



Town of Sudbury

Housing Trust

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MINUTES

DECEMBER 11, 2019 AT 7:45 AM

SILVA ROOM, FLYNN BUILDING, 278 OLD SUDBURY ROAD, SUDBURY, MA

Housing Trust Members Present: Chair Cynthia Howe, Kelley Cronin, Janie Dretler, Carmine Gentile, and Kaffee Kang

Housing Trust Members Absent: None

Others Present: Selectman Pat Brown, Director of Planning and Community Development Adam Duchesneau, and Director of the Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO) Elizabeth Rust

At 7:51 AM, Ms. Howe called the meeting to order.

1. Minutes

a. Approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of 10/21/19

Ms. Kang made a motion to approve the minutes of October 21, 2019. Ms. Dretler seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, 3-0, with Ms. Cronin and Mr. Gentile absent from the vote.

2. Finances

a. Vote to Ratify the FY 2020 September, October Transactions

Ms. Rust provided an overview and summary of the transactions.

Ms. Dretler made a motion to ratify the FY2020 September and October transactions. Ms. Kang seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, 3-0, with Ms. Cronin and Mr. Gentile absent from the vote.

At this time Mr. Gentile arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Howe asked if there were any additional financial commitments not on the sheet which had been presented and Ms. Rust indicated there were not.

3. New Business

b. Planning Board Inclusionary Zoning Initiative

Mr. Duchesneau provided an overview of the draft proposed Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw. He noted the regulation, as proposed, would only be triggered for new housing developments of five (5)

units or more. For projects of this size or greater, no less than one, but at least 10%, of the dwelling units proposed for the development would need to be affordable dwelling units. Mr. Duchesneau indicated the Planning Board was hoping to bring forth this proposed Zoning Bylaw amendment to the May 2020 Annual Town Meeting.

Ms. Kang felt the section of the proposed bylaw which allowed for developers to provide the Town with land to construct affordable housing units should be removed. She believed it did not make sense for the Town to acquire land for this purpose because the logistics of then constructing new affordable dwelling units would be very challenging for the Town.

There was then discussion regarding the section of the proposed bylaw amendment which called for a surcharge to be paid to the Housing Trust for each new dwelling unit which was created. Housing Trust members felt it might be easier to collect a Building Permit surcharge (a flat fee on top of the Building Permit fee) and they also discussed the possible implementation of a Transfer Tax. It was pointed out that both of these items might require special legislation for them to be implemented.

At this time Ms. Cronin arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Kang wondered how the money collected from the Building Permit surcharge would be spent and affirmed this was a question which needed to be examined.

Ms. Dretler wondered if the proposed Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw amendment would be viewed as a way to curtail development instead of a way for the community to produce more affordable dwelling units. She also raised concerns regarding the language in the proposed bylaw which allowed for affordable dwelling units to be constructed off site. Ms. Dretler felt this might lead to an area in town which would become a location with a high density of affordable dwelling units. Her preference was for affordable dwelling units to be spread throughout the community. Ms. Dretler also stated the types and sizes of dwelling units also needed to be considered.

Ms. Rust indicated the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) was becoming stricter about not accepting off site affordable dwelling units into the Local Initiative Program (LIP). She stated the market rate and affordable dwelling unit types needed to be the same. For example, in the same development, market rate houses could not be constructed with condominium affordable dwelling units.

Ms. Dretler stated the Housing Trust wanted to make sure this proposed Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw amendment could be implemented and did not receive pushback from the community.

Ms. Howe noted the applicability of the proposed bylaw would be very limited because there were not many potential larger development sites still available in town. She also felt the proposed bylaw would be difficult to roll out.

Mr. Duchesneau pointed out the “carrot versus the stick” approaches and noted this proposed bylaw was a “stick” style approach. He wondered if the community should look at attempting to implement an incentive based affordable dwelling unit development approach instead.

