

APPROVED

Newton Housing Partnership Meeting

Notes from January 19, 2021 Meeting

Zoom Meeting

6:00-8:00 pm

Partnership Members in Attendance: 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

Summary of the meeting of January 5, 2021. Josephine McNeil requested a review of the data presented in the notes regarding affordable units. The notes will be revised with input from Amanda Berman and Josephine McNeil. It was moved by Chuck Eisenberg to approve the notes for the meeting with the revision as requested. The vote to approve was unanimous.

Affordable Housing Trusts

Shelly Goehring from Massachusetts Housing Partnership presented an overview of housing trusts. The Newton City Council has docketed this item. Lizbeth Heyer stated that the Newton Housing Partnership will make a recommendation to the City Council and Mayor regarding a housing trust. It was noted that the City has considered forming a trust in the past and the proposal was not supported by the City Council that included the current Mayor at the time. Barney Heath stated that the City Council will take up this item in March or April. Members of the Community Preservation Committee were in attendance to participate in the presentation. Shelly Goehring presented an overview and made the following points:

- The Housing Trust legislation was passed following the passage of the Community Preservation Act.
- There are 140 trusts in the Commonwealth. These trusts are public entities that typically act more nimbly as a separate entity to facilitate development of affordable housing.
- The Boards are appointed by the Mayor.

- There are many sources of funding in addition to CPA funds that include IZ, real estate transfer fees, tax deductible donations. For example in Cambridge the trust receives 80% of the City's CPA funds.
- Many trusts have paid staff.
- The steps prior to forming a trust is a housing need analysis, followed by setting priorities and creating benchmarks.
- Essential to define low and moderate income.

Questions posed by the attendees were as follows:

- Is there data regarding the number of ELI Black and Brown individuals and families who have benefited from housing sponsors by trusts?
- Do community preference ordinances pertain to trusts?
- Is there a requirement for public bidding?

Josephine McNeil mentioned that the City of Newton has a procurement policy that requires public bidding.

No information was available to respond to the other questions.

The following cities and towns were identified as good models:

- Beverly with a very supportive Mayor
- Cambridge
- Brookline
- Somerville
- Brewster

A discussion among members followed regarding the relationship between a trust and existing City functions. Question raised about the impact on existing functions and what issues would be uniquely addressed by a trust. Eliza Datta asked whether a trust can streamline development rather than be additive. Josephine McNeil asked when this was docketed and the position of the Mayor.

#### City of Newton Housing Development/Funding Data

Barney Heath informed the NHP that the City has retained a consultant to assist in the reconsideration of the current community preference ordinance. The engagement is limited in scope and will not answer many questions regarding current DEI. Lizbeth Heyer informed that the NHP will work on the scope of the consultancy with staff and coordinate with the Fair Housing Committee and staff will return to the NHP with the scope.

## FY22 Annual Action Plan Consultation

\_\_\_\_\_ Staff presented the FY22 Annual Action Plan that pertains only to federal funds (HOME/CDBG/ESG). Staff will return with the level of funding included in the total for Newton.

## Coleman House Vote

It was moved by Chuck Eisenberg and seconded by Marva Serotkin to support the Coleman House plan as presented. There were 5 in favor and 1 abstention.

## Project Updates

Staff announced that the Reuse Committee will consider the proposal for the City to purchase the Armory for a dollar and make a final recommendation to the City Council. Staff reported that there is potentially \$560,000 available for the Armory.

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