

Belmont Housing Trust – Minutes for December 13, 2018 Meeting

2019 FEB 14 PM 2:48

Present: Judie Feins, Rachel Heller, Gloria Leipzig, Betsy Lipson, Paul Rickter, Jeremy Romanul, Judy Singler, Joe Zarro

Absent: Chuck Clark, Madeline Fraser Cook, Tommasina Olson

Guests: Julie Perkins (League of Women Voters)

The meeting was called to order by Betsy at 7:38pm.

Minutes. Minutes were approved (Betsy moved, Judy seconded) with two amendments.

General Business. Discussion about how to share items among committee members and stay in compliance with the Open Meeting Law. We agreed that if a document is shared with the committee, either before or at the meeting, the document should be posted on the Town website.

Waverley Square Placemaking. Betsy distributed to the committee a Waverley Planning Process document that Madeline had created, outlining the process to connect community stakeholders in a process of creating Waverley Square development ideas. Discussion about how to launch this initiative and the roles of Housing Trust, Planning Board, and Metro West Collaborative Development in this process. Rachel will work with Jennifer Van Campen of Metro West to turn Madeline's document into a flyer to organize a community meeting, probably starting with a core group of Waverley Square residents and business stakeholders.

Building a "culture of support for affordable housing" in Belmont. Jeremy introduced a PowerPoint presentation he put together on the theme of building a culture of support for affordable housing in Belmont. Discussion about good models for shaping our message. Joe suggested using language around "making our community whole." Betsy asked committee members review the Frameworks document (https://frameworksinstitute.org/assets/files/housing/enterprise_housing_playbook.pdf), consider how to make the message appropriate for Belmont, and suggest changes to slides in the presentation.

On engaging faith leaders, Gloria suggested involving social action committees in different congregations to build support for affordable housing. Discussion about gathering email addresses and using them to encourage people to reach out to neighbors, attend Planning Board meetings, and speak out in favor of affordable housing. Joe suggested a list of possible groups to engage with, including congregations, Belmont Against Racism, League of Women Voters, PTOs, Belmont parents Facebook group. Betsy stated that it's crucial for us to focus on reaching out to key allies in various groups to build a critical mass of support.

Inclusionary zoning. Rachel reported on the current state of inclusionary zoning. The Bradford is the first development in Belmont to trigger inclusionary zoning under our current bylaws and will have 10% affordable units at 80% of area median income (AMI). The bylaw requires 15% affordable units for developments with more than 40 units, but 10% for mixed use development. We could consider removing or changing the lower percentage for mixed use developments or reducing the number of units that trigger inclusionary zoning. Gloria expressed concern that under Belmont's bylaws, a resident with an increased income could become ineligible to stay in their affordable unit. Rachel will check on to make sure that language is correct. Judie stated that an issue is that the Town hasn't allowed developers flexibility like increased density or parking relief in exchange for more affordable units. Paul noted that with a goal of 10% affordable housing units town-wide, we could have dozens of mixed use developments with 10% affordable units and get no closer to the town-wide goal. We discussed the following thresholds: 6-12 unit developments: 10%, 13-20 unit developments: 12.5%, 21+ unit developments: 15%, and no provision for mixed-use developments. Discussion about deeper affordability, such as requiring some units to be

affordable for 50% of AMI, in addition to the other units at 80% of AMI. Rachel will continue to refine the ideas on inclusionary zoning for our meeting.

Brief updates. Betsy reported on the timeline for the affordable housing lottery for the Bradford. SEB, the consultant handling the lottery, expects to start marketing the affordable housing lottery in about three months and the marketing period typically lasts 60 days. So, SEB expects the lottery to be held in April 2019 with residents potentially moving in as early as May. She also reported that there is some confusion on the final affordable housing documents for the Bradford, which need to be supplied to the Bradford representatives by town staff. Gloria reported that the CPA Committee approved the Belmont Housing Trust Fund document, but there appears to be confusion about whether further approvals were needed. Rachel and Betsy will follow up with Patrice on that question.

Next steps. Betsy noted that, reviewing our action plan, we appear to be focusing on the appropriate items. Jaclyn Martin, Executive Director of the Belmont Housing Authority, will be our guest at our January meeting.

The committee adjourned at 9:44pm.

Submitted by Paul Rickter