



Town of Sudbury

Housing Trust

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MINUTES

August 8, 2024 AT 8:00 AM

VIRTUAL MEETING

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

Absent: Jessica Cerullo Merrill

Others Present: Adam Burney Director of Planning and Community Development Adam Burney, Community Preservation Coordinator Ryan Poteat, and Director of the Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO) Liz Rust

Mr. Gentile began the meeting at 8:01 AM

New member applicant Ashley Rieser

Mr. Gentile introduced Ms. Rieser and stated they had a nice conversation over the weekend. Ms. Rieser introduced herself and stated that she was a fairly new resident of approximately 2 years. When asked what had interested her in getting involved with the Housing Trust. Ms. Rieser stated she understood that Sudbury is not an inexpensive place to live. She went on to say she knows that Sudbury also has an aging population who may not be able to keep up with the increases to the cost of living here. She would like to take an active role in protecting Sudbury's aging population or those who may be at risk of being pushed out due to the high cost of residing in town.

Mr. Ryan made a motion to recommend to the Select Board that they appoint Ms. Rieser to the Sudbury Housing Trust. Ms. Cronin seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Ryan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler - Aye, Ms. Howe – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

Nomination of Sudbury Housing Trust Vice Chair

Mr. Gentile recognized that the Housing Trust had voted on the appointment of Mr. Ryan to the vacant Vice Chair seat at their July 18th meeting. Because it had not been on the agenda, Mr. Gentile called on the members to confirm and revote Mr. Ryan's appointment to Vice Chair.

Ms. Dretler made a motion to appoint Mr. Ryan as Vice Chair of the Housing Trust. Ms. Cronin seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Ryan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Dretler - Aye, Ms. Howe – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

Housing Production Plan

Mr. Ryan pointed out that the most critical point of concern the Trust had was in the identification of Town owned properties with potential for development. He stated he believed the Trust's concerns in this area had been thoroughly discussed and outlined in Mr. Burney's memos dated July 11, 2024. Mr. Burney was appreciative for the praise but pointed out the importance of the Trust speaking up if there were any other points of concern in other parts of the HPP. Ms. Rust asked the Trust if they had any ideas for plans to further affordable housing in Sudbury and mentioned down payment assistance as an example. She encouraged the Trust to get these types of ideas into the HPP. Mr. Gentile spoke about Concord and how they have several groups dedicated to affordable housing and how the individual groups meet periodically (have "roundtable discussions") to stay on the same page. He stated he had an interest in using similar methods in Sudbury and asked Ms. Rust to go into further detail. Ms. Rust stated that the Town of Concord has Concord Housing Development Corporation which is a §501(c)(3) and does not have the same municipal barriers that other types of entities must comply with and because of this they are able to develop properties without as much expense and on shorter timelines. She stated on the construction side the expenses are 40% cheaper than municipal development. Concord also has the Concord Housing Foundation which does advocacy, public outreach and fundraising. They have a newsletter and solicit donations and assist developers in their development efforts. All the groups meet regularly at the Concord Roundtable and include these housing groups as well as the Select Board, Community Preservation Committee, the Planning Board and others to collectively work together to implement many of the things laid out in the goals and strategies section of their Housing Production Plan. These meetings are a check in of sorts to see where projects are and help to identify priority projects as well as assist in how they will be funded as a collective entity. Mr. Gentile stated he would like to explore this further and expressed his desire to have them identified for possible future consideration in the HPP.

Ms. Cronin stated she would like to recommend that the HPP be updated to reflect the recent vote on the MBTA Communities zoning. Ms. Rust asked if the Trust planned to make a list of changes or if they were going to make recommendations piecemeal.

Mr. Gentile stated he would like to recommend that the HPP be updated to reflect the consideration of having "roundtable" type meetings with the existing groups and that at these meetings the groups could consider establishing a 501c3 to assist housing efforts. Ms. Rust stated this would be a significant effort but that having it in the HPP was a great idea. Mr. Ryan and Dretler were both enthusiastic about identifying this for exploring this further in the HPP.

