



Town of Sudbury

Housing Trust

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MINUTES

DECEMBER 10, 2020 AT 8:00 AM

VIRTUAL MEETING

JOINT MEETING WITH THE SUDBURY HOUSING AUTHORITY

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

Housing Trust Members Absent: John Riordan and Susan Scotti

Sudbury Housing Authority Members Present: Sherri Cline, Amy Lepak, Steven Swanger, and Tania Vitvitsky

Sudbury Housing Authority Members Absent: None

Others Present: Executive Director of the Sudbury Housing Authority Sheila Cusolito, Director of Planning and Community Development Adam Duchesneau, and Director of the Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO) Elizabeth Rust

Ms. Howe called the meeting to order at 8:06 AM.

Ms. Cline acknowledged the passing of former Housing Trust member Lydia Pastuszek noting she had been a strong advocate for affordable housing during her career.

1. Minutes

- *Approve Meeting Minutes of November 12, 2020 and November 20, 2020*

Ms. Cronin made a motion to approve the minutes of November 12, 2020. Ms. Dretler seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, and Mr. Hummel – Aye.

Ms. Cronin made a motion to approve the minutes of November 20, 2020. Ms. Dretler seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, and Mr. Hummel – Aye.

2. 67-73 Nobscot Road – Possible Property Acquisition

- *Status Update and Discussion*

Mr. Duchesneau provided a status update regarding the property and his conversation with Conservation Coordinator Lori Capone and Environmental Planner Beth Suedmeyer. He discussed

potential challenges regarding the access driveways, including a culvert under the southern driveway, as well as septic system and ledge concerns at the property.

Ms. Lepak noted the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) was not very encouraged about the lower part of the property because it was so close to some wetland areas. Ms. Cusolito stated the MHP felt there were two separate developments at the property due to the drastic elevation changes and she also noted MHP had concerns about the possibility of ledge at the site.

Ms. Howe then asked for opinions, reactions, and comments from the other members of the Housing Trust based upon the information provided to this point.

Mr. Hummel stated he was simply taking in all of the information but he did not have a good handle on what the next steps should be for the Housing Trust. He indicated he would go along with whatever steps the other Housing Trust members recommended.

Ms. Cronin raised questions about the size of the parcel and Mr. Duchesneau provided clarification the property for sale was only approximately 5.4 acres in size.

Mr. Gentile indicated he wanted to pursue this potential acquisition further and suggested perhaps creating four buildings on the property with two dwellings units in each. He went on to point out the Town needed additional housing options for its residents and noted he felt that whatever the easiest path forward was should be pursued (partnering with Sudbury Housing Authority or not).

Ms. Howe wondered if three dwelling units could be created on the upper portion of the property and four on the lower area. She also noted there were a number of challenges with the property including the length of the driveways, the length of the utilities, wetlands, etc. Ms. Howe asked if the Sudbury Housing Authority had other parcels in town they were considering for development which were a higher priority. Ms. Lepak stated they did have a bit more interest in a property near the Department of Public Works as well as the land at the front of the Frost Farm residential development.

Ms. Howe suggested perhaps the next steps in the process should be a meeting with Town Department Heads and then looking into the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Sudbury Housing Authority.

At this time Mr. Swanger joined the meeting.

There were then discussions regarding separating off the 5.4 acre parcel from the rest of the larger property, the nonconforming status of the existing buildings, and how to move forward with a viable project.

Ms. Lepak stated she felt the upper area of the property seemed very isolated and in particular the building at 73 Nobscot Road.

Mr. Gentile recalled his time on the Planning Board as it related to a proposed 4-unit subdivision project which faced significant challenges, but ultimately ended up being built across from the Department of Public Works.

Ms. Howe noted how the land was used and how it was buffered were key items to consider.

Ms. Dretler was curious if anyone had reached out to the local Boy Scouts to find out their thoughts about the sale of the property. She urged someone to contact Hank Rauch to see if he had been in touch with local Boy Scout troops.

