

SUDBURY HOUSING AUTHORITY

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MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING

October 8, 2024

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

Also present: Alicia & John Carrillo, 68 Basswood Ave; Diane & Paul Marobella, 10 Willis Lake Drive; Charlene Shelton, Musketahquid Village; Susan Taricani, 7 Beechwood Ave; John Lingley, 65 Basswood Ave; Carolyn Colby, Musketahquid Village; Mary Anne Telles, Musketahquid Village

Absent: Treasurer: S. Swanger

MINUTES

A motion was made by S. Cline, seconded by F. Riepe, and unanimously voted, to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2024 Special Session as amended and the August 13, 2024 Regular Session.

FINANCIALS

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

NEW BUSINESS

FY25 Capital Improvement Plan: S. Cusolito noted that this is the formal start of developing both the Capital and Annual Plans, which sync at the public hearing slated for the December 10, 2024 regular meeting. An overview of capital projects was presented, largely ordered by feasibility under the constraints of over-expending in near-term years on the 667 fire alarm upgrade, FISH 288071. Projects added or updated include 667 building security and paddle door handle installation; a 667 moisture/air quality study; a 667 generator control panel assessment/repair; 705-4 entry overhang and shed repair/replacement; Fairbank Circle septic replacement. S. Cusolito commented that the generator receives twice-yearly contracted preventive maintenance service, but in recent years has sporadically failed to auto-initiate during monthly maintenance checks. The contractor has indicated the issue is with the control panel, rather than the generator itself. S. Cusolito also noted that the EOHLC architect has done a site visit for the Fairbank Circle septic based on a targeted list it maintains; however, she also noted the system has not raised any concerns during contracted preventive maintenance.

Commissioner Vitvitsky asked about the 667 fire road paving project. S. Cusolito stated that it's unlikely the fire road will be paved after all: there are several utility lines that run under the road and the Fire Department would require the road be widened. Moreover, there are concerns about speeding and a tenant-expressed concern about changing the character of the Village. Finally, the Fire Department previously emphasized the need to prioritize the alarm upgrade over the fire road. She stated that some edging should

be installed to prevent further erosion and that the project scope also includes necessary regrading and resurfacing at several 705 sites.

MVTO Request for Sponsorship: The MVTO is requesting the SHA sponsor leadership attendance at an upcoming MassUnion conference in Springfield. Additionally, the MVTO is requesting SHA cover the \$20 cost of parking and place a sponsorship ad in the conference program.

A motion was made by S. Cline, seconded by T. Vitvitsky, and unanimously voted, to cover costs of attendance for up to five MVTO members, parking, and a program ad, totaling up to \$570, for the upcoming MassUnion conference.

Sudbury Doing Good Fair: Commissioners will partner with the MVTO on registering for a table. The Fair will run 11 am to 2 pm on November 2 at the Curtis Middle School.

MEI Program: The Board previously explored assistance through CHAPA's Municipal Engagement Lite program, but decided against pursuing it. More recently, the SHA and Planning Department discussed a joint request to the standard MEI program, but elected to wait until the Housing Production Plan was finalized. CHAPA recently announced it is accepting a new round of requests. Given a deadline of October 18 and the status of SHA initiatives, the SHA will not submit an application.

Public Housing Administration Notices S. Cusolito provided a link to the published notices, which include a notice on changes to the Agreed Upon Procedures (AUP) audit. Her understanding is that SHA will have its already scheduled FYE24 audit in October and will also have its FYE25 audit next fall. Provided its performance qualifies, it will then be moved to a biennial schedule.

Liaison Reports: SHT: The SHA is invited to attend SHT's October 10 meeting at which information on the HOME Consortium will be provided. A. Lepak will attend. She noted that the Consortium supports several funding initiatives, but that Sudbury receives a very small portion of funding. A. Lepak reported that the SHT's September meeting focused largely on finalizing comments for the Housing Production Plan. She also reported that SHT Chair Carmine Gentile outlined the structure of LexHAB, a 501(c)(3) undertaking similar projects to those discussed at the August 20 joint meeting with the SHT undertaken by Concord. It's anticipated that further discussion will occur at the February joint meeting of SHA and SHT, as part of an interest in furthering joint undertakings. Finally, the SHT has a balance of funds earmarked for mortgage assistance; however, applicants do not qualify for the funds for post-Covid circumstances. SHT Chair C. Gentile is exploring relief mechanisms to make the funds available.

