



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

Barney Heath
Director of
Planning & Development

Malcolm Lucas
Housing Planner

Members

Esther Schlorholtz, Chair
Donna Rigg, Vice-Chair
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

CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Fair Housing Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Date: October 4, 2022

Time: 8:00 a.m.

Place: Virtual (Zoom)

Members Present: Esther Schlorholtz, Chair

Donna Rigg, Vice Chair

Josephine McNeil

Alexandra Weiffenbach

Judy Korzenowski

Tatjana Meschede

Ellen Tanowitz

Members Absent:

Staff Present:

Malcolm Lucas, Housing Planner

Jini Fairley, ADA/Sec. 504 Coordinator

Amanda Berman

Eamon Bencivengo

Public Present:

Sam Scoppettone, Civico Development

Taylor Bearden, Civico Development

Caitlin Madden, MetroWest CDC

Sharone Small, MetroWest CDC

Pam Wright, Councilor

Andreae Downs, Councilor

Alicia Bowman, Councilor

Sharyn Roberts

Malcolm Lucas, Housing Planner served as recorder, Esther Schlorholtz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

1. Approval of August and September 2022 minutes



- Upon a motion by DR, the minutes for August and September 2022 were approved 7-0-0, with TM seconding the motion.

2. Armory Presentation

- Taylor Bearden gave an introduction and began the [presentation](#). Taylor Bearden then explained the background on Civico and MetroWest to the committee and talked about projects they have worked on in the past (Austin Street and Packard Street in Newton). TB stated that the Armory will be 100% affordable and they are preposing 43 units of affordable family housing with a variety. All units will be at and below 60% Area Median Income. They stated they are trying to create an intergenerational family compound that accommodates people at various life stages.
- The developer will be committed to preserving the historic architecture of the structure. The current proposal for the breakdown of the affordable units are:
 - 15 Units at 30% AMI
 - 28 Units at 60% AMI
- MetroWest will provide an integrated resident services program to identify and address the needs of each housing tenant on an ongoing basis. The office will be on site. Maloney Properties will be managing the property. After this discussion they proceeded to rank themselves on the FHC's ranking tool. Affordability (3) Accessibility (2) Visitability (3) Proximities to Employment (3) Proximities to Transportation (1) Discriminatory Impacts (3). After Taylor Bearden asked the Chair if she or the Committee have any questions.
- The project completion is estimated in the fall 2026. ES stated that she will work with Metro West and Civico on the letter that the FHC would provide.

3. Training Program Planning for Winter

- ES has been working with CHAPA and was introduced to Suffolk Law School and their housing discrimination program. ES stated that Kelly Vieira, Director of Investigations and Outreach for the Suffolk Housing Discrimination Testing Program, gave a strong presentation when ES participated in one of her trainings. ES thought that it would be great to have her do a training for real estate professionals, so she reached out and invited her to speak on January 19th, 2023, at 8:30 am. The topic will be geared toward real estate professionals. ES thanked JK for agreeing to work with her on the invitation and outreach to real estate professionals and for agreeing to welcome the speaker and guests at the training.
- AW asked if it would be all day. ES stated that it will be an hour with 30 minutes for questions. JM asked will there be any discussion about the appraisal process and the valuation of properties for African American owners. ES said she has asked KV to include a brief overview of the appraisal issue in the presentation, as well as other issues including discriminatory deed restrictions and exclusive listings. JM stated most realtors in Newton deal with homeownership and not rentals. ES said that she would communicate this to KV so that it can be incorporated in the training. JM stated that she could reach out to the HUD regional office to get more information about a program that they have. AB said that it would be valuable to have a training on discrimination in appraisals and include City Councilors in the training. ES stated that this topic should definitely be addressed in more depth but thinks it should be on a different date separate from the upcoming training and stated that that topic is really valuable for the committee and others to learn about.

- ES asked JM about her progress on a training program for members of the committee. JM stated that she will reach out to the HUD regional office to get more information about a training program that they have.

4. ARPA Follow up

- DR spoke about the letter sent out by the committee and spoke about the Mayor's response and pursuing more funding for discrimination testing. The Mayor responded to the letter thanking the committee for their recommendations but explained that most of the funds are designated for creating more affordable housing and for direct assistance to people in need in Newton and that the FHC's request for discrimination testing funds from ARPA was denied.

