

SUDBURY HOUSING AUTHORITY

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MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

November 12, 2024

The SHA met in open session at 7:00 p.m. Those present: Chair: A. Lepak; Vice Chair: S. Cline; Treasurer: S. Swanger; Assistant Treasurer: F. Riepe; Executive Director: S. Cusolito

Also present: Carolyn Colby, Musketahquid Village; Tom Martin, Musketahquid Village; Janie Dretler, address withheld

Absent: Member: T. Vitvitsky

MINUTES

A motion was made by S. Swanger, seconded by F. Riepe, and unanimously voted, to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2024 Joint Session with the Sudbury Housing Trust as amended.

A motion was made by S. Cline, seconded by S. Swanger, and unanimously voted, to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2024 Special Session.

S. Cusolito addressed a comment made at the Special Session regarding the optimal bedroom count configuration for the proposed redevelopment. She stated that current and trending demographics of both the wait list and SHA residents suggests that two (2/2)-bedroom and two (3/1)-bedroom structures best reflects the demand. This was one of the questions SHA was asked to address by EOHLC as a follow-up to its full PHI submission; however, until a design architect is hired, the configuration cannot be determined definitively.

FINANCIALS

A motion was made by S. Cline, seconded by S. Swanger, and unanimously voted, to approve the checks written in October 2024.

NEW BUSINESS

FYE25 Q2 Financial Report: S. Cusolito reported that the FYE25 Q2 financial report was not received from the fee accountant. Commissioners expressed concern with the generally late receipt of the financial reports. S. Cusolito will follow up to learn if a second meeting is required in this instance and if the reports can be provided in more timely manner.

EOHLC-2026-SHA Subsidy Agreement: A motion was made by S. Cline, seconded by S. Swanger, and unanimously voted, to approve renewal of the Operating Subsidy Agreement between the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities and the Sudbury Housing Authority and to authorize Chair A. Lepak or Executive Director S. Cusolito to sign on behalf of the Housing Authority.

The current Agreement expires June 30, 2025. The renewal will be effective for five years. Commissioner Riepe asked if the reference heat pump subsidy will adjust, given the requirement for all-electric installations with their associated higher installation and maintenance costs. S. Cusolito noted that all units have been installed under grant programs, including a ductless installation to replace an oil-based system in one of the single-family homes. She referred to a Public Housing Notice issued last Spring, in which EOHLC communicated that funding support would not be provided for fossil fuel-based installations. She also referenced the poor outcome of the 2017 heat pump installations at the Village: several units began

failing within the first year, with the most recent failure involving an outdoor unit serving the Community Building. SHA has taken failed units offline, as components to repair are no longer available for the installed models. Failures primarily result from improper sizing for both heating and cooling functions, failure to hold charge, and use of condensate pumps on long runs with insufficient pitch. Units installed prior to 2017 have had fewer failures.

705 Rent Write-Off: A motion was made by A. Lepak, seconded by S. Cline, and unanimously voted, to approve a rent write-off of \$11,651 owed by a 705 resident, who recently vacated, and to continue to pursue collection.

S. Cusolito stated that the SHA worked extensively with the family to bring it into compliance; however, debt accrued due to chronic underreporting of income. The family decided to vacate the property, rather than comply with requests for documentation required for annual recertification. Although the family expressed interest in paying off the debt, there was disagreement over the amount. SHA was unable to make further adjustments in the absence of paperwork to support them. S. Cusolito noted that a collections action can still be pursued, even with the write-off.

FISH 288081, 667 Water Main Gate Valve Replacements Low Bid Approval: A motion was made by S. Cline, seconded by S. Swanger, and unanimously voted, to accept the bid of \$38,789 from Boston Mechanical Inc., the lowest responsible qualified bidder, for FISH 288081, 667 Water Main Gate Valve Replacement, with the provision that Sudbury Housing Authority will not accept/approve any Change Order that relates to space constraints, and to authorize S. Cusolito to sign the Owner-Contractor Agreement on behalf of the Sudbury Housing Authority.

S. Cusolito noted that the original advertisement included a mandatory walk-through, given the space constraints where the pipes are located, but that no responses were received. RCAT, which is facilitating the project, in concert with BLW, the design engineer, elected to amend the advertisement to exclude the requirement.

Public Housing Administration Notices S. Cusolito provided a link to the published notices.

