



# Town of Sudbury

## Housing Trust

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### MINUTES

NOVEMBER 20, 2020 AT 9:30 AM

### VIRTUAL MEETING

**Housing Trust Members Present:** Chair Cynthia Howe, Kelley Cronin, Janie Dretler, Carmine Gentile, Robert Hummel, John Riordan, and Susan Scotti

**Housing Trust Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** 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 9:34 AM.

#### 2. New Business

##### *a. 67-73 Nobscot Road – Possible Property Acquisition*

Ms. Cronin stated she felt the property had a lot of potential. She noted if the Housing Trust and Sudbury Housing Authority wanted to purchase the land, there may need to be some procurement procedures followed. Ms. Rust stated that if Community Preservation Act funds were going to be used there may not need to be a public procurement process.

Ms. Howe noted there was a substantial amount of undeveloped land at the property in addition to the existing buildings which were in reasonable shape. Ms. Howe asked for opinions and discussion on the property ensued.

Ms. Rust indicated the Housing Trust did not currently have enough funds to outright purchase the property.

Mr. Riordan stated he felt having the benefit of an appraisal would be extremely helpful, but his first reaction to the property was that it was very interesting. He indicated this was an opportunity the Housing Trust should be interested in and he was open to a partnership with the Sudbury Housing Authority. Mr. Riordan noted having additional partners on this property would only be advantageous to the initiative.

Ms. Howe indicated going through a friendly Chapter 40B permitting process would likely be necessary to make the project profitable.

Mr. Riordan noted the only real access to the upper building (73 Nobscot Road) was via a driveway with an access easement over 99 Nobscot Road.

Ms. Scotti agreed that partnering with the Sudbury Housing Authority could be a good plan, but having an appraisal for the property would be very helpful, even in these beginning stages of conversation.

Mr. Hummel felt the property was a great site but was curious to know how much it would cost to rehabilitate the buildings and septic systems. He inquired as to how many units the Housing Trust could get out of the land and also noted the Housing Trust would need to work with the neighbor at 79 Nobscot Road.

Ms. Dretler indicated it was an interesting site but agreed with some of the concerns raised about the property such as the legal access and the culvert which runs underneath the southern access driveway. She felt there was still a lot to learn about the property at this point in the process.

Ms. Cronin stated she felt it seemed as though additional analysis would be needed for the property.

Mr. Riordan noted the Master Plan update process had a focus on housing and how past housing needs studies had indicated a need for smaller types of housing in Sudbury. He felt this type of housing development could be created at this property and this would be a tremendous asset to the Town for both new residents and existing ones looking to downsize.

Steven Swanger from the Sudbury Housing Authority agreed with everything which had been stated and he believed the property offered an opportunity for collaboration between the Housing Trust and the Sudbury Housing Authority. He was curious to know what the other offers had been on the property in the past. Mr. Swanger thought a mixed income development might be the best housing use for this property, including rental and ownership perhaps. He also noted the Sudbury Housing Authority was conducting site visits that day to look at other properties in town which were under various level of consideration by the Sudbury Housing Authority for new rental housing developments.

Ms. Howe asked if there was any Sudbury Foundation funding readily available to conduct analysis for the 67-73 Nobscot Road property, such as for a septic system. Ms. Swanger noted the amount they had been awarded was only \$50,000 so the Sudbury Housing Authority needed to be careful with the expenditures.

Ms. Rust noted if the Housing Trust or Sudbury Housing Authority did work at the property, it would be subject to public procurement laws.

Sheila Cusolito, Executive Director of the Sudbury Housing Authority, noted the Sudbury Housing Authority had requested Community Preservation Act funding for general housing support purposes. She noted if only the Sudbury Housing Authority used Community Preservation Act funds, the work would not be subject to public procurement processes.

Hank Rauch from the Executive Board of the Mayflower Council stated he was happy to hear the Housing Trust and Sudbury Housing Authority were interested in the property.

Ms. Howe asked Mr. Rauch if any engineering work had been performed at the property. Mr. Rauch indicated a plan from Beals and Thomas had been distributed which indicated a possible subdivision plan for the property.

Mr. Swanger stated he had no idea what it might cost to conduct percolation testing at the property. Ms. Rust indicated it would be probably about \$2,000 per day based on a recent experience she had with a site conducting 10 test pits on a property.

Ms. Howe noted the wetland boundaries and the septic percolation issues would be the two big items to figure out.

Mr. Rauch noted the Town's Conservation Coordinator at the time had discouraged the possible subdivision plan at the property. Ms. Rust pointed out the proposed plan showed a roadway over wetlands. Mr. Rauch indicated that was correct and stated that was the concern of the former Conservation Coordinator.

