

Belmont Housing Trust – Minutes for December 21, 2023 Meeting

Members: Rachel Heller, Judie Feins, Mark Kagan, Gloria Leipzig (BHA Liaison), Tommasina Olsen, Jeff Birenbaum (Planning Board Liaison), Mike Marotta.

Public: Ade Baptista

Meeting Called to order at 7:46 PM

1. **Minutes:** Minutes for 2/16, 3/9, 3/27, 4/11, 4/27, 5/4, 6/28, 11/20, and 12/1 were approved as revised – Moved by Judie, Seconded by Mark. Adopted unanimously.
2. **Election of Co-Chairs:** Tommasina Olson moved to nominate Judie Feins and Gloria Leipzig for election as Housing Trust Committee Co-chairs. Seconded by Mike Marotta. Approved Unanimously.
3. **Energy Efficiency Grant:** Rachel Heller gave an update on potential options for grants related to energy efficiency and affordable rents that she discussed with the Town Planner. Potential options include working together with Belmont Light or with Belmont Village. Grant applications are due on January 12th. Gloria Leipzig, Mike Marotta, and Rachel Heller discussed on how to proceed and agreed that, while it is not feasible to get a grant in time this year, it is a good idea to convene organizations for next year.
4. **CPA Funding:**
 - a. Contacting a third-party entity: Rachel Heller stated that we need people to monitor affordable housing for compliance, review applications for CPA funding, and perform other duties related to managing existing affordable units. Rachel Heller proposed that we hire an organization to do this further with a portion of CPA funding. Several nonprofits offer these services and have current contracts with other towns. The committee discussed this option in detail.

Motion: Rachel Heller moved that Judie Feins amend the Trust’s FY25 application to the CPC for purposes of adding administrative funds to monitor Affordable Housing compliance, assist in administering the Trust’s Notice of Funding Availability, and maintain Belmont’s Subsidized Housing Inventory with the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities. Seconded by Judie Feins. Adopted unanimously.
 - b. Sherman Gardens: There was a discussion of relocation questions about Sherman Gardens, which relates to this agenda item because CPA funds are being used for planning the redevelopment. No relocation will take place before 2025.
 - c. Notice of Funding Availability for Affordable Housing Production: The Trust’s final version of the NOFA was included as a DRAFT with the FY25 CPA application, because Town Counsel had not yet reviewed it. That remains the case. The Trust also needs to finalize the developer application for these funds.

5. **MBTA Advisory Committee:** Rachel Heller shared an update on the work of the MBTA Advisory committee. The committee set a target of multifamily zoning by right for 1632 additional homes, identifying potential locations for increased density zoning, which are near transit and existing commercial uses, and have passed the compliance model. There will be a public meeting to review these locations and source feedback from the public, and Rachel encouraged committee members to attend it.

6. **Outreach to Bring New Members to the Housing Trust to Fill Two Open Seats**
Rachel H. urged all members to seek additional volunteers for the Trust. With two open seats, there are serious limitations on the issues and projects that can be pursued in 2024.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mark Kagan