Ms. Cronin stated the Housing Trust should thank the Planning Board for looking into this proposed Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw amendment and attempting to bring it forward.

5. Trust Meeting Schedule

There was discussion regarding attempting to implement a regular meeting time each month moving forward. Housing Trust members indicated there was a preference for early morning meeting times and Thursday mornings appeared to work best for most members. As such, the Housing Trust members decided they would attempt to meet the first Thursday morning of each month moving forward. The next meeting was scheduled for January 8, 2020 at 7:45 AM.

3. New Business

a. Coolidge at Sudbury Phase II Request

Before discussion commenced, Ms. Howe recused herself from the discussion on this matter and left the room as she works for a property management company and the Coolidge at Sudbury is one of their clients. Ms. Cronin took over as the acting Chair.

Jesse Kanson-Benanav from B’nai B’rith Housing was present to discuss the request. He noted the Coolidge at Sudbury Phase II was currently under construction, but early site work found very dirty soil on the property which needed to be handled in a special manner. As such, an extra \$500,000 was spent on the removal and disposal of this soil. Mr. Kanson-Benanav indicated they were seeking an additional \$150,000 from the Housing Trust to help offset the cost of this soil removal to help keep their project on budget.

Ms. Kang asked if any test pits had been conducted on the site prior to construction. Mr. Kanson-Benanav indicated there were but nothing concerning was found from their results.

Ms. Dretler asked how much contingency was built into the project’s budget. Mr. Kanson-Benanav stated approximately 7% or roughly \$750,000. He then discussed the other funding sources they have been seeking to help offset the additional costs of this soil removal.

Ms. Rust noted the Town had already contributed approximately \$750,000 to the project, including MetroWest HOME Program funds. She also stated there would be approximately \$200,000 remaining in the Housing Trust at the end of Fiscal Year 2020.

It was suggested perhaps a Sudbury Housing Authority (SHA) donation could be sought and the Coolidge at Sudbury could provide the SHA with some units within their project. Ms. Rust noted the regulating aspects of the Coolidge at Sudbury project were too far along to make any adjustments to include this type of proposal.

Ms. Kang then suggested perhaps SHA residents could be allowed to access some of the amenities at the Coolidge at Sudbury in exchange for a donation of SHA funds.

Ms. Dretler wanted to see more details regarding the impact of the request on the Housing Trust's financials.

There was then discussion regarding the contingency amount of 7% and whether or not it was reasonable, as well as the \$500,000 cost of the soil removal, which seemed to be very high.

Ms. Kang stated she was not in favor of contributing any more money to the project.

Mr. Gentile made a motion to appropriate an additional \$50,000 for the Coolidge at Sudbury Phase II project. Ms. Cronin seconded the motion. The vote was 3-1-1, with Ms. Cronin, Ms. Dretler, and Mr. Gentile voting in favor, Ms. Kang voting against, and Ms. Howe recused from the vote.

At this time Ms. Howe returned to the meeting and resumed her duties as Chair.

Also at this time, Ms. Dretler left the meeting.

There was then a discussion regarding the Frost Farm affordable housing fund, and how the money could be accessed and used.

4. Old Business

a. Home Preservation Grant Program – 8 Eddy Street Update

Ms. Rust noted the basement work was completed and the basement was now dry. She stated her office was now moving forward with the paperwork to close out this project.

b. Village at Old County Road, Unit 28 – Update

Ms. Rust indicated the closing for this unit was occurring the following week to a tenant of the SHA.

3. New Business

c. Housing Choice Amendment

Ms. Rust indicated a letter from the Board of Selectmen regarding their position on the Governor's Housing Choice Bill had been included in the Housing Trust members materials for the meeting. She noted the Board of Selectmen's letter indicated their agreement with the Town of Needham's Board of Selectmen's proposed amendments to the Housing Choice Bill.

At 9:15 AM, Ms. Kang made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Cronin second the motion. The vote was unanimous, 4-0, with Ms. Dretler absent from the vote.