CPC: S. Cline reported that the next CPC meeting is scheduled for October 16, 2024. The initial review of 11 applications for FYE26 CPC funding will be undertaken.

OPEN FORUM

Susan Taricani, 7 Beechwood Ave asked for an update on the Pine Lakes redevelopment project, given notification of the funding award from the State. SHA commented that there has been no significant development to date. Alicia Carrillo, 68 Basswood Ave asked if the SHA will request CPA funding for the project, which was confirmed. She also asked for confirmation that SHA will not consider retaining single-family dwellings in Pine Lakes. Commissioner S. Cline responded that the SHA is awaiting hiring an architect to more fully explore options for the sites in question. Ms. Carillo then asked for clarification on references to structures on Broadacres and Sewataro. A. Lepak explained that within the Housing Production Plan (HPP), which will be presented to the Planning and Select Boards, are listings of Town-owned parcels that are suitable for housing, but have not been set aside for such. Both the SHT and SHA requested the two sites be included in the HPP.

Musketahquid Village resident Charlene Shelton asked members of the public what their concerns are with duplex public housing. Susan Taricani, 7 Beechwood Ave responded that she loves the single-family home presence of Sudbury Housing in the (Pine Lakes) neighborhood. She worries that duplexes will make less space for families and that units with smaller numbers of bedrooms will limit the families that can be housed to favor couples without children. She also noted that duplexes are too large for the generally small Pine Lakes lots and that it would be nice to retain the single-family homes without creating what she called a monstrosity. Her preference would be for the architect to draw up plans for revitalizing the existing homes, characterizing the currently unoccupied unit as an untapped resource.

Ms. Shelton commented that she has experienced some negativity toward SHA residents within the broader Sudbury community, despite the fact that most residents are contributing members of the community.

Alicia Carrillo, 68 Basswood Ave stated her objection to a “NIMBY” characterization, asserting that the Pine Lakes neighborhood is the most densely populated in the Town. She called putting duplexes on such small lots ludicrous, especially in light of the availability of larger Town-owned parcels such as Sewataro and Broadacres.

Ms. Shelton expressed concern for the number of applicants in need of housing. She understands this is part of the rationale for creating additional housing units and that it is further coupled to the criteria for State funding.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Housing Production Plan Finalized Comments: At its September 10, 2024 meeting, Commissioners added to previously submitted comments, which Commissioner Swanger incorporated and submitted to the Planning Department. S. Cusolito separately sent comments to the Planning Department, many to address inconsistencies in format and referencing. She expressed concern that one of the strategies (4c) indicates that the definition of family limits the types of two or more person households that qualify for housing. She believes the strategy originates with a conversation she had with one of the consultants about the need for non age-restricted single-bedroom housing that would expand opportunities to those one-person or two-person households that do not meet the eligibility criteria for 667 housing, unrelated to the definition of family. S. Cusolito also noted that some tables listing strategies and the lead and supporting entities were not updated to reflect discussions by the HPP Steering Committee and that the section on transportation does not include some options. Commissioners suggested limiting further follow-up to one key point at this juncture.

FYE26 Community Preservation Act Project Submission Update: The narrative with incorporated comments was distributed. S. Cusolito noted that for consistency with the initial September 5 submission, CHA specified the proposed funding sources and reverted the numbers in Exhibit A that were automatically updated by background data collection. Exhibit B was also modified to remove the site plans but retain the soil testing data. Updated documents were also dated for better version control.

705 Redevelopment: Resolutions, FAQ Update: A motion was made by S. Cline, seconded by F. Riepe, and unanimously voted, to adopt the Sudbury Pine Lakes Resolutions as presented and authorize S. Cusolito as clerk of the Sudbury Housing Authority to sign on behalf of the Housing Authority.

