



Town of Sudbury

Housing Trust

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MINUTES

JUNE 16, 2020 AT 4:00 PM

VIRTUAL MEETING

Housing Trust Members Present: Chair Cynthia Howe, Kelley Cronin, Janie Dretler, Carmine Gentile, and John Riordan

Housing Trust Members Absent: None

Others Present: Director of Planning and Community Development Adam Duchesneau, Robert Hummel, Director of the Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO) Elizabeth Rust, and Susan Scotti

With Ms. Howe not yet in attendance, Ms. Cronin called the meeting to order as Acting Chair at 4:05 PM.

1. Candidates for Trustee

a. Robert Hummel

Mr. Hummel introduced himself and provided a description of his background which included training in the fields of planning and environmental studies. He also noted his current employment as a municipal planner with the Town of Acton, with the specific focus areas of housing issues, monitoring services, and Chapter 40B development projects. Mr. Hummel also stated he was an advocate of affordable housing.

b. Susan Scotti

Ms. Scotti indicated she was a new resident to Sudbury and had noticed the openings on numerous Town boards, committees, and commissions. She felt the Housing Trust aligned the most with her experience and background. Ms. Scotti noted she was a former affordable housing unit owner and also had an extensive background in marketing and public relations.

Mr. Riordan asked Mr. Hummel what was the biggest challenge Acton was facing in terms of affordable housing. Mr. Hummel stated senior housing was the biggest issue as there were not many of these types of units and the Town only had a couple of these projects in the pipeline.

Mr. Riordan noted the Town of Sudbury needed to have a diverse housing base (senior dwellings, starter homes, etc.) and stated he felt both candidates would be great members on the Housing Trust.

Mr. Gentile made a motion for the Housing Trust to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that Robert Hummel and Susan Scotti be appointed to the Housing Trust. Ms. Dretler seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye, with Ms. Howe absent from the vote.

Ms. Dretler suggested perhaps the appointments of Mr. Hummel and Ms. Scotti could be placed on the Board of Selectmen’s consent calendar for their agenda on June 22, 2020.

At this time Mr. Hummel left the meeting.

c. Amendment to Declaration of Trust Discussion

Ms. Rust presented the proposed amendment to the Housing Trust Declaration of Trust. The proposed amendment would address a situation when a majority of the Trustees’ terms expire simultaneously, it would allow a sufficient number of Trustees to be appointed or reappointed by the Board of Selectmen for a term of one (1) year so as to maintain staggered terms among the Trustees.

Ms. Dretler asked that the Declaration of Trust also be amended to indicate the terms of Trustees would expire on May 31st, as opposed to April 30th, to be consistent with the terms of most other Town board, committee, or commission members.

Mr. Riordan confirmed the proposed amendment would need approval from the Board of Selectmen and Ms. Rust indicated that was correct.

Mr. Riordan made a motion to approve the proposed amendment to the Housing Trust Declaration of Trust as amended to indicate the terms of Trustees would expire on May 31st and to recommend the Board of Selectmen vote to amend the Declaration of Trust. Ms. Dretler seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye, with Ms. Howe absent from the vote.

2. Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) - Update

Ms. Rust indicated six (6) ERAP applications had been submitted, five (5) were eligible to receive funding, and all five (5) requests were able to be funded. She noted her office was currently processing the applications and she would provide a more detailed summary of those who they were providing funding to at the next Housing Trust meeting.

At this time Ms. Howe arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Rust then discussed the next steps for people to be able to participate in the ERAP and noted how the rental assistance would be provided toward the July 2020 rents for recipients. She also stated applications would continue to be accepted until the funding for the program ran out.

3. Resale Updates

a. 18 Pinewood Avenue – Notice Provided, Town Action

Ms. Rust discussed the background of the property, and noted the owners had purchased another unit and were looking to sell. She asked the Housing Trust if they desired to recommend to the Board of Selectmen to possibly designate the Right of First Refusal to the Sudbury Housing Authority.

Ms. Howe raised concerns about the possible conversion of another affordable ownership unit to an affordable rental unit. She pointed out having all types of tiers of housing levels in the community was desirable for residents. Ms. Howe stated she believed the 8 Eddy Street property was a much more appropriate dwelling unit for the Sudbury Housing Authority to take over due to the size of the lot and the immediate adjacency of another Sudbury Housing Authority property. She indicated she was not supportive of affordable ownership units being converted to affordable rental units unless there were special circumstances, such as in the case of the 8 Eddy Street property.

Ms. Cronin indicated she wanted to hear what the Sudbury Housing Authority had to say before she could weigh in on the matter.

Ms. Dretler noted it appeared the affordable rental units in town were mostly in multi-family dwelling complexes as opposed to being single-family dwellings.

Ms. Rust stated the Town needed to get back to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) quickly because the 90-day clock was already running in which an eligible purchaser needed to close on the unit.

Mr. Riordan indicated the role of the Housing Trust was to promote home ownership at affordable levels. He stated it would be preferable to find another eligible purchaser for the unit and keep an affordable dwelling unit owner in the property.

Ms. Howe raised concerns about the Town having already invested approximately \$190,000 of Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds in the property.

Ms. Dretler noted the Sudbury Housing Authority had recently received a grant from the Sudbury Foundation to assess various properties in town for possible housing development sites.

Ms. Rust stated the owner of 8 Eddy Street had not committed one way or the other (to move forward with the resale or withdraw their intent to resell) as to what they wanted to do.

There was then discussion and debate regarding what the Housing Trust should recommend to the Board of Selectmen regarding the Right of First Refusal for 18 Pinewood Avenue.

Ms. Howe made a motion for the Housing Trust to recommend to the Board of Selectmen they not exercise the Town's Right of First Refusal for the property at 18 Pinewood Avenue. Ms. Dretler seconded the motion.

There was then discussion regarding the requirements and timelines of the resale process.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Cronin – No, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, Ms. Howe – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

b. 8 Eddy Street – On Hold, July 10, 2020 Decision

Ms. Rust provided a status update on the property. She noted the Sudbury Housing Authority and Town were waiting for the owners to decide what they wanted to do with the sale of the unit (move forward or withdraw their intent to resell).

c. 490 Dutton Road – On Hold

Ms. Rust indicated this dwelling unit was tied up in the court system and she did not have an update on this property. She stated the court was waiting to hear back from the owner of the property at this time.

Other Business

Ms. Rust noted the MassHousing Request for Proposals response from the Housing Trust had been submitted.

Ms. Cronin requested the Sudbury Housing Authority be invited to attend the Housing Trust meeting in July to find out what they were working on and if a Sudbury Housing Authority member was interested in joining the Housing Trust. She recommended the Executive Director, Sheila Cusolito, and a member or two be invited to attend.

Mr. Riordan expressed an interest in expanding the ERAP to encompass more residents and asked this item be added to the next Housing Trust meeting agenda.

At 5:25 PM, Mr. Riordan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Gentile seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, Ms. Howe – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.