

Belmont Housing Trust – Minutes for October 2, 2019 Meeting

2020 FEB 18 AM 9:29

Present: Jeremy Romanul, Tommasina Olson, Rachel Heller, Gloria Leipzig, Judy Singler, Betsy Lipson, Madeline Fraser Cook, Judie Feins

Absent: Thayer Donham, Paul Rickter, Joe Zarro

Guests: Kevin McGuire (Mass. Housing Partnership consultant from OxbowURBAN), Julie Perkins

McLean Development

Rachel reported on the September 13 “summit meeting” with Patrice, McLean, and Northland. Patrice had the Housing Trust lead off with our proposal. A key question raised was about political support—how the Trust could help McLean/Northland at Town Meeting to pass the proposal.

McLean indicated they want to address both zones (3 and 4) at the same time. They are concerned about the MOU, hoping to avoid opening it to changes. They do see the PILOT (in-lieu payments to the Town) amount increasing.

We discussed who were influencers to help with Town Meeting outreach.

Madeline suggested we should deal with the transportation issue head-on, because there will be lots of concern and potential opposition over that. Assuming that shuttle service is part of the commitment from McLean/Northland, the pitch should be, “This won’t make traffic problems worse.” Should someone approach the Belmont Savings Bank Foundation or another source to fund a small, quick, traffic study?

There was a discussion about sustainability. The Cambridge Highlands development on Concord Ave. is all affordable and net zero. It will meet the passive house criteria (the key feature is the envelope, also tankless hot water heaters). Northland’s Newton development will be LEED-certified instead. The tradeoff is between incremental upfront costs and long-term savings.

Kevin pointed out that the developer needs to know (for financing) that this is feasible, can be permitted, and is commercially viable. It was suggested that Smart Growth America offers materials and training on this area.

Kevin went over revenue projections to the Town. Calculating the additional taxable value is easy. The development will also increase the Town’s bonding capacity. The harder part is to estimate the service costs.

We discussed outreach to the League of Women Voters, Council on Aging, and various Town Meeting influencers.

CPA Grant Agreement

The agreement is ready to sign; it’s in Patrice’s office, with Matt. We need to keep following up on this.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM. Submitted by Judie Feins.