



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

August 14, 2025 AT 8:00 AM

VIRTUAL MEETING

Housing Trust Members Present: Vice Chair Jack Ryan, Kay Bell, Jessica Cerullo-Merrill, Janie Dretler, Cynthia Howe, Jeff Levine, and John Riordan

Absent: Carmine Gentile

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

Mr. Ryan began the meeting at 8:04 AM

Education: Public outreach and Housing Forum

Discussion about the upcoming forum scheduled for October 23rd, focusing on keeping the discussion at a general level without diving into specifics about projects. Developer participation on the panel was debated and ultimately decided against to avoid shifting focus to specific projects. Instead, the forum will emphasize general affordable housing issues and community engagement. The press release for the forum has been drafted and will be used as a starting point for marketing materials like flyers and other information pieces.

The goal is to launch outreach efforts around the time schools open in early September. Various outreach strategies were considered important, including personal invitations to balance supporter and opposition attendance, social media, and using town communication networks. Emphasis was placed on clear, concise, and engaging messaging to capture public attention amidst information overload. It was noted that attendees are likely to ask about specific projects despite the forum's high-level intent. Preparations were suggested to address questions tactfully without engaging in project-level debates. Participants suggested providing handouts or leave-behind materials to direct attendees to factual and updated information on specific projects and housing types. Transparency and availability of information both during and after the forum were stressed.

Content planning for the forum's presentations aims at about 45 minutes of speaker presentations followed by 45 minutes for questions and discussion; flexibility remains on timings.

Presentations will include broader affordable housing issues such as housing density, housing styles beyond single-family homes, and the regional importance of the crisis. The challenges faced by younger and older generations regarding housing affordability were emphasized as key points to personalize the conversation for the community. Data points such as average incomes for seniors, market rent versus affordable housing rent comparisons, and Area Median Income (AMI) clarifications were discussed as essential information to include in presentations and handouts.

Ideas to humanize the event included having members of the housing trust and housing authority greet attendees at the venue and distribute materials. Maintaining an inviting atmosphere was considered key.

Rent increases at Cold Brook Crossing

Ms. Rust explained the Housing Trust's role as the monitoring agent responsible for reviewing and approving rent increases at Cold Brook Crossing. A recommendation for limiting lease renewals to a 5% increase or the HUD maximum, whichever is less, was presented. Questions about the implications of denying rent increases were answered, reaffirming that the monitoring agent has authority to approve or deny increases but with fallback regulatory terms that may allow higher increases if denied. It was clarified that these rent increases apply only to affordable units and maintain a balance between affordability and financial sustainability of the property management. The current year's HUD increase is around 3%, and the 5% cap proposal is protective of tenants.

Ms. Howe made a motion to approve the rent increases at Cold Brook Crossing as presented. Mr. Ryan seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Ryan – Aye, Ms. Bell – Aye, Ms. Cerullo-Merrill – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Levine – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

The motion to approve the rent increase recommendation was moved, seconded, and passed by roll call vote.

Lottery Agreement

The trust reviewed and approved a contract with Lexington for lottery services related to a moderate-income ownership condominium unit. The contract involves monitoring and continuity support for successful homeownership.

It was noted that this contract brings in revenue to the Trust from monitoring services beyond Sudbury, assisting financially outside of Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds.

Ms. Dretler made a motion to approve the Linc Cole Lottery Agreement as presented. Ms. Bell seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Ryan – Aye, Ms. Bell – Aye, Ms. Cerullo-Merrill – Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Levine – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

The motion to approve the lottery agreement was made, seconded, and passed by roll call vote.

Housing Trust Initiatives

Updates on 77 Hudson Road and 59 Horse Pond Road properties were given. The groundwork on 77 Hudson Road has started; Horse Pond is being monitored as a possible future affordable housing development depending on state property disposition. The importance of maintaining these properties on the agenda as monitoring items was stressed.

Financials

The May and June financial transactions and FY25 financial reports were reviewed. The trust received revenue from monitoring contracts and expenditures related to salaries and mortgage assistance. Explanation of how to read the financial spreadsheet, including town meeting funds and revenue streams, was given for the benefit of newer members.

Ms. Dretler made a motion to ratify the June financial transactions as presented. Mr. Riordan seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Ryan – Aye, Ms. Cerullo-Merrill– Aye, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Levine – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

The motion to ratify the June financial transactions was made, seconded, and passed by roll call vote.

Minutes

Mr. Riordan made a motion to approve the July 10, 2025 minutes as presented. Ms. Dretler seconded the motion. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Ryan – Aye, Ms. Cerullo-Merrill– Abstain, Ms. Dretler – Aye, Ms. Howe – Aye, Mr. Levine – Aye, and Mr. Riordan – Aye.

The motion to approve the July 10, 2025 minutes was made, seconded, and passed by roll call vote.

Future Meeting Schedule

The next meeting of the Housing Trust is scheduled for Thursday, September 11, 2025 at 8:00 AM via Zoom.

Other or New Business

The importance of submitting a CPC funding application by the September 21 deadline was discussed. Intent to submit was expressed, though specifics may depend on updates related to 77 Hudson Road and other projects. An application will be prepared with the option to revise as more project details become available. Past CPC feedback indicated a preference for concrete project details rather than speculative funding requests. Historic preservation projects such as the Broadacre farmhouse rehabilitation were highlighted as potential future funding priorities.

A light-hearted apology was recorded for an early morning disturbance to Chairman Gentile due to a difference in time zone.

To keep planning moving efficiently Mr. Ryan renewed the request for members to email their thoughts regarding the forum to himself alone (to avoid an Open Meeting Law violation).

Adjournment

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

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made, seconded, and approved by roll call vote.

The meeting ended at 9:19 AM