

NEEDHAM AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST

* MINUTES *

August 20, 2019

5:00 p.m. A meeting of the Needham Affordable Housing Trust was convened by the Select Board Chair John Bulian at the Needham Town Hall. Present were Mr. Matthew Borrelli, Mr. Moe Handel, Mr. Dan Matthews, Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick, Housing Trust Member Avery Newton, Director of Planning and Community Development Lee Newman, and Community Housing Coordinator Karen Sunnarborg. Ms. Cooley arrived at the meeting at 5:10.

Approval of Minutes –

Motion: Mr. Matthews moved that the Minutes from the March 26, 2019 meeting be approved. The motion was seconded by A

Ms. Newton. Unanimous: 6-0.

Motion: Mr. Borrelli moved that the Minutes from the August 7, 2018 meeting be approved. The motion was seconded by Ms. Newton. Unanimous: 6-0.

Status of Fund – Ms. Sunnarborg reported that there was \$8,717.50 deposited into the Fund in 2018 with another \$5,000 received thus far in 2019 for a total of \$13,717.50. Another \$4,758.60 in fees is also expected this year. Ms. Sunnarborg noted that she met with the Accounting Department to work out a protocol for paying contractors through the Small Repair Grant Program. She further mentioned that an outstanding question is whether the \$50,000 allocated by Town Meeting for this Program will be deposited into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund or remain in an existing Town account. Ms. Fitzpatrick said that she will research this issue.

Small Repair Grant Program – Members reviewed draft documents for the Small Repair Grant Program and made additional comments on the Program flyer, Program Summary and Application Package, Grant Agreement and Award Letter. The discussion concluded with a change in eligibility requirements for seniors from age 65 and older to at least age 60 in order to be aligned with the Town's Safety at Home Program. It was also decided that requiring at least three estimates from contractors is overly burdensome for such small amounts of funding and it was decided to only require a single estimate. There was some discussion about what the Housing Trust could do in the case of inadequate work and whether the contractors should be licensed and insured. It was decided that this too would be overly restrictive and that requiring the owner's sign-off on the job and photos of the completed work prior to payment would be sufficient. Another requirement that was dropped included requiring owner identification such as a driver's license or passport and eliminating a reference to whether the applicant rents or owns in the application. There were other suggestions regarding formatting, and agreement to accelerate the funding round in the first year of the program.

Motion: Mr. Matthews moved that the Trust approve the documents for the Small Repair Grant Program subject to minor technical corrections to be

made by the Town Manager. The motion was seconded by Mr. Handel. Unanimous: 7-0.

Housing Guidelines Update – Mr. Matthews indicated that he was reviewing the Needham Chapter 40B Guidelines that were prepared in 2012 by a Working Group of representatives from several boards and committees with technical support from Planning staff and a consultant. Now that the Town has surpassed the state 10% affordability threshold, it makes sense to revisit and update these Guidelines. Mr. Matthews stated that he was redlining the document and it was probably worthwhile to convene a similar working group to make appropriate revisions.

HOME Program Planning – Ms. Sunnarborg explained that she will be involved in drafting a number of documents over the next several months as part of the West Metro HOME Consortium’s process for the Five-Year Consolidated Plan for 2021-2025. Ms. Sunnarborg briefly described the function of the HOME Consortium and indicated that the Town will need to have some final endorsement of the document. Ms. Sunnarborg will insure that drafts of the Consolidated Plan components are reviewed prior to submission by the Town Manager and Director of Planning and Community Development and that a meeting of the Select Board will be scheduled at an appropriate time to review and sign-off on the Plan. There was some discussion about the level of compliance that is required for participation in the Consortium, and Ms. Sunnarborg suggested that the time involved in this work has been covered by HOME administrative funding. She added that HOME funding was important in supporting the High Rock development as well as the special needs facility at 1285 South Street. It is hoped that HOME funding can be accessed to also support the financial feasibility of an NHA-sponsored project with funding from the Consortium’s larger competitive pool. Ms. Cooley indicated that she would like to learn more about the compliance requirements, and Ms. Sunnarborg offered to provide a summary.

Pending Housing Issues – Ms. Sunnarborg stated that she is coordinating two resales as part of the High Rock Homes development, both of which have presented some challenges. The fees from these resales will be deposited into the Housing Trust Fund. She also indicated that she was involved in the turnover of the affordable rental unit at Needham Place. Ms. Sunnarborg added that the Chapter 40B comprehensive permit for 1180 Great Plain Avenue had been submitted to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

?5:55 p.m.

Motion: Mr. Handel moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Ms. Cooley. Unanimous: 7-0.