



Town of Ashland

M A S S A C H U S E T T S

Affordable Housing Trust Fund
101 Main Street
Ashland, MA 01721

MINUTES

April 2, 2020

Zoom Virtual Meeting called to order at 4:00 pm by Steve.

In attendance: Steve Greenberg, Debra Griffin, David Rosenblum, Dan Shea, Joe Magnani

Guests: Michael Herbert, Preston Crow, Jenn Ball, Beth Reynolds

The Trust discussed with Debra, her concerns about the operation of the trust including how new topics are brought forward by the chair, process of getting minutes corrected and approved. We discussed rotating minutes or possibly hiring someone to take minutes. Other committees have hired someone to take minutes. David is taking minutes for this meeting. We discussed process of creating agenda. We agreed that agenda should be sent to trustees 2 weeks before a monthly meeting and trustees should offer additions to agenda to the chair within 1 week of the meeting. Agenda should be shared with trustees ASAP for meetings more frequently than monthly. Joe suggested the next meeting Agenda can be discussed during a meeting. Backlog of minutes was discussed. Debra was concerned about lack of communication between meetings. Open meeting law prevents discussion, but acknowledging emails was asked for by Debra. Debra was concerned with all there is to learn about the trust. David, as other new member, agreed. Debra was concerned about personal liability for trust business. We discussed how to handle outside communication from Ashland residents. A key to this is to get the trust town email address working. Michael Herbert will follow up on this. IT people have been very busy with deploying chrome books for students.

We discussed the draft motion about creating a homeowner assistance program using Affordable trust funds (see below). Michael and Jenn were at the meeting to take part in this discussion. The trust has a rental assistance program and this would expand the program to home owners. We discussed draft motion to allow up to \$250,000 of Affordable Housing Trust money to be used for this. Our

discussion included questioning whether this would be grant or loan, how would we protect confidentiality, what would role of Ashland Emergency Fund be in this, and the amount of the trust's funds to be allocated for this.

Our meeting was ZoomBombed. Steve, Michael and others ably got us running again. Sharing screen was restricted to host only. Debra suggested using Zoom waiting room.

We resumed discussion of the draft motion. We discussed our funding. We have approximately \$600,000, \$200,000 is committed to Pond Street development, using \$250,000 for new program would leave us with only \$150,000. We discussed dedicating less money to this. We also discussed how the program might be administered including who would be eligible and what amounts of grant/loan might be and for how long.

We discussed that state and federal programs might be better positioned to provide this funding. David mentioned Boston Globe article about state bill concerning relief funding that was expected to be passed in days.

The trust agreed to table the emergency homeowner and rental assistance motion for now.

We discussed proposed motion (see below) to approve \$200,000 grant funding for 12 Pond Street. A motion was made to approve the motion as written, authorize Steve to communicate with the developer and lender about grant agreement and that the motion had passed. Motion made by David, seconded by Dan, passed 5-0.

We discussed approving minutes. Motion was made by Joe, seconded by Dan to approve minutes of November 7, 2019, passed 5-0.

We discussed how to deal with communications from Ashland residents. Debra will resend emails and attachments she has received. We will look at these and take up response at our next meeting. Town email address for the Trust was mentioned again.

Next meeting set for April 13, 2020 at 4:00 pm.

Motion to adjourn at 6:11pm by Dan, seconded by David, passed 5-0.

Documents discussed at the meeting:

Draft Motion:

THE ASHLAND AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST TO AUTHORIZE UP TO \$250,000 TO PRESERVE AND SUPPORT HOUSING FOR ASHLAND HOMEOWNERS AND RENTERS ACCORDING TO THE QUALIFICATION GUIDELINES OF THE MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.

ALL APPLICATIONS TO BE REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY THE TRUST. ANY FUNDS DISTRUBUTED BY THE TRUST WILL BE PAID TO MORTGAGEE OR LANDLORD ONLY.

12 Pond Street Motion:

Motion to approve up to \$200,000 of Ashland Affordable Housing Trust funds for the creation of four (4) deed restricted in perpetuity residential units at 12 Pond Street Ashland, MA 01721. Funds to be distributed subject to a mutually agreeable grant agreement with the developer and the Trust, developer obtaining occupancy permits for all units in the development from the Town of Ashland, mutually agreeable schedule and formula to determine affordable rental rates for the four (4) affordable units going forward.