



# Town of Sudbury

## Housing Trust

HousingTrust@sudbury.ma.us

Flynn Building  
278 Old Sudbury Road  
Sudbury, MA 01776  
978-639-3387  
Fax: 978-639-3314  
www.sudbury.ma.us/housingtrust

### MINUTES

**FEBRUARY 11, 2021 AT 8:00 AM**

### VIRTUAL MEETING

**Housing Trust Members Present:** Chair Cynthia Howe, Vice Chair John Riordan, Kelley Cronin, Janie Dretler, Carmine Gentile, Robert Hummel, 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) Liz Rust

Ms. Howe called the meeting to order at 8:04 AM.

#### **1. Minutes: Approve Meeting Minutes of January 14, 2021**

Ms. Cronin made a motion to approve the minutes of January 14, 2021. Ms. Dretler seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Absent, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Hummel – Aye, and Ms. Scotti – Absent.

At this time Ms. Scotti joined the meeting.

#### **2. Annual Report: DRAFT**

Ms. Rust provided an overview of the draft 2020 Annual Report for the Housing Trust. She noted the draft report indicated the funding which had been allocated for grants and what had been spent over the course of the last year.

Ms. Dretler made a motion to approve the 2020 Annual Report for the Housing Trust. Mr. Gentile seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Absent, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Hummel – Aye, and Ms. Scotti – Aye.

#### **4. Cold Brook Crossing – Local Preference**

Ms. Rust provided an overview of the breakdown of the housing units in the Cold Brook Crossing residential development. She noted the developer was seeking to have the local preference category expanded to include all of Middlesex County as opposed to only being within the Town of Sudbury. Ms. Rust indicated it would be very difficult to justify to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) the ability to have a local preference category at a county-wide level.

At this time Mr. Riordan joined the meeting.

Ms. Howe asked who the lottery agent was for the project and Ms. Rust indicated Winn Properties would be doing the affordable housing lottery as well as the marketing for the units.

Mr. Hummel asked how affordable housing lotteries were being conducted during the pandemic. Ms. Rust indicated they were being held via Zoom or other conferencing platforms, and she confirmed someone from her office watched each of the lotteries to monitor them.

Ms. Cronin made a motion to recommend up to 70% of the affordable dwelling units in the Cold Brook Crossing residential development have a local preference. Mr. Hummel seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Abstain, Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Hummel – Aye, and Ms. Scotti – Aye.

### **3. 67-73 Nobscot Road – Possible Property Acquisition**

#### *a. Status Update and Discussion*

Hank Rauch from the Executive Board of the Mayflower Council was in attendance to discuss the matter with the Housing Trust.

Mr. Riordan noted he and Ms. Cronin, and Amy Lepak and Steve Swanger from Sudbury Housing Authority (SHA) had met to discuss the project. Mr. Riordan indicated there was a discussion about the property, it was noted analysis was needed for the site, and the group had discussed the possibility of moving forward through a Chapter 40B permitting process. Mr. Riordan also pointed out the following: 1) the Housing Trust needed to stay in close contact with the Conservation Commission about the property, 2) there needed to be a legal review of the access easements for property, and 3) certain steps should be taken to conduct a feasibility analysis, survey, soil testing, conceptual Site Plan, preparation of development budget, and to deliver some type of final report. Mr. Riordan stated the subcommittee group believed all of these tasks could be conducted by an engineering firm. If any significant issues arose during the analysis by the engineering firm, the Housing Trust could instruct all work to stop and have the issue brought back to the Housing Trust and SHA for discussion. There was then discussion about the possibility of the Housing Trust and the SHA splitting the costs of this analysis with each organization contributing around \$10,000 to \$15,000.

Mr. Swanger from the SHA was in attendance and noted the Massachusetts Housing Partnership was not interested in the property.

Ms. Cronin noted there did seem to be housing development potential at the property, but a feasibility analysis would be needed to get a better handle on potential scenarios. She also indicated the process forward and next steps should be discussed and determined.

Amy Lepak from the SHA was in attendance and noted the SHA had discussed the property at their February 9, 2021 meeting. She indicated the SHA had about \$60,000 to conduct preliminary studies of properties in town. Ms. Lepak stated the SHA had voted to spend up to \$10,000 on the preliminary analysis and further investigations regarding the property. Ms. Lepak also noted there

was a state funding program which could provide financial backing for the analysis of smaller housing development projects, which could be another funding source.

