



CITY OF CHELSEA
AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND BOARD

c/o Chelsea Department of Planning & Development
Chelsea City Hall
500 Broadway
Chelsea, Massachusetts 02150



Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 25, 2017
6:00 p.m.

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A meeting of the Chelsea Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board was called to order by Brian Hatleberg, Chair, at 6:10 p.m. on Tuesday, April 25, 2017, in Chelsea City Hall, Room 102, Conference Room, 500 Broadway, Chelsea, MA, with the following members in attendance: Brian Hatleberg, Colleen Kelley, Teri Weidner, and Laura Wiener. Norieliz DeJesus arrived at 6:14 p.m. The following members were absent: Robert Boulrice and Tiffany Managad.

Minutes of March 28, 2017

On a motion made by Colleen Kelley, seconded by Teri Weidner, it was voted 4-0-0 (4-Yes-Brian Hatleberg, Colleen Kelley, Teri Weidner, Laura Wiener; 0-No; 0-Abstain) to waive the reading of the minutes of March 28, 2017 and accept the minutes as written.

Discussion of AHTFB Letter to City Council

The Board agreed that the Chair send a letter on behalf of the Board to the Chelsea City Council. The letter will inform the Council that Board has been meeting, discussing its role, and that it is proposing the future expenditure of funds to seek consulting assistance to develop priorities. Council members are invited to the future AHTFB meetings.

Discussion with JM Goldson and RKG Associates, Inc. on the Housing & Strategic Plan & Affordable Housing Trust

Consultants: Jennifer Goldson, JM Goldson, community preservation + planning
Amanda Berman, RKG Associates, Inc.

Jennifer Goldson facilitated a discussion with the Board members on the role of the AHTFB, the role of the AHTFB in relation to the Community Preservation Committee to be appointed (under the Community Preservation Act), and the development of priorities, goals, and actions in the future. This is a continuation of the discussion with JM Goldson that was started at the February meeting.

The discussion was framed around questions of:

- Why are we here? Who are we?
- What is the Board's role?

The housing plan, upon completion, will help inform the AHTFB on needs in the community and what activities to take on. The Board members commented on what stood out from the prior discussion including the following: the need to focus on executable actions; there appears to be no time for

advocacy; there is much that is not yet known of the housing needs and what community wants; what will be the future sources (of funds) and uses.

Jennifer Goldson referred to the JM Goldson document entitled: Chelsea Housing Plan, Community Workshop, Summary of Results, prepared by JM Goldson, 3/31/17 (13 pages) distributed to the Board prior to the March 21, 2017 Community meeting. The meeting had engaged conversation. Some take-aways of the comments at the public meeting related to: deeper affordability, retaining existing residents, and addressing displacement.

The Board members commented further housing needs in Chelsea and issues to address: how to connect residents (including newcomers) to housing resources; how to assist on housing search; how many people are new in the City based on city-wide door knocking; how to assess staffing needs for the AHTFB.

Jennifer Goldson referred to three primary models for CPA allocations to housing trusts in Massachusetts: Model #1: Trust as housing arm of the CPC (strongest model); Model #2 (hybrid – standard percentage allocation and ability for additional allocations); and Model #3: Trust as an applicant (weakest model and most common in Massachusetts). See Handout 1 entitled: Community Preservation Committee and the Trust (1 page).

The Board questioned Model #1 in a community with strong CDC presence. Further, a question was raised whether some Trusts receive proposals for funding year after year, or just one-time. JM Goldson said it depends on the activity being funded, e.g. direct assistance or housing production or something else. Model #3 may create potential for conflicts of City policy, for example, if one Board (the AHTFB) approves a development proposal and the other (CPC) rejects it.

Jennifer Goldson raised the question if the Chelsea AHTFB wanted to recommend to the City Manager that one member of the AHTFB sit on the CPC. There were no recommendations of Board members for this role.

It was noted that the Chelsea AHTFB has the mission to preserve, create, rehabilitate and maintain affordable housing units. It was recommended to ask the City attorney for an opinion on whether the AHTFB could fund housing assistance type activities (e.g. rental supplements).

Jennifer Goldson raised the question of whether the Board sees its role as a funder or initiator or both. As a funder, the Board would issue a Notice of Funding Availability (or RFP), evaluate proposals, and choose one or a multiple of proposals. As an initiator, the Board identifies an idea and proceeds with a project. For example, if the Board were to acquire land, it could contract for a feasibility study, issue an RFP to seek a developer, and oversee a project to completion.

Jennifer Goldson's initial observation is that the Board is leaning towards being a funder. The Board raised a concern that the initiator role is limited by time constraints of Board members and that there is not lots of open space in the City, and potential risk.

Discussion of a Strategic Plan Focus Group for Chelsea Housing Study

Amanda Berman reviewed the housing study schedule and key milestones in the next few months. The next community meeting is June 22, 2017. RKG Associates will deliver to the Department of Planning & Development the first portion of the report: needs assessment and draft goals in early May, thus initiating review of these sections.

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There was a discussion of the inadequacy of the U.S. Census data to accurately count the Chelsea population. The consultants and the City acknowledged these limitations of the Census data (e.g. that it does not capture undocumented families and individuals). Additional data collection is valuable. RKG recognized this and also note that there are limitations to data collection and the type of outreach which can be done within the budget the housing study. Board members were encouraged to continue their participation and make suggestions going forward for the remainder of the study over the next several months to encourage community involvement and attendance of residents at the June community meeting.

At a later project stage, when strategies are developed and discussed, RKG Associates would like the City to recommend housing professionals or those with an interested in housing to meet and discuss strategies as part of an 8 to 12 person focus group. The group would vet strategies prior to the June 22nd Community Meeting #2. The proposed date for this Focus Group meeting is June 1, 2017.

Upon inquiry of the Board members, Norieliz DeJesus and Colleen Kelley (if her schedule allows) agreed to participate in the focus group.

The Board members did not establish a meeting date for the AHTFB in May 2017. The June 2017 meeting was suggested to be replaced with attendance at the Housing Study Community Meeting on June 22, 2017 (at a location to be determined). The July 2017 meeting was proposed to be July 11, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall.

Adjournment

On a motion made by Colleen Kelley, seconded by Teri Weidner, it was voted -0-0 (5–Yes–Norieliz DeJesus, Brian Hatleberg, Colleen Kelley, Teri Weidner, and Laura Wiener; 0–No; 0–Abstain) to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

MINUTES APPROVED: 

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