

DRAFT

Newton Housing Partnership Meeting  
Notes from November 16, 2021, Meeting  
Conference Call Meeting  
6:00-8:00 pm

Approved at 1/18/22 meeting

Partnership Members in Attendance: Mark Caggiano, Eliza Datta, Chuck Eisenberg, Ann Houston, Marva Serotkin, Albert Simmons, Stephen Tise

Others in Attendance: Amanda Berman, Eamon Bencivengo, Hattie Kerwin Derrick, members of the community

The October 19, 2021, meeting summary was unanimously approved.

Marva Serotkin chaired the meeting.

Recommendation to the Mayor re: ARPA Funds for Affordable Housing

The Partnership reviewed the draft letter to the Mayor prepared by Josephine McNeil and Lizbeth Heyer, including the additional recommendations by Lizbeth to support high priority capital projects for the NHA. Eliza Datta reported on a call sponsored by CHAPA regarding the ARPA funds for state-owned public housing. There is a significant deficit in the current funding for preservation and maintenance of affordable housing in the Commonwealth. Chuck Eisenberg reported that the deficit has been estimated at \$3.5b. VOTE: Chuck Eisenberg moved and seconded by Eliza Datta to approve the letter as presented to include redevelopment and acquisition of property for the creation of affordable housing. The vote in favor was unanimous.

Zoning Redesign

Those who attended the ZAP meeting at which zoning redesign was discussed reported that the meeting was attended by anti and pro development in the village centers. The expectation is that ZAP will prioritize zoning design and recommend to the City Council. Lynn Weissberg encouraged the Partnership to advocate for affordable housing in the redesign and to include the walking shed in the consideration.

Marva Serotkin will recommend that this item be included on the agenda for the December meeting as it is projected that the Council will take up the issue in early January.

### Housing's Role in DEI

Amanda Berman reported that the Council voted to lower the local preference threshold to 25% from 70% with at least one fully accessible unit in each building. Amanda Berman thanked the Partnership for its role in this change. Partnership members congratulated Amanda Berman who had taken a lead advocating for the change. A question was raised about the date of implementation and whether this change applies to certain current projects. The Legal Department is researching this question and whether this change applies to 40b projects.

The Partnership continued its discussion of policy issues related to property manager tenant selection practices. Amanda Berman recommended that the Partnership select a few of the barriers cited in the Barrett Report and develop action plan for addressing. Partnership members looked to more in depth understanding of the barriers. Eliza Datta advocated spending time identifying best practices to apply to projects going forward. There are several entities involved in the lottery and selection process including lottery companies and developers. The following action items were identified to gain a better understanding of the barriers:

- Amanda Berman will ask Judy Barrett to identify best practices by communities and the source of her list of barriers
- Albert Simmons will speak to his colleagues at BHA and request that someone present to the Partnership
- Albert Simmons will inquire about the practices in Brookline

### Project Updates

Affordable Housing Trust. Amanda Berman reported that the November 18 ZAP meeting includes discussion and possible vote on the Trust. Chuck Eisenberg and Lizbeth Heyer are planning to attend. Chuck Eisenberg reported that the proposal has been watered down; however, Amanda Berman indicated that ZAP has not put forward any proposed changes to date.

To address the Partnership's concern about potential funding sources for a Trust, Eliza Datta reported on her review of CPC funding for affordable housing. She noted that this information is available on the CPC website.

The CPC's target for affordable housing is 35%. During the past 10 years, 51% of CPA funds have gone to affordable housing projects. There were 20 awards during this time, with several going to activities such as homebuyer or rental assistance, and the balance to development projects. There have been 10 development projects funded over the past 10 years, with the average award of \$1.6m.

The CPC received approximately \$5m this year from the CPA surcharge and State funding match, so that 35% of that amount would be \$1.75m and 50% would be \$2.5m.

The Partnership provided the following guidance to Lizbeth Heyer in representing the position of the Partnership:

- CPC funding for affordable housing at 50% based upon experience
- Do not water down the role and authority of the Trust
- Identify the need to make funding reliable year to year

West Newton Armory. Eamon Bencivengo reported that the public comment period regarding the proposals closes on November 30. Partnership members were encouraged to comment as individuals.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Marva Serotkin