Ms. Dretler raised concerns about how the homeowner at 99 Nobscot Road would feel and wanted to better understand the feelings of this property owner before getting too far ahead with the potential project.

Mr. Cronin indicated it would be a good idea to reach out to the abutter sooner rather than later. Mr. Rauch indicated the easement was in place and was on record with the Middlesex South Registry of Deeds.

At this time Mr. Riordan left the meeting.

Ms. Cronin inquired what the buildings had been used for in the past. Mr. Rauch stated the buildings pre-dated ownership of the property by the Boy Scouts. He also noted the Boy Scouts had acquired property for Nobscot reservation and the buildings were rented out for people to live there who, in some cases, lived there for many years.

Mr. Rauch indicated the driveway easement for 73 Nobscot Road was active and had been used by the Boy Scouts to gain access to 73 Nobscot Road to maintain the property.

Ms. Cronin noted there were not a lot of affordable housing opportunities in Sudbury and this was a good opportunity to create more affordable housing units in the community. She added she felt constructing family housing there would be a great opportunity for this site.

At this time Mr. Riordan returned to the meeting.

Mr. Riordan asked if there was any opportunity to possibly increase the size of the property being offered up to 10 acres. Mr. Rauch noted there were big hurdles to clear, including approvals by Town Meeting and the state legislature. Mr. Gentile indicated obtaining these types of approvals was not out of the question, especially if there were no objections from any parties.

Ms. Howe noted it would be preferable to start with some legal research for the property and to understand the capabilities of the existing 5.4 acres being offered before possibly looking into expanding the size of the property which could be used.

Mr. Riordan made a motion to continue to work with the Sudbury Housing Authority as a subcommittee and to authorize the spending of up to \$10,000 of Housing Trust funds for an initial feasibility analysis for the property including survey, legal research, soil testing, conceptual Site Plan, preparation of development budget, and to deliver some type of final report. Ms. Cronin seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Hummel – Aye, and Ms. Scotti – Aye.

## **5. HOME Fair Housing Update**

Ms. Rust discussed the analysis of impediments to fair housing choice project which was ongoing by the HOME Consortium. She indicated the action plan oriented towards increased outreach and education; regulatory and legislative adjustments which were needed; and fair housing testing (discrimination against future tenants and homeowners). Ms. Rust stated the analysis would have a five year outlook to elevate fair housing and she also noted its importance. Ms. Rust noted each town could get involved in the process as they saw fit (up to each community).

## **6. Small Grants – Discuss Program Changes**

Ms. Rust noted there was a Small Grants Program cap of \$10,000 and some recipients had hit this combined maximum amount with all of their projects over the years. She also indicated the maximum project grant amount had changed from \$3,000 to \$5,000 and with up to a \$5,000 allocation per project, this would likely only allow for homeowners to conduct two projects.

Ms. Howe suggested there should be a timeframe by which the maximum funding allocation could be sought. She recommended this timeframe be 10 years, but then applicants could receive another \$10,000 after that window of time had elapsed. Mr. Riordan agreed or thought perhaps an increase of the maximum amount of funding should be considered. There was then discussion regarding possibly raising the limit of the funding cap versus extending the timeframe by which a household could then seek another full grant amount.

Mr. Riordan suggested a \$15,000 maximum amount for those awarded funding and recommended a renewal could occur after 7 years by which someone could become eligible again.

Ms. Howe recommended perhaps saying a person could be eligible again after 7 years and to reevaluate the funding increase maximum at a later time.

Mr. Riordan made a motion to make the program eligibility seven (7) years from the participant's last grant award, and that the program give priority to first time applicants and emergency situations, and to reevaluate the parameters of program in the future. Mr. Gentile seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Hummel – Aye, and Ms. Scotti – Aye.

Ms. Rust noted the “all materials will be held confidential” language in application form. She indicated it was unclear what items in the materials would be subject to a public information request.

It was determined the next Housing Trust meeting would be held on Thursday, March 11, 2021 at 8:00 AM.

At 9:22 AM, Mr. Riordan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Dretler seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Hummel – Aye, and Ms. Scotti – Aye.