

Newton Housing Partnership Meeting
Notes from September 15, 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, Barney Heath, Eamon Bencivengo, Dana Hanson, members of the community

The summary of the August meeting will be presented at the October meeting.

Haywood House Funding Request

Amy Zarechian, Director, Newton Housing Authority, and staff presented a request for additional funding for the construction of Haywood House. The project is a tax credit project with 55 apartments for individuals over 62 years of age. It is on campus with another NHA building. 32 <60% AMI (11<30%AMI) and 25 units under 99% AMI. The original budget was \$28.5M compared with the current budget of \$29.8M. The additional costs consist of construction costs greater than budget and the addition of a ramp and lift. The latter costs totaling \$327,900, which is the request of the City for CDBG and CPA. Steve Tise expressed his support of the strong team who will work on the project. Amanda Berman stated that the Mayor supports the project, which is consistent with the consolidated plan for new funding.

It was moved by Josephine McNeil and seconded by Marva Serotkin and voted by all members with Chuck Eisenberg abstaining who is a consultant to NHA to support additional funding.

Newton Housing Partnership Initiatives

- Update from the Subcommittee on extremely low income housing strategy. The Subcommittee (Josephine McNeil, Mark Caggiano, Marva Serotkin, Kathi Marchi) described an approach to address economic self-sufficiency for this population modelled after a program implemented by CAN DO. The goal of the program is to move extremely low income individuals and families to become self-

sufficient and move out of low income housing. The approach is mentoring economic mobility. A discussion followed regarding funding sources. Amanda Berman stated that the City budget for human services is \$300,000.

The NHP voted to support the concept with the understanding that the Subcommittee should flesh out a proposal.

Amanda Berman stated that the RFP for Human Services funding will be circulated in January.

Lizbeth Heyer reminded the committee that there continues to be a need for services for seniors.

- **Zoning Redesign.**

Staff reported that a schedule for voting on zoning redesign for residential will be published soon. The goal is to create greater diversity of housing options. A grant has been submitted to the MAPC Racial Equity Municipal Action Plan. There has been no decision as of the meeting.

A discussion followed regarding an amendment to the IZ to reduce the 70% preference for Newton residents. It was reported that Brookline reduced its preference to 25%. Josephine McNeil and Chuck Eisenberg agreed to meet with the staff to develop the amendment.

As for the Riverside project, there is no need for action of the preference as tenant applications are likely 5 years out.

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 by November 30th with a final report to the Reuse Committee. Affirmative Investments will present to the NHP in October. The special legislation authorizing purchase by the City expires end of year.
- **Dunstan East.** A lawsuit has been filed in Middlesex Court by some abutters.
- **The Emergency Housing Relief Program** has been extended for three months. Of the 180 households funded to date, 55% are under 30% AMI, 70% are white, 14% are Black and 11% are Asian. Question was

raised about an approach to assist these families at the end of the funding cycle including assistance for training and jobs.

Upcoming Meetings

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Marva Serotkin