

**Belmont Housing Trust Meeting: 7:30 pm July 9, 2020**  
**Remote**

2020 AUG 10 AM 8:49

**Attending:** Rachel Heller, Betsy Lipson, Paul Rickter, Judie Feins, Gloria Leipzig, Tomi Olson, Madeline Fraser Cook, Joe Zarro

**Guests** via phone/zoom: Sam and Chris Alexander, Bea Kleppner, Barry Lubarsky, Susan Burgess-Cox

**1. Update on the set up of the temporary emergency rental assistance program:**

The subcommittee working on this program has been meeting and the RFP was distributed by the Town. Metro West Collaborative Development responded and committee members are working with the Town Administrator on processing the contract. Following approval of the contract by the Town attorney, a three week marketing plan will begin in late July. Judie obtained a list of local landlords from the Town and they will be sent a flyer informing them of the program. Additional marketing will include a flyer sent with the local electric bill. The subcommittee will meet again on Tuesday, 7/14/20 via zoom. Details to be posted and emailed to members.

Rachel noted that the state has extended RAFT funding, which will supplement housing benefits for local renters.

**2. Discuss/Develop annual outreach/awareness/education plan**

Rachel asked if members had seen the recent online presentation by the Town of Arlington on affordable housing as it offers a model for Belmont. Betsy noted the Trust has been in contact with Belmont Against Racism over the past two years around the HPP and this may be a good partnership for ongoing education. A webinar format, perhaps via Zoom, to discuss issues of diversity and opportunity in the context of housing could be planned for the fall.

The Board agreed to schedule an additional meeting this month to discuss this further.

**3. Update on McLean Proposal**

The Select Board voted recently to approve a revised version of units in the proposed development: 40 townhouses (no change), 53 age-restricted rental apartments and 57 non-age-restricted rental apartments (formerly 110 non-restricted units). This vote came after release of the traffic study which showed slightly higher traffic volume than that allowed under the agreements between the Town and McLean. The developer noted a total of 12 trips/day over the limit. However, it was later learned that a report from the town's traffic consultant, using a different calculation method, showed 1.5 excess trips/day. Trust members questioned the need to change the configuration of the apartments for 1.5 trips. The change would reduce the number of units available to families with children.

Judy noted that there is support on the Council on Aging for increasing the options available to seniors throughout Belmont, but no vote has been taken on the McLean proposal and the COA Board was not aware of the Select Board's actions. Rachel noted that non-restricted units are also available to seniors and that Belmont residents will have a 70% preference when units are rented.

The Planning Board is expected to vote later in July on a zoning proposal for the McLean land for Town Meeting in the Fall.

Considerable discussion on the Select Board's decision on the revision in the number of units led to the following motion: Moved, to ask the Select Board to reconsider its endorsement of age-restricted units, in light of recent alternate traffic study statistics and changes in traffic patterns. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **4. Review of Minutes of Previous Meetings:**

June 11, 2020: Housing Trust Meeting – approved as amended.

June 22, 2020: Subcommittee on Emergency Rental Assistance – approved.

June 26, 2020: Subcommittee on Emergency Rental Assistance – approved as amended.

July 6, 2020: Subcommittee on Emergency Rental Assistance – approved as amended.

#### **5. Open discussion of Beatrice Circle Project with residents.**

Responding to questions about the proposed 40B development on Beatrice Circle, Rachel reviewed the state process for consideration and approval of such projects. The developer files his proposal with Mass Housing and the Town and others have a period of time to respond formally to the proposal, in this case the deadline is July 15, 2020. Mass Housing reviews these responses and decides whether to approve the project. If approved, the developer works with the Town's Zoning Board of Appeals on final approval and possible modifications.

Following this information, several residents of Beatrice Circle spoke of their concerns regarding the development and asked if the Housing Trust will issue any statements about the development.

Barry Lubarsky noted that the HPP notes the need for more affordable housing and wondered what the Trust's position is on this development

Sam and Chris Alexander, 43 Beatrice Circle, expressed opposition to the project, noting safety concerns along the access road and invited members of the Trust to visit the site for a better understanding of their concerns. Several members agreed to do so.

Susan Burgess-Cox, 135 Radcliff Rd, expressed disappointment that the Trust has not taken a position on the development.

Beatrice Kleppner, 19 Beatrice Circle, recounted raising her family there and also cited traffic and safety concerns.

Rachel and others noted that the HPP identified several areas in town for housing development, and the Trust is working to develop those areas, including the McLean land currently under consideration. The Trust also focuses on zoning changes that would allow more development within certain areas. Rachel reiterated that the process of 40B developments proceeds through Mass Housing.

Next meeting: July 23, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. Agenda to include continued discussion of education plans and update on rental assistance program.

Meeting adjourned @ 9:35 p.m.

Submitted,

Judy Singler