Liaison Reports: SHT: The SHT met on October 10, following the joint Select and Planning Board meeting at which the Housing Production Plan was discussed. Neither board approved the HPP, primarily related to its inclusion of parcels such as Broadacres as possible housing sites. A. Lepak sent RHSO specialist L. Rust the CHAMP applicant profile relative to bedroom count. L. Rust noted that 30% of Meadow Walk renters of affordable units, where the rent is set to accommodate those at 80% AMI, have mobile vouchers. The WestMetro HOME Consortium conducted fair housing testing around acceptance rates for mobile voucher holders. Sudbury, Brookline, and Wayland have high refusal rates among landlords. The final report is anticipated by the end of the year. L. Rust plans to retire in 2026 and will train a co-director in 2025. The RHSO is requesting \$10,000 in FY26 CPA funds from each member town to cover the staffing costs.

CPC: S. Cline reported that CPC met on October 30 and reviewed supplemental responses of FY26 CPA funding applicants. One CPC member asked why SHA doesn't use its funds to fix up existing homes and use CPA funds to purchase single-family homes. Questions focused on the cost-benefit analysis of these undertakings relative to SHA's current proposal. Another CPC member noted that the work outlined on architectural plans to rehab 21 Great Lake falls short of addressing significant capital needs that would also need to be addressed. SHA is scheduled to present to the CPC on December 18. S. Cusolito will present, with A. Lepak also attending.

The November 2 Sudbury Doing Good Fair attracted approximately 90 attendees and close to double that, the number of presenters. It was an overall positive, informative experience. A. Lepak will provide contact information for a representative of the Boston Nature Preschool for distribution to SHA's family residents.

OPEN FORUM

J. Dretler, address withheld, called attention to the recently distributed housing survey. One-third of respondents didn't answer the survey questions, only providing narrative comments, many with identical or near-identical comments. She reviewed responses to a number of other Town-conducted surveys, noting that this is the most significant in terms of the number of people who skipped the survey in favor of the comments section. She and S. Cline noted that both the survey and a good portion of the comments were positive and sensitive to affordable housing needs. S. Cline quantified the number of duplicated anti-duplex comments at nine, calling it a minority of the overall response. Ms. Dretler commented on a Boston Globe article published today highlighting use of public land for housing. A. Lepak reported that WBUR distributed a link to a survey on housing today.

Some discussion of the upcoming changes in zoning related to ADUs ensued, with a hope that SHA and SHT will have the opportunity to weigh in as Sudbury revises its bylaw. J. Dretler noted the approval of several ADUs recently before the ZBA. SHA Commissioner F. Riepe, who also serves on the ZBA, noted that there is never an objection to the ADU applications before the ZBA. A. Lepak noted that owners will not be required to occupy one of the units under the new law. She wonders if the law will allow builders to purchase an existing home, demolish it, and construct a duplex. J. Dretler noted this was a concern raised by the Planning Board also. Commissioners commented on the option to build single-family homes with an accessory apartment. This is particularly relevant for units that might have the 3-BR/1-BR configuration, two of which would optimize the wait list and current resident demographics. S. Cusolito recalled the qualitative assessment to add such structures on to the existing homes, which Hancock Associates characterized as less effective than all new construction. S. Cline noted that it's a matter of semantics, but others commented that it would change the zoning characterization if such construction is allowed under the new law.

Ms. Dretler asked about the extent of improvements under the architect's proposal for 21 Great Lake and whether SHA deliberately deferred maintenance on the property. S. Cusolito noted that the architect's basic design called for selective improvements, such as a new kitchen and some sitework, but did not include other capital needs, such as new siding, roof, windows or heating system. She also noted that the approach for all units tends to be selective and that each of the four units slated for redevelopment has undergone capital work in recent years. For example, the single bathroom at Great Lake was completely renovated a few years ago, at great disruption to the resident family. Finally, she noted that all properties undergo preventive maintenance of the basic systems necessary to allow for occupancy. J. Dretler noted that the SHT has received some of the same questions around maintenance of the affordable ownership units.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

SHA Feasibility/705 Redevelopment: LLC, Conveyance, Ground Lease, CFA, & Related: S. Cusolito reported that the Certificate of Organization for the LLC and the Operating Agreement were signed and submitted to the Commonwealth dated today. She and Commissioner S. Cline met two times with NSP to review the remaining documents. The ground lease and CFA require EOHLC review. NSP will transmit all documents to EOHLC and request an expedited review in hopes that all documents can be executed to synchronize with anticipated approval of the RFP at the SHA's December 10, 2024 meeting.

