



Town of Ashland

MASSACHUSETTS

Affordable Housing Trust Fund
101 Main Street
Ashland, MA 01721

MINUTES

May 20, 2021

Trustees in attendance: Steve Greenberg, Joe Magnani, Debra Griffin, David Rosenblum, Alan Galiwango, Bernadette Lunkuse, Barbra Sekesogundu Simon

Trustees absent:

Guests: Cathy Van Lancker

Zoom Meeting called to order at 3:16pm by Steve.

We opened discussion on deed restrictions. Steve has been looking for examples to use. No useful responses yet. Steve will reach out to the Select Board to piggyback on Valentine property deed restrictions the project to add restrictions on 6 Cherry St and 125 Front St. Joe is okay with that. Cathy suggested contacting town counsel. Cathy had to leave our meeting.

Motion to approve minutes of meeting of April 15, 2021 as written made by Joe, seconded by Alan, passed 5-0.

Emma Snellings was not able to attend this meeting. She left word that \$160,000 in aid was distributed. \$41,000 of this was from Affordable Housing Trust money, the rest from CARES act funds. (rounded \$ amounts). Emma emailed us about responses to the home purchase lottery. Two people responded. Joe was not surprised with the low response. Joe mentioned low Ashland town election voting numbers. One response used the word "unfair". Alan questioned whether this might refer to the restrictions, not the process. Joe said we should be working on legislation for aid. Debra said that the survey was a platform for people to be heard. Steve mentioned a Medfield MCD housing lottery that had an open group Q&A session. Alan said that based on talking to people he knows, that the qualifications are complicated.

We brought up the ERAP federal Emergency Rental Assistance Program. David said that it looks this is being administered by SMOC (South Middlesex Opportunity Council) as part of applying for state aid such as RAFT assistance. David thought that knowledge of the program would be helpful for other town organizations. We are asking Emma to look into this.

We discussed proposals for Monitoring services received by the AHT. We got 3 bids. Length of contract was discussed. Consensus was to go a year at a time. Lowest bid was from Elizabeth Rust's company. We are inviting her to an interview at our next meeting and can decide on bids after that.

Joe brought up the Eversource Hardship assistance program. He sees this as an additional way to help residents in need. Steve will reach out to Jenn Wuelfing about this.

Steve updated us on the upcoming resale of 72 Raymond Marchetti. The owner has filled forms for the state, is obtaining an appraisal and is cleaning up the house. The AHT is not planning to buy and resell the house. The owner will resell directly. DHCD is involved in the sale and must approve it. Joe asked what the price would be. Steve thought it would be close to the \$314,000 sales price of a similar house last year. The question of whether the sale was a lottery or first-come-first-serve sale. Steve said that Reiko Hayashi at DHCD would know the rules for this. That said, Steve made a motion that the AHT take title and resell, if necessary, the home and that the Trust approve the potential purchase and/or just marketing services for the sale. Seconded by David. Motion passed 5-0.

Steve updated us on the resale of 281 America Blvd. It is owned by a senior resident living alone. They have been living in Arizona. Steve visited the house. There are a lot of items that need to be out of the house for resale. The owner has a daughter living locally (in MA). The house has A/C and hardwood floors and is generally in great shape. Steve made a motion that the AHT take title and resell, if necessary, the home and that the Trust approve the potential purchase and/or just marketing services for the sale. Seconded by Debra. Motion passed 5-0.

Action items were discussed. Debra said a lot has been done including the survey, monitors and deed restriction work.

The letter from Cathy Rooney was discussed. Much of the letter addressed issues such as type of building siding and insulation. Joe said that these issues are not the AHT's purview. He said they were planning board and zoning board issues. And that the Select Board and others had many public forums about the project. The development agreement specifies 25% affordable units. It was mentioned that

building codes govern many of these issues and that the recent Housing Production Plan is concerned with these issues. Joe will reach out to Cathy and follow up about this. Debra said that Cathy was concerned about quality housing for residents of affordable homes.

We discussed building more affordable housing. Debra brought up buying small houses, add deed restrictions and sell. Tiny houses were also mentioned. The AHT land on Olive Street was brought up. Joe said that an affordable development was on the table about 5 years ago. Joe will look into it. Joe will invite someone from Habitat for Humanity to our next meeting. Steve brought up recent HPP and upcoming inclusionary zoning which could create more affordable homes. Additional Dwelling Units (ADUs) were discussed. The HPP forums showed a lot of interest in them and they are a good way to add homes on property with current homes. It is currently possible to build ADUs in Ashland, but the regulations are strict and cumbersome. Debra asked if we could buy and resell homes. Steve said that this was possible, but current prices are just too high. Joe brought up small homes being built in Bellingham by Fafard Co. We discussed adding this to the agenda and getting information about the development. Bernadette brought up income limits to get affordable homes and whether the limits were appropriate. Joe said that 80% AMI limits for a 4 person household was about \$95,000. Some of us thought that homes should be available for higher incomes.

Our next meeting is scheduled for June 17, 2021. Meetings will be starting later at 5:00pm.

Motion to adjourn made by Debra, seconded by David, passed 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 4:47 pm.

Next meeting will be June 17, 2021 5-7pm.

Documents discussed:

Emma Snelling email

Cathy Rooney letter