

Newton Housing Partnership Meeting  
Notes from January 5, 2021 Meeting  
ZOOM Meeting  
6:00-7:00 pm

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

Others in Attendance: Amanda Berman, Barney Heath, Eamon Bencivengo, members of the community and City Council

This was a special meeting to consider the Coleman House Renovation Project funding request. The meeting was chaired by Marva Serotkin.

Elise Selinger, project director for 2LifeCommunities and Jeff Sacks, chair-elect of 2LifeCommunities Board of Directors, presented the response to questions raised by Partnership members at the December 15, 2020 meeting. Questions related to two categories: accessibility compliance and accommodation and ethnicity of residents.

Jeff Sacks described the commitment of 2LifeCommunities to increase the number of Black residents in their portfolio while acknowledging that racial diversity is lacking currently. Newer properties have a greater number of Black residents than older established properties. Weinberg has 25% Black residents and Brown Family has only 6% Black residents as a consequence of local preference. Currently 5% of the waitlist for Coleman is Black and the current occupants are 1.8% Black.

Partnership members asked whether Black individuals were interested in moving to Newton and the impact of local preference on selection. Josephine McNeil inquired if 2LifeCommunities if has presented the project to the Fair Housing Committee. Elise Selinger responded that there had not been a submission to the Fair Housing Committee but would pursue. Barney Heath explained that submission to Fair Housing was not required of developers.

Elise Selinger reviewed the responses to Steve Tise's questions regarding compliance with accessibility regulations. Steve Tise stated that the plan seemed

to be in compliance though there were some technical issues. Partnership members expressed concern about lack of full wheelchair accessibility. Steve Tise offered to work with 2LifeCommunities to go further than requirements to enhance aging in the community.

Amanda Berman presented a summary of City of Newton affordable housing data between FY16 and December 2020, including funds expended, construction completed, and projects approved during this time. Of the 1030 units included in this data matrix:

- 64% family
- 29% senior
- 7% family and special needs

During this period, approximately \$22m in CDBG, HOME and CPA funds was awarded / expended per Federal HUD and CPA guidelines (with a CPA balance of approximately \$8m). Partnership members agreed that this data requires further discussion.

Eliza Datta noted that the project meets the criteria for project review developed by the Partnership.

It was moved by Chuck Eisenberg and seconded by Steve Tise to recommend to the Planning and Development Board, Committee Preservation Committee and the City Council approval of the Coleman project. The vote was unanimous with Josephine McNeil abstaining.

NHP meetings will be held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month 6-8pm. The January 19<sup>th</sup> meeting will start at 6pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marva Serotkin