Meir House Expansion Project

The presentation of the project was made by Rachel Belanger and Zoe Weinrobe from 2Life Communities. Lizbeth Heyer abstained from the discussion and vote due to a conflict of interest. This is an expansion of the existing Golda Meir House. 2Life Communities has submitted a request for HOME funds and CPA funds totally \$1.5m. 9 units will be designated for formerly chronically homeless individuals in accordance with the requirements of receiving HUD funding.

Discussion followed regarding the ethnic breakdown of the current residents. Staff responded that the residents are Chinese, Russian and others with a small percentage of Blacks and Brown individuals. Josephine McNeil explained that there are only 31 Black families living in subsidized housing in Newton and encouraged 2Life Communities to extend outreach to include Black and Brown individuals. This project is subject to the 70% preference for Newton residents. All units will be subsidized in perpetuity. There will be 174 units at the completion of the project.

Amanda Berman explained that if the HOME funds are not spent on this project, the funds will revert to the Consortium.

It was moved by Chuck Eisenberg and seconded by John Hennessy to approve funding from HOME and CPA. The vote was approved unanimously.

### Upcoming Meetings

NHP meetings will be held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month 6-8pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Marva Serotkin