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Malcolm Lucas
Housing Planner

Members

Esther Schlorholtz, Chair
Donna Rigg, Vice-Chair
Josephine McNeil
Tatjana Meschede
Judy Korzenowski
Alexandra Weiffenbach
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CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Fair Housing Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Date: February 1, 2023

Time: 8:00 a.m.

Place: Virtual (Zoom)

Members Present: Esther Schlorholtz, Chair

Donna Rigg, Vice Chair

Judy Korzenowski

Josephine McNeil

Tatjana Meschede

Ellen Tanowitz

Members Absent: Alexandra Weiffenbach

Staff Present:

Malcolm Lucas, Housing Planner

Amanda Berman, Director of Housing & Community
Development

Jini Fairley, ADA/Sec. 504 Coordinator

Shaylyn Davis, Senior Community Development Planner

Public Present:

Alicia Bowman, Council

Sharyn Roberts

David Hedison

Steve West

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

1. Approval of January 2023 minutes

- Upon a motion by TM, JK seconded the motion. The minutes for January 2023 were approved 6-0-0.

2. Training for Real Estate Professionals Review



- ES stated the training went well and discussed the details of the date and spoke about the presenter Kelly Vieira from Suffolk Law. There were 108 attendees and stated that it was a strong interest. ES stated that the comments after the workshop were positive. ES stated that some of the feedback was that the focus should be on what real estate professionals should do in terms of what best practices can be used. ES did state that there was an appreciation for the history of the study that showed the discriminatory practices. ES stated that JK asked for the presenter to consider having this training as a part of continuing education and to receive education credit.
- ES mentioned the possibility of posting the training on the website and stated that the presenter stated that it would be fine to post for a month and a half for legal reasons and also to make sure the information does not go out of date. The one stipulation was to edit the video when the questions and answer part begin. ES asked ML to start working on this.

3. FY24 Annual Action Plan

- Amanda Berman introduced herself and the planning team and then proceeded to present the information about the Annual Action Plan process. The Housing and Community Development team as has met with various groups and committees. AB then discussed the following the allocations for each program. CDBG – 1.8 million, HOME – 1.6 million (Newton receives \$140,000 *HOME is shared amongst the Metro West Home Consortium which is made up of 13 surrounding communities) and ESG - \$165,000. AB further discussed the allocations in detail which are divided into different programs. [See presentation.](#) After the presentation AB opened the meeting up for questions.
- ES asked about the Housing Trust and why it was not a part of the groups that were reached out to. ES stated that she is pleased the fair housing testing is moving forward. ES stated that this has been a priority for the committee and that the committee would like to hear about the specifics for the scope.
- Shaylyn Davis stated that planning will include the FHC during the testing progress and explained that the testing will be a two-year contract and will start in March 2023. It will be up to 130 tests (10 tests per community and will focus on race and source of income) that will happen throughout the West Metro Consortium. SD stated that Suffolk is currently looking to hire a testing coordinator. The method will be [paired testing](#) the staff they are seeking will have law degrees.
- ES stated that she is really pleased that the testing is happening for the consortium and wanted to put this in context for the group. ES stated that the recent study that Suffolk law did was based on vouchers and black testers. And the discrimination results were that 86% of voucher holders and 71% of black testers had experienced discrimination. ES thanked the presenters.

4. Newton Stability/Mobility Initiative update

- AB stated that the mayor is close to making a public announcement and how she is going to be awarding \$1.75 million for the initiative. She explained that there was a 10-member advisory committee that worked with the city's consultant from UMass Donahue Institute to develop the RFP that were put out in the fall of 2022. AB stated that once the announcement is made, they will work from there and there will be more specifics then.

5. Proposed HUD Rule on Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing--Comment by FHC

- JM stated that the FHC should be aware of the [AFFH Rule](#) and be prepared to put some effort into working on it with planning and feels that this task should not be left for staff to do the work. She stated once the new rule is posted the committee will have 60 days to make comments. JM recommended having a more detailed discussion in at a FHC meeting or having a special meeting. ES agreed and stated that it is very important to have a response and asked the committee to read the information on the AFFH document that was forwarded to the committee.

6. Subcommittee Updates

• Lottery Results & Lease-ups Sub-Committee

- TM stated there is not much to report. February 14th meeting is their next meeting, and they are inviting a representative from Maloney Properties to present. TM briefly discussed Austin Street's lottery that they may have when vacant units are available. Austin Street's representative has shared data with TM and she is curious to review the data so they can better understand the lottery process.

• Membership & Nominating Sub-Committee

- DR introduced the two new potential members (Steve West and David Hedison). Steve West has been working in the affordable housing field since 1990 in a variety of capacities. Homeownership renovation, development and property management and worked on low-income tax credits. He stated that he would love to be a part of this committee and stated that any efforts that they can make as a city to make this a more diverse community he is willing to join.
- ES discussed the current number of members and spoke about two of the membership slots are designated for members from the Human Rights Commission and the Commission on Disabilities. ES asked about the process of re-writing the ordinance regarding possible elimination of the criteria of having places for members from these commissions.

• Fair Housing Award Sub-Committee

- ES asked if someone from the committee could join to help. ES stated it will be presented in April 2023 and stated that she has not started the work yet. ES stated that the award will be jointly given to Ted Hess Mahan and Kathy Laufer. They are the previous Chair and Vice Chair of the FHC.

• Fair Housing Literature Sub-Committee

- ET stated that it has been very busy and there has been no movement. She stated that she will come back to it when things settle down.

7. Fair Housing Committee Priorities Discussion

- **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**

- **Promote improved practices for real estate professionals to achieve more housing choice for diverse populations**
- **Promote effective processes/practices for new affordable homeownership and resales**
- **Promote data collection on multi-family rental and new homeownership occupancy**
- **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**
- **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**
- **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**
- **Promote Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging in Newton**

8. Next meeting Wednesday, March 1, 2023

*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