



# Town of Sudbury

## Housing Trust

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### MINUTES

**FEBRUARY 10, 2022 AT 8:00 AM**

### VIRTUAL MEETING

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

**Housing Trust Members Absent:** Karl Pops and Susan Scotti

**Others Present:** Director of Planning and Community Development Adam Duchesneau, Director of the Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO) Liz Rust, and Liz Valenta from the Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO)

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

#### **1. Minutes: Approve Meeting Minutes of December 9, 2021, and January 13, 2022, if presented**

Mr. Gentile made a motion to approve the minutes of December 9, 2021. Mr. Riordan seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, and Mr. Hummel – Abstain.

Mr. Gentile made a motion to approve the minutes of January 13, 2022. Mr. Riordan seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, and Mr. Hummel – Aye.

#### **2. 67-73 Nobscot Road – Site Feasibility Analysis Update**

Mr. Riordan noted the 67-73 Nobscot Road Subcommittee had met on January 28, 2022, and David LaPointe and Matthew Cote from Beals + Thomas were in attendance to discuss their work on the analysis project. Mr. LaPointe presented plans with potential development scenarios

Mr. Duchesneau provided an overview of the three development scenarios ranging between 18 and 28 units. He discussed how the access driveway would need to be widened and shifted to the south slightly. Mr. Duchesneau also noted these plans were just starting points and preliminary designs, and the Subcommittee was still awaiting the more detailed report for the subject property.

At this time Ms. Rust arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Howe raised concerns about wetlands impacts and ledge removal issues for each of the scenarios.

Ms. Dretler inquired if the site could potentially be a part of the required as-of-right multi-family zoning for Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Communities. Mr. Duchesneau stated it was a possibility because the piece of land under discussion was just over 5 acres in size, which would meet the minimum amount of zoning area.

Ms. Cronin noted there were still a lot of issues which needed to be ironed out and understood about the property.

Ms. Howe asked Mr. Duchesneau to touch base with Beals + Thomas as to when their more detailed report might be forthcoming.

### **3. Sudbury Rent Relief Program**

Ms. Howe noted there was a lot of discussion to be had regarding this new program and perhaps the formation of a subcommittee would be in order to work through some of the challenging details associated with the program moving forward.

- Update on Phase 1 Initial Applications

Ms. Valenta noted that in the first 10 days of the application period there were over 60 applicants and, in total, over 70 applications had been received. Due to the large number of applicants, a lottery was held to determine who would receive assistance. Ms. Valenta indicated only 23 households were able to receive assistance due to the amount of funding available. She stated there were a significant number of applicants from the Coolidge at Sudbury and also noted the average income of the applicants was between \$32,000 to \$33,000 per household.

Ms. Cronin noted there was clearly a need for rental assistance and the Housing Trust should figure out how much additional funding they would like to provide.

Town Social Worker Bethany Hadvab pointed out housing was one of the basic needs that all humans require in order to provide a foundation for the other aspects of their lives. She also noted how the turnover process of an affordable housing unit was burdensome for all parties involved, especially the families leaving or coming into the unit.

Ms. Howe inquired as to the status of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding from the Town of Sudbury which had been requested by the Housing Trust for a few supportive programs. Ms. Dretler indicated the Town had received some of its ARPA funding and those monies were used to fund some immediately pressing needs with the Sudbury Public Schools, Fire Department, and areas of public health. She added there was almost 4 million dollars of ARPA funding remaining which could still be allocated by the Select Board to the various ARPA funding requests.

Ms. Howe asked the Housing Trust members if a subcommittee should be created to further discuss this topic outside of the full Housing Trust meetings? She also wondered how much additional funding should be provided to the Sudbury Rent Relief Program.

- Discuss and Possible Vote for Additional Funds

Mr. Gentile noted there were two objectives to meet. One, was to help people in the current housing situation for the short term. The second objective was to create permanent affordable housing.

Mr. Gentile made a motion to allocate another \$110,000 to assist those currently on the Sudbury Rent Relief Program wait list. Ms. Cronin seconded the motion.

Ms. Hadvab expressed concerns regarding the need for rental housing assistance, and stressed it was extremely pressing and immediate in nature. She inquired about a possible timeline to assist those households who were not able to get on the Sudbury Rent Relief Program wait list.

Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, and Mr. Hummel – Aye.

- Discuss and Possible Establishment of Task Force Future Enhancements

Ms. Howe made a motion to form a Sudbury Rent Relief Program Subcommittee to examine application and qualifications for program, to include Ms. Howe, Town of Sudbury Social Worker Bethany Hadvab, Sudbury Housing Authority Social Worker Lauren Abraham, Liz Valenta from the Regional Housing Services Office, and Ms. Cronin, if she was able to attend. Mr. Gentile seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, and Mr. Hummel – Aye.

#### **4. Mortgage Assistance – Review Program Materials**

Ms. Rust indicated this program would be funded with \$75,000 of state ARPA funds which Mr. Gentile was able to secure from the state legislature. There was then discussion to refine the eligible properties and owners for the program.

Ms. Hadvab provided comments and concerns regarding certain aspects of the proposed parameters for the program and the application form itself.

Mr. Riordan inquired as to how frequently these assistance payments would be made. Ms. Rust stated a \$3,000, one-time grant, would be issued and indicated separate checks could be provided for two months of mortgage payments to program participants.

There was discussion regarding timing of the bankruptcy ineligibility requirement and adjustments were made to this language.

Ms. Rust stated she would make edits to the Mortgage Assistance Program parameters and application form based upon the discussion, and would bring back the details of the program for a vote at a future Housing Trust meeting.

## **5. Financial Update**

- Vote to Ratify the FY22 December Transactions, if presented

Ms. Rust noted these transactions had not yet been prepared, but they would be ready for the next Housing Trust meeting in March of 2022.

## **Other or New Business**

Ms. Dretler asked that a discussion regarding the proposed Housing Trust Bylaw be a standing item on the Housing Trust's agendas. Ms. Rust inquired if the Housing Trust wanted to survey bylaws from other communities. Mr. Riordan recommended the Housing Trust engage separate counsel from Town Counsel to be advised on the matter.

At this time Ms. Cronin left the meeting.

Ms. Howe asked Mr. Duchesneau to contact Town Counsel to request a representative attend the next Housing Trust meeting on March 10, 2022 and to recirculate the documents which displayed the proposed changes to the Housing Trust Bylaw.

## **Public Comment**

There were no additional public comments.

At 10:12 AM, Mr. Gentile made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Dretler seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Riordan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Absent, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Mr. Gentile – Aye, and Mr. Hummel – Aye.