



Ruthanne Fuller  
Mayor

Barney Heath  
Director of  
Planning & Development

Malcolm Lucas  
Housing Planner

*Members*

Esther Schlorholtz, Chair  
Donna Rigg, Vice-Chair  
Kathy Laufer  
Josephine McNeil  
Tatjana Meschede  
Judy Korzenowski  
Alexandra Weiffenbach  
Ellen Tanowitz

1000 Commonwealth Ave.  
Newton, MA 02459  
T 617/796-1120  
F 617/796-1142

[www.newtonma.gov](http://www.newtonma.gov)

---

## CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

### Fair Housing Committee

---

## MEETING MINUTES

Date: May 4, 2022  
Time: 8:00 a.m.  
Place: Virtual (Zoom)

**Members Present:** Esther Schlorholtz, Chair  
Donna Rigg, Vice Chair  
Kathy Laufer  
Alexandra Weiffenbach  
Judy Korzenowski  
Ellen Tanowitz  
Josephine McNeil

**Members Absent:** Tatjana Meschede

**Staff Present:** Malcolm Lucas, Housing Planner  
Barney Heath, Director of Planning and Development  
Jini Fairley, ADA/Sec. 504 Coordinator  
Hattie N. Kerwin Derrick, Director of Community  
Engagement & Inclusion

**Public Present:** Councilor Julia Malakie  
Stephen Buchbinder, Attorney  
Mark Development Staff

Malcolm Lucas, Housing Planner served as recorder, Ted Hess-Mahan, Chair called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

### 1. Approval of April 2022 minutes

➤ Upon a motion by KL, the minutes for April 2022 were approved 6-0-1, with AW abstaining.

### 2. Meeting Schedules for July and August

➤ ES was concerned about having quorum for these months and wanted to make sure and check their availability. JK and JM stated that they will be

travelling. AW available for July and not August. JM stated to find a date to meet in between those dates. KL stated that she will be traveling also and stated that meeting could be combined.

- ES recommended to try to schedule one meeting during July or August and try for an alternate time. ES asked ML to work on a poll to get everyone's answer.

### **3. (Reserve for Project Reviews)**

- Projects were not reviewed in order to make sure Open Meeting Law was followed. The reason being is the projects were not identified on the agenda and materials were not sent to the Committee in advanced. ES asked Mark Development staff and their attorney to reschedule, and to please forward the materials about the projects for June's meeting. Their attorney stated that they did not have any time constraints and it was fine for them to reschedule for June and that they will send the presentation to the committee.

### **4. Discussion on Distribution of Informational Documents**

- JM asked this because she thinks that it should be a policy about sending information within the communication of the committee. And when information is sent it should be explained on why it's being sent. JM feels that some of the information is not being read and may not be any interest of the committee. Lastly, JM discussed that sometimes the information could also be overwhelming to the committee if multiple resources are being sent within the same month. DR stated that she normally reviews things that are forwarded and has not notice anything that was not relevant. DR also feels that she is not flooded with information.
- KL likes the idea that information is forwarded to the committee, and it is up to the committee members to read it. KL stated that she thinks all information should go through the Chair. ES agrees that it should be a gate keeper for the flow of information but feels that it is more appropriate to go through DR, Vice Chair since she is works on posting pertinent information to Facebook and the website. DR stated that she did not mind taking this on but asked to be informed about the information that is being sent.
- JM asked about the information being posted on Facebook and is there any exchange and have people commented on post. DR stated that people comment but it is minimal and gave an example about Phill Herr's ceremony. People commented on how great the ceremony went. DR stated that she does not respond to comments.
- DR stated to the committee if a member wants to send pertinent information out to the committee to send it to her with a blurb of what it is, and she will review. If relevant she will forward it to ML to be distributed to the committee.

### **5. Subcommittee Updates**

#### **• Lottery Results & Lease-ups Sub-Committee**

- JM stated that they had a brief meeting and talked about what they wanted and did not make any decisions. JM stated that more information is needed from the management companies in order to have a further discussion about their tenant selection policies. HKD stated that the next subcommittee meeting is set for May 24<sup>th</sup>.
- KL stated that next meeting will be full of information because that have the Attorney General's filling of the tenant screening discrimination study in the Boston Globe. National rental software companies that are used by property management

are being sued for their screening system that discriminates against voucher holders. ES asked the link should be forwarded again if people did not see it . ET clarified of what the software did. The program screened out section 8 voucher holders which is against the law.