Mr. Riordan had sent out an email regarding first time home buyers and down payment assistance. Mr. Riordan stated he would like the HPP to state that the Trust would like to explore ways to assist first time homebuyers in town through programs such as but not limited to down payment assistance.

Ms. Rust suggested an amendment of strategy 2A for zoning code regulation to allow for ADUs by right. Ms. Howe stated the town has an ADU bi-law but Mr. Burney pointed out that in 180 days (from when the housing bill passed) the current bi-law would no longer be in compliance with the state law but that the town will have to write the Sudbury specific rules including setbacks/parking/other prior to adopting the new state regulation. Ms. Howe stated she would like to see the Housing Trust be involved when the Town rewrites the ADU bi-law. Ms. Rust asked if the Trust had interest in adding an education campaign regarding ADU's. Mr. Gentile enthusiastically agreed.

Ms. Rust suggested general updates to chapter 3-5 to reflect events that have happened since the current draft of the HPP was distributed. These would include things like the FY25 CPA fund appropriation and the HLC grant awarded to the Housing Authority for \$1.2M to develop 4 stand-alone Chapter 705 scattered sites into 8 affordable units for rent. These properties include 21 Great Lake Drive, 8 Oakwood Ave, 2 Beechwood Ave. and 9 Richard Ave. Ms. Howe offered to do some neighborhood outreach.

Ms. Cronin asked to include other local initiatives the Town has completed such as the CMAT. No other examples were given.

Ms. Rust asked the Trust if they had completed their review of the HPP. The Trust did not approve their recommendations at this time. Mr. Gentile asked if the Trust could receive a list version of their recommended changes and approve their suggestions at their August 20th meeting.

Mortgage Assistance Program

Ms. Rust stated that the application currently has applicants demonstrate that their income is less now than it was during Covid. She said this is a fairly dated requirement and is confusing and difficult for many otherwise qualified applicants to demonstrate. Ms. Rust asked if the Trust thought we could continue to use the available funds without having this requirement. Mr. Gentile thought it would be better to reach out to administrative officials prior to removing this requirement. Mr. Gentile asked the Trust to authorize him to inquire with the Commonwealth if it is ok to remove the requirement. Mr. Riordan also stated he would like the language pertaining to homeowners in arrears being ineligible reviewed and considered for edit in the future.

Mr. Ryan made a motion to authorize the Chair of the Housing Trust to inquire with the Commonwealth if it is ok to remove the Covid requirement. Mr. Riordan seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Ryan – Aye, Ms. Cronin (no vote), Ms. Howe – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

Review of Draft FY25 Budget

Ms. Rust went over the FY25 budget. She stated this is good practice but not necessarily required. Ms. Cronin thanked Ms. Rust for all her work and pointed out that the \$1M+ listed in the fees section (line 20) was all due to the work of the RHSO. The Trust decided to table the vote on approving the FY25 budget for a future meeting.

Mr. Gentile made a motion to work to create a new unit of affordable housing this fiscal year. Mr. Ryan seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Ryan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, Ms. Howe – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

Review of FY25 Community Preservation Act Funding Applications

Attachment A was edited during the meeting and approved as edited.
Attachment B was edited during the meeting and approved as edited.

Mr. Ryan requested an outline of the steps on how the Trust goes about acquiring a new piece of property for affordable housing. Mr. Burney stated the application should be as simple as possible but that the requested information should be used as supporting documentation.

Review of July 18th, 2024 Draft Minutes

Mr. Riordan made a motion to approve the minutes of July 18th, 2024 as amended. Mr. Ryan seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Ryan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

Future Meeting Schedule

- Joint meeting of the Housing Trust and Housing Authority
 - Tuesday August 20, 7:00 PM In-Person at Muskhetaquid Village Meeting Room
- Housing Trust - Thursday September 12, 2024 8:00 AM – Virtual meeting

Public Comment

There was no public comment at this meeting.

Mr. Riordan made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Ryan seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Gentile – Aye, Mr. Ryan – Aye, Ms. Cronin – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

The meeting ended at 10:01 AM