Mr. Riordan noted a plan would be needed to figure out the septic system requirements and percolation possibilities to determine the number of units which could be located on the property.

Amy Lepak from the Sudbury Housing Authority noted that at their last meeting someone attended who had concerns about housing being located at the 67-73 Nobscot Road property. She felt there needed to be some outreach to the Boy Scouts to mitigate any concerns about housing at the property. Mr. Rauch stated 425 acres of land would still remain at the property even in this piece of land were sold off. Mr. Riordan noted there would still be a large portion of property at the site which the Boy Scouts would still be able to use in the future.

Ms. Dretler inquired about more specifics of the concerns of the person who attended the Sudbury Housing Authority meeting. Mr. Rauch noted the only piece of this land in Sudbury which was not under a Conservation Restriction was the 5.4 acre piece of land which was currently being marketed.

Ms. Dretler asked how the process would work moving forward and who would be responsible for what items. Ms. Howe noted she did not believe the Housing Trust and Sudbury Housing Authority had ever partnered on a project together. She suggested perhaps some type of Memorandum of Understanding be implemented to move the partnership forward. Mr. Riordan stated this would need to be a collaborative effort and Town staff assistance would be needed to develop the Memorandum of Understanding.

Ms. Howe indicated conducting a septic system analysis, then developing a Memorandum of Understanding, and then having an appraisal performed might be the best path forward. Ms. Rust noted engaging an engineer would be helpful to understand the access issues for the property as well as figuring out the septic system challenges.

Mr. Rauch noted Sullivan, Connors and Associates, Inc. had done a percolation test at the property in 2017.

Ms. Howe indicated it would be a good idea to get a legal opinion regarding the access easement to the property.

Ms. Dretler inquired if the Fire Department had any concerns about being able to access the property from existing roadways. Ms. Howe stated the existing access points would likely need to be upgraded to provide emergency vehicle access to the property.

There was then discussion as to who would pay for what portions of the information gathering for the property.

Ms. Howe stated any decisions on potential expenditures to perform analysis for the property should be deferred until the December Housing Trust meeting.

## **1. Finances**

### *a. FY22 Community Preservation Act Funding Request – Community Preservation Committee Hearing and Questions*

Ms. Rust stated a request to allocate Community Preservation Act funds to the Housing Trust had been submitted to the Community Preservation Committee. She noted the Home Preservation Program and the Emergency Rental Assistance Program were items which were highlighted in that request. Ms. Rust went through a memorandum she prepared which outlined the requests. The memorandum indicated the request was for 15% of the Community Preservation Act funds for Fiscal Year 2022, equating to an approximately \$388,500 allocation.

Ms. Cronin wondered if the Housing Trust wanted the purpose of the funding to be as broad and as flexible as possible to provide the widest amount of discretion for the Housing Trust to use the funding.

Mr. Riordan and Ms. Howe made suggestions to Ms. Cronin on how to present the request to the Community Preservation Committee. Both noted the altruistic mission of Housing Trust which was what their funding expenditures would be used for related to housing. Ms. Howe suggested adding text to the memorandum to speak to the broad nature of Housing Trust spending.

Mr. Riordan advocated expansion of the Emergency Rental Assistance Program and noted other affordable housing programs were currently stretched to their limits. He indicated people in society in general were very much in need of housing assistance at this time.

### *b. Accept Lottery Contract for Lexington Meadows Moderate Income Unit*

Ms. Rust provided an overview of the Lexington dwelling unit lottery contract.

Ms. Cronin made a motion to accept the Lottery Contract for the Lexington Meadows Moderate Income Unit. Mr. Riordan seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Ms. Cronin –

Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Hummel – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Aye, and Ms. Scotti – Aye.

*c. FY22 Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO) Support*

Ms. Rust noted the Housing Trust was being asked to commit \$45,000 towards the Town of Sudbury's RHSO membership fee. She indicated the remaining membership fee amount was being requested as Community Preservation Act funding.

Mr. Riordan made a motion to approve a \$45,000 allocation for the FY22 Regional Housing Services Office Membership Fee. Mr. Hummel seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Hummel – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Aye, and Ms. Scotti – Aye.

Ms. Scotti asked if she could assist in promoting the Emergency Rental Assistance Program. Mr. Duchesneau indicated he would coordinate with Ms. Scotti on this matter outside of the meeting.

Mr. Riordan requested a discussion regarding the Emergency Rental Assistance Program be placed on the Housing Trust's agenda for their meeting on December 10, 2020.

It was noted the next Housing Trust meeting was on Thursday, December 10, 2020 at 8:00 AM.

At 11:05 AM, Mr. Hummel made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Cronin seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Hummel – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Aye, and Ms. Scotti – Aye.