Ms. Cronin noted there were many examples in town of beautiful affordable housing properties with wonderful residents, and it would seem this kind of development would be preferable to the neighbors who deal with the vacant buildings currently.

Ms. Howe stated six to seven dwelling units in three buildings was probably the maximum housing development potential for this site.

Mr. Gentile noted a project at this site could look very similar to the development at Fairbank Circle off of Fairbank Road.

Mr. Swanger stated it should be assumed there will be opposition to this proposed housing project, and the Sudbury Housing Authority and Housing Trust should be prepared to address this opposition.

Ms. Rust noted the advocacy work for this project will be the most critical aspect to moving it forward.

Ms. Dretler stated it should be made clear what property is under consideration to be purchased (only the 5.4 acre piece of land).

Mr. Hummel indicated it might be helpful to show other examples of affordable housing units in Sudbury to highlight how well they blend into the surrounding neighborhood and community.

Beth Farrell, the real estate agent for the buyer and seller of the recent transaction of 79 Nobscot Road, stated the driveway on the south side of 79 Nobscot Road was used to access the garage for 71 Nobscot Road. She also noted the new owner of 79 Nobscot Road, Brian Gettings, did not have email and may need to be contacted in a number of different methods.

Mr. Swanger offered to reach out to speak with Mr. Gettings, if and when appropriate. There was then discussion about which abutters should be directly contacted early on in the potential acquisition process.

Ms. Cline made a motion to adjourn the Sudbury Housing Authority meeting. Ms. Vitvitsky seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Cline – Aye, Ms. Lepak – Aye, Mr. Swanger – Aye, and Ms. Vitvitsky – Aye.

3. 2021 Meeting Schedule

- *Discussion on Meeting Dates, Times, and Lengths*

Ms. Rust inquired if the time of day and/or approximate current duration of meetings was acceptable for the Housing Trust members. Ms. Cronin felt as though the Housing Trust was not able to finish all of their business within the timeframes for meetings and suggested putting time limits on agenda items. Ms. Cronin added she believed this issue was tied into the staffing of the Housing Trust. Ms. Howe suggested the Housing Trust should perhaps allocate two hours for each of their upcoming meetings.

There was then discussion regarding the Regional Housing Services Office tasks related to the monitoring agent work they were conducting on behalf of the Housing Trust.

At this time Ms. Dretler left the meeting.

Mr. Gentile suggested perhaps the Housing Trust should have more than one meeting per month when there are a number of topics to cover.

4. Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP)

- *Status Update and Discussion on Program Expansion*

There was discussion about the program moving forward and how Community Preservation Act funds might support this initiative into the future.

Ms. Cronin noted she believed the Community Preservation Committee wanted to know how the Community Preservation Act funding allocation amounts would be split between the Emergency Rental Assistance Program and the other work being conducting by the Housing Trust.

The Housing Trust members discussed whether the rental assistance program was going to be short term rental assistance or would provide a rental subsidy to a small group of people indefinitely.

Ms. Cronin stated the Housing Trust needed to figure out how much of the Community Preservation Act funding allocation would be spent on rental assistance program. Mr. Duchesneau indicated he would send out proposed times to schedule an additional Housing Trust meeting before the next Community Preservation Committee meeting.

The Housing Trust determined, that due to the hour, the following matters would be tabled until a future meeting:

5. Staffing the Housing Trust

- *Planning Department/Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO)*

6. Other Business

- *Resale: 6 Old County Road, Unit 11 – Lottery Applicant in Approval by Trust*
- *HOME Consortium – Fair Housing Report, Public Comment Period to January 6, 2021*

- *Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP) Sessions for Trusts: Relevant Sessions for Development Considerations*

At 9:49 AM, Ms. Cronin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Hummel seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Absent, Mr. Gentile – Aye, and Mr. Hummel – Aye.