At its August 13, 2024 meeting, Commissioners agreed to hold a vote on the FAQs until September; however, the vote was not taken. S. Cusolito suggested that if the current version of the FAQs is acceptable, the only discussion involves the preamble, which will be posted separately. Commissioners Swanger and Cline drafted versions of the preamble, with the final content agreed to by consensus.

In addition to posting on SHA's website, S. Cline requested that the neighbors for whom email addresses were obtained, as well as the Boards and Committees that received letters from those neighbors, be sent a link to the posting.

A motion was made by F. Riepe, seconded by T. Vitvitsky, and unanimously voted, to appoint S. Cline as the executive editor of the FAQ page, with all decision-making authority on its content, timing and distribution.

Also distributed was a table prepared by A. Lepak to expand on FAQ responses regarding square footage relative to lot size. S. Cline will incorporate this, as well as references on property values and crime provided by CHA.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Cash Receipts: The cash receipt report was presented.

Agreed Upon Procedures (AUP): S. Cusolito is in the early stages of preparation for the site visit scheduled for the end of the month.

Governor's Appointee: SHA received notice that Commissioner Lepak has been reappointed for a term expiring on July 21, 2029.

Staffing: SHA's RSC will be out on an eight-week medical leave starting later this month.

Sustainability Initiative: A recently distributed survey to glean information on the effects of climate change on vulnerable populations received a high response rate from SHA residents, in part due to survey completion facilitated by the RSC. The biggest concern amongst residents is flooding; however, beyond identified grading issues that result in pooling, SHA has not had instances of water infiltration at sites with slab construction.

COVID Vaccination Policy: S. Cusolito hopes to bring an updated draft to the November meeting.

Annual Data Collection: The State-required census was completed and submitted on time.

Housing Management Software: A software update is required by the end of the calendar year in order to allow the State to directly monitor certain information on tenants. SHA is scheduled to convert mid-November.

MVTO: S. Cusolito and L. Abraham met with the MVTO leadership last week. A meeting with the tenant community will occur sometime in November.

Options for Recorded Meetings: S. Cusolito contacted SudburyTV to learn of options to record its meetings while continuing to hold them at Musketahquid Village. SudburyTV does provide equipment on loan, as well as training, and will schedule a site visit to better outline the recording options.

Vacancies: Two 667 leases will be signed this week, for 100% occupancy. An at-risk 705 household met with SHA, but chose to relocate rather than provide the required information for annual recertification. The family expressed interest in paying off its debt; although it disagrees with the amount. SHA emphasized it cannot adjust the amount without submission of requested documentation. The vacancy presents a possibility to relocate one of the families in a unit slated for redevelopment. The family is over-housed and previously expressed interest in relocating. S. Cusolito will follow up with the family to gauge current interest.

Evictions: SHA issued one 30-day Notice on October 1 to a New Duplex tenant for an unauthorized household member.

Maintenance: The first group of 667 inspections are on schedule. S. Cusolito praised Framingham Housing Authority for assistance in installing a water heater at 9 Richard Ave within a day of a request. FHA has licensed tradespeople on staff. The existing heater was damaged when the controller on the furnace back-fired. Recent interviews of maintenance applicants identified a qualified applicant who elected not to pursue employment with SHA.

705 Boilers: The State is no longer supporting installations of gas- or oil-based systems, which means the four units projected to require boiler replacement will either have heat pump systems installed, with anticipated State support of capital funds, or phased installations to replicate existing equipment.

MEMBERS' FORUM

No comments.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by S. Cline, seconded by F. Riepe, and unanimously voted, to adjourn the October 8, 2024 Regular Session and move to Executive Session to discuss legal matters related to redevelopment, for to do so in open session might compromise the position of the Housing Authority, not to return to open session. The time was 8:55 p.m.

Yes: S. Cline

Yes: A. Lepak

Yes: F. Riepe

Yes: T. Vitvitsky