5. Village Center Zoning Review

- ES reviewed the materials shared with the committee about the zoning redesign in village centers. ES urged people to visit the library to see the display. The aim was to have a discussion today about providing a letter to Councilor Crossley who chairs ZAP. ES spoke about the Department of Justice document, which was shared with the committee for the meeting and is also on the City's website and spoke about the fair housing act (FHA) pertaining to zoning laws. She talked about the basis for review of zoning in the FHA, including disparate impact and perpetuation of segregated housing patterns. She discussed specific aspects of zoning that are identified in the FHA and reviewed aspects of the City's process so far.
- JM asked what are the specifics of Fair Housing that has been discussed as a part of this zoning process. She asked what outcomes have been articulated that impacts Fair housing. ES described issues as listed in the document circulated to the committee. She said she will draft a letter and will be looking for the committee to comment on it to coincide with ZAP's request for comment.

6. Subcommittee Updates

• Lottery Results & Lease-ups Sub-Committee

- TM stated that Austin Street forwarded their data which brought out more questions, and the sub-committee agreed that they need to talk in more depth with those involved in the lottery process to understand it better. She said that the sub-committee invited a representative from SEB to talk to them next Friday. TM stated that she will forward the invite to the committee and encouraged members to attend.

• Membership & Nominating Sub-Committee

- DR said that she has been in contact with Hattie Kerwin Derrick and asked for suggestions. JM asked the committee if they would be supportive of including a person on the committee who had direct experience as a tenant in affordable housing. ES thought that was a great idea and commissioned the committee to help recruit. AW agreed that she was willing to reach out to her residents if that would be helpful.
- ES also stated that they have to recruit a fair housing attorney and someone from the HRC and there should be some focus on that since it has been a long time without members representing these categories. DR said that she has asked to

attend a meeting of the HRC to bring this to their attention. She said she will update the committee on her progress.

- **Fair Housing Award Sub-Committee**

- ES said she continues to look for recommendations.

- **Fair Housing Literature Sub-Committee**

7. Fair Housing Committee Priorities Discussion

- ES asked the committee if there is any further discussion about the priorities that the committee has been discussing at its recent meetings. She summarized the list and asked if the committee would like to offer any amendments. She noted that the list is not static and may change as the committee thinks necessary. The committee discussed the substantial priorities and how to organize them in a more manageable way. ES said we would continue to consider how to do so. The committee provided some updates on the priorities.

- **Promote housing choice for diverse populations to advance Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH), with focus on race/ethnicity, public subsidy and disability**

- **Identify and work to overcome barriers to successful tenancies and to improve processes/practices for tenant selection in lottery and market rate multi-family rental housing**

- The sub-committee on lottery and lease-ups is holding meetings with lottery specialists to better understand the process of tenant selection.

- **Promote improved practices for real estate professionals to achieve more housing choice for diverse populations**

- The committee is preparing a training program for January 19, 2023, to provide training to real estate professionals on Fair Housing.

- **Promote effective processes/practices for new affordable homeownership and resales**

- ES asked ML to summarize the purchasers of affordable units at an upcoming meeting of the committee, including: 1. The number of units 2. Demographics 3. Price.

- **Promote data collection on multi-family rental and new homeownership occupancy**

- The subcommittee on lottery and lease-ups is collecting rent-up data on affordable and market rental properties.

- **Promote FH training for real estate professionals, public and committee members**

- **Enhance Project Review of Housing Developments to advance AFFH**

- **Support AI/Consortium Fair Housing Testing and FH testing in Newton**

- **Collaborate with Related Newton Commissions and Committees to increase affordable housing for households of various sizes and lower incomes and to encourage increased funding for affordable housing**

- ES said that DR and she, representing the FHC, will be meeting this month with representatives of the Newton Housing Partnership and the Newton Affordable Housing Trust, coordinated by the City's Planning Department to discuss ways to coordinate the work of these groups to promote affordable housing efforts.

- **Promote affordable housing production in coordination with other City commissions and committees**
- **Support federal, state and city initiatives that promote AFFH**
- **Collaborate with Human Rights Committee on Fair Housing Complaint Process**
 - ES said that ML is organizing a meeting for members of HRC, FHC and the Planning Department to discuss the current Fair Housing Complaint Process. ML said that he has reached out to those that will attend.
- **Contribute to Newton's FH-related plans**
- **Enhance FH literature and website information and access for the public**
- **Address committee membership appointments with representation from Human Rights Commission and legal counsel with FH specialty**
 - DR said that she is reaching out to the HRC and will attend an upcoming meeting.
- **Promote Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging in Newton**

8. Next meeting Tuesday, November 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 or (617) 796-1253. The city's TTY/TDD direct line is: 617-796-1089. For the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), please dial 711