

FINAL

Newton Housing Partnership Meeting
Notes from May 17, 2022 Meeting
Conference Call Meeting
6:00-8:00 pm

Approved on 6/21/22

Partnership Members in Attendance: Eliza Datta, Chuck Eisenberg, Lizbeth Heyer, Josephine McNeil, David Rockwell, Marva Serotkin, Albert Simmons, Stephen Tise

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

The April 19, 2022 meeting summary will be submitted at the June meeting.

New NHP Member Announcement

Lizbeth Heyer welcomed David Rockwell as a new member of the NHP. He is a Newton resident and a former director of the lending team at MHP. David Rockwell commented that he is an advocate for additional affordable housing in Newton and that he is eager to be involved.

Crafts Street Project/Senior Housing with Services Discussion

Damien Chaviano representing the Crafts Street and Washington Street Projects was welcomed to the meeting. It was agreed at the last meeting of the NHP when Crafts Street was discussed that there would be a presentation about senior living/housing. Lizbeth Heyer shared a presentation on the topic: economics of aging, siloed misalignment of housing and services and options for elders. Selected data of the presentation follows:

- Median income of MA residents is \$17,000, the largest gap between income and cost of living in the US
- This gap is particularly significant for people of color and women
- The situation is not static and gets worse with advancing age
- Need vouchers to close the gap between LIHTC funding and income
- To be eligible for LTSS through Medicaid, the individual must have income at or below \$12,000

- MA ranks #1 in the US for nursing home admission per capita
 - Options for elders include independent living, assisted living and CCRC
- The presentation was enlightening to the NHP and raised many questions.

Amanda Berman presented an overview of the provisions in the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance regarding Elder Housing with Services.

Selected provisions follow:

- Base amenities provided must be comparable to base amenities offered to all regardless of income
- Stipulates 5% IZ beds up to 80% AMI
- Included is a cash payment By Right Option that the developer may choose to satisfy the IZ requirement in lieu of providing units.
- The cash payment is divided between the City's IZ fund and Newton Housing Authority

Damien Chavino explained that the developers are proposing a \$12m cash payment in lieu of services. He stated that Engine 6 is supporting this proposal.

It was moved by Eliza Datta and seconded by Chuck Eisenberg to support the payment in lieu of services. Six voted yes and one member abstained.

Chuck Eisenberg recommended that the NHP letter of support explain the reason for the support.

1314 Washington Street/Santander Project

The Washington Street Project was discussed.

It was moved by Josephine McNeil and Seconded by Eliza Datta to support the project. Six voted in favor, one member abstained.

Economic Mobility and Self Sufficiency

Amanda Berman announced that the Mayor has allocated \$2m to address the issues identified in the Community Needs Assessment Report. \$1.75m has been allocated for comprehensive services to assist families to achieve economic self-sufficiency and \$250k for a low barrier cash program for families disproportionately impacted by COVID.

An advisory committee has been appointed to advise a consultant in writing the RFP and program implementation. Marva Serotkin has been appointed to the committee. NHP had advocated for such a fund prior to COVID. Post COVID and the release of the consultant's report on the results from Community Needs Assessment Survey several groups including the Newton Coalition of Black Residents, U-CHAN, the Newton League of Women Voters and some Newton City

Councilors wrote letters to the Mayor suggesting that she allocate American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Funds for services to families disproportionately economically impacted by COVID.

Project Updates from staff:

- Amanda Berman: Funds for the emergency support program are nearly exhausted. 200 households have been served.
- Eamon Bencivengo: The Armory project has been awarded a total of \$4.9m from various City sources – CPA; IZ funds; CDBG and HOME. Project eligibility letter would be going to DHCD this week. The project will be heard by the ZBA in September for issuance of a comprehensive permit; construction begins in 2023 with occupancy in 2025. Given supply chain issues there is a 23-25% increase in construction costs.
- Barney Heath: Zoning Redesign. The focus has been on village centers with recommendations to ZAP during several meetings in June. Barney Heath presentation included charts that examined the impact of various zoning options. In response to a question about the relationship between the village centers zoning plan and the MBTA Communities Plan issued by the State, Barney Heath responded that since the villages are close to the MBTA that village zoning will address the MBTA Communities Plan. Comments were made about traffic implications during the review process and the size of units that have implications for families. Chuck Eisenberg suggested that presentations should include traffic analyses for the various options. Josephine McNeil suggested that the NHP should be a part of the Community Engagement Network initiative being led by Nevena Pilipovic-Wengler. Lizbeth suggested that Josephine, Chuck and she should discuss offline

Agenda Items for Future Meetings:

1. Continued discussion of the village and MBTA zoning plan
2. Procedure for reviewing lease-up data in collaboration with Fair Housing Committee

Upcoming Meetings:

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

The meeting- adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marva Serotkin