A. Lepak commented that it seems administratively cumbersome for the LLC to manage the property. It was noted that the LLC will be able to hire staff to oversee operations. S. Cusolito stated that this is part of the benefit of operating non-state housing programs, with their associated restrictions on staffing.

Design Services RFP: Commissioners questioned the use of the \$2.6M hard cost for the project and not the \$4.18 total cost previously used. Commissioners prefer that the higher construction cost number be used to align with information already presented to the Town and as utilized in the Advertisement.

For the designer selection committee, Commissioners discussed asking Cynthia Howe, who is a Pine Lakes resident, member of the Housing Trust, and who has affordable housing professional experience; a member of the Design Review Board as a resident of Town government; and a Housing Authority resident. S.

Cusolito will reach out to a 705 resident of one of the units under consideration for redevelopment. A. Lepak will reach out to Ms. Howe and F. Riepe will reach out to the Design Review Board.

Commissioner Riepe worked with CHA to refine the content of the RFP. The primary change was to revert to using the standard AIA contract, rather than the more complex custom contract CHA adapted from the AIA. Some changes to desired experience were also made, but no changes to the rankings. All references to Section 3 HUD requirements will be removed, as SHA does not operate programs subject that provision.

A motion was made by S. Cline, seconded by F. Riepe, and unanimously voted, to approve the Request for Proposals: Architectural and Engineering Design Services for the Redevelopment of 21 Great Lake Drive, 8 Oakwood Avenue, 2 Beechwood Avenue and 9 Richard Avenue, Sudbury MA, as revised to utilize the total development cost of \$4.18M.

Agreed Upon Procedures Update: SHA performed with only a single exception to obtaining a signature from one tenant on one document, despite SHA's repeated efforts to obtain both signatures and rent from the tenant.

FYE26 Annual Plan Update: The draft Annual Plan was published October 24, 2024. SHA will meet with the resident community on November 26 and hold the public hearing as part of the December 10, 2024 Regular Session.

FY26 Community Preservation Act Project Submission Update: As discussed under Liaison Reports and Open Forum.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Cash Receipts: The cash receipt report was presented.

RSC Q2 Report: The quarterly report was presented.

Payroll Provider Change: SHA will change providers from Paychex to Harper's starting with the first pay period of 2025. The change results in a modest increase in per-payroll costs; however, repeated errors by Paychex in payroll administration and failures to timely correct them have placed a significant burden on SHA. Harper's only administers payroll within the public sector.

ZBA Notices: The November 4, 2024 notice included two ADU proposals in the Pine Lakes neighborhood.

Eversource Refund: For the second time this year, in July, SHA received a significant refund from Eversource for usage at Musketahquid Village. S. Cusolito expects it is an error based on an inquiry regarding duplicate billing for one day and that it will be corrected in a subsequent billing cycle. Alternatively, it might related to a redesignation of SHA's account to Sudbury Public Schools, but the District was unresponsive to a request for information. Until resolved, payments to SHA's energy supplier are compromised.

FISH 288071, 667 Fire Alarm Upgrade: A Notice to Proceed was issued October 28. The SFD has some questions that need to be addressed before the work begins. The project is expected to complete in March 2025.

Options for Recorded Meetings: S. Cusolito heard back from Sudbury TV late today regarding scheduling a site visit to better outline recording options at the Village. The visit is scheduled for November 14.

Vacancies: One 667 resident gave notice to vacate at the end of November. SHA hopes to place an under-60 applicant using the list that yielded the two most recently housed individuals.

Evictions: SHA issued one 30-day Notice on October 1 to a New Duplex tenant for an unauthorized household member. The Notice was reissued on October 22 due to a failure to mail the notice.

Maintenance: The Billerica House of Corrections work crew is on site at the Village this week, primarily for groundwork.

MEMBERS' FORUM

On November 14, S. Cusolito is volunteering at a fundraiser for Metro Housing Boston. The entity provides housing resources and advocacy for residents of Boston and surrounding communities.

S. Cline suggested moving the Open Forum to follow any discussion of the 705 redevelopment project. S. Cusolito noted that the Open Forum is not specific to the redevelopment project and unless it's moved until after the Director's Report, it might prevent other members of the public from having the opportunity to comment on other matters. S. Cline restated her preference, but absent that, she prefers to leave it where it is, rather than move it to the end.

ADJOURN

A motion was made by S. Swanger, seconded by F. Riepe, and unanimously voted, to adjourn the November 12, 2024 Regular Session. The time was 9:05 p.m.

Yes: S. Cline

Yes: A. Lepak

Yes: S. Swanger

Yes: F. Riepe