- KL stated that it is really not a lottery subcommittee and stated that they have talked about this on the subcommittee and figured out that the lottery is really not the issue of why people are not moving to Newton in these units. KL stated that the name of the subcommittee should be or rent or lease up. JM motioned to rename the committee KL seconded. All in favor to rename the committee The lottery results and lease up subcommittee.

- **Membership & Nominating Sub-Committee**

- DR stated that they are waiting on representation from the Human Rights Commission and the Commission on Disability. HKD stated that there was some interest from the COD and there may be some members who will attend June's meeting and once she hears about any other interested candidates, she will let the FHC know. HKD stated that the 8 o'clock time is tough for people. ES stated we could discuss this for the next meeting and asked ML to do a doodle poll. ML reminded the committee about a recent poll and most of the committee agreed mornings were best but stated that he could do another one.

- **Fair Housing Award Sub-Committee**

- ES stated that the went very well and got great feedback and compliments and there were 35 people and people on zoom as well. And was pleased to honor Phil and honored Ted as well. The Mayor and Councilor President Albright presented. JM thanked Esther for putting it together.

- **Fair Housing Literature Sub-Committee**

- ET worked on a draft with THM in February, and she sent that draft to ES for reviews and was sent back. She stated that she could work on it but asked assistance from DR because the next month will be tough for her. DR stated that she will take a quick look at the draft and send it back. JM thinks it could be a combination of things a FAQ, Articles and other information that could be helpful. KL stated that she loved the idea of a FAQ and factsheet and stated that looking at the website of what information is posted already because the items may not be current. KL stated that it will be a progression of how they communicate with the public about Fair Housing and their role in the city.
- ES stated that she has reviewed the website and stated that it has great information and there also there needs to be some updating of some information and explained what items and some reports that are out of date.

## **6. Fair Housing Committee Priorities**

- **Project Review of Housing Developments**

- The discussion was about revising the document and wanting to provide the committee and have the developer respond to what data they want. ES will work with BH. JM stated that she would be willing to help with this and it would be nice if anyone in the committee to step up. ES would like to recommend that she works on

something and give it to JM and to Barney. ES stated that this could go on the June meeting and stated that JF can also participate.

- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

- DR is wondering if this is a separate priority or adding it to the lottery and lease up discussion. KL thinks that it should be a part of every discussion that the committee has and to start to integrate it. JM stated that the Committee needs to be trained on this item and recommended doing a retreat. DR stated that she is agreement for a training in DEI and asked if another subcommittee be formed. ES agreed and stated that this is very important on all topics including Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

- **FHC Training for Committee and Public**

- DR recommended a subcommittee for this topic. KL stated she did not think a subcommittee should be formed at this time and clarified that a discussion should happen first then one should be formed after. DR asked if people would put a list together for June and JM stated that this would be too soon and should be a discussion with what training that they need. KL recommended that members should create their list over the summer and ES and ML compile the information and a discussion should happen in September. DR agreed.

- **AI/Consortium Fair Housing Testing**

- There is not specific information. The Consortium at this time does not have a consultant to work on this program. DHCD is currently implementing a program that is utilizing many of the local fair housing testing resources, so the Consortium is waiting for another six months, possibly more before they re-release the RFP.

- **Annual Reporting Requirements for Multi-family Minority Rentals**

- ES recommended to put this in another subcommittee. ES thinks it is related to the lottery and lease up subcommittee and thought this topic should be looked into more deeply because there is no time.

- **Use of ARPA Funds**

- April 19 the Mayor sent a message of what funds were used about some of the future uses. JM funds were allocated to the schools and for other services. JM stated that the committee should make recommendations now they if they are going to do it. JM recommended the committee to read the community needs assessment in order to have a better understanding to discuss any recommendations or thoughts that they may have.

- **Collaboration with Related Newton Commissions and Committees**

- There was not a discussion on this matter.

- **Collaboration with Human Rights Committee on Fair Housing Complaint Process and Form**

- There was not a discussion on this matter.

## **7. Next meeting Wednesday, June 1, 2022**

\*Supplementary materials are available for public review in the Planning Department of City Hall (basement) the Friday before the meeting. For more information contact **Malcolm Lucas at 617.796.1149**. The location of this meeting/event is wheelchair accessible and Reasonable Accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities who require assistance. If you need a Reasonable Accommodation, please contact the city of Newton's ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, Jini Fairley, at least two business days in advance (2 weeks for ASL or CART) of the meeting/event: [jfairley@newtonma.gov](mailto:jfairley@newtonma.gov) or (617) 796-1253. The city's TTY/TDD direct line is: 617-796-1089. For the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), please dial 711