

Belmont Housing Trust – Minutes for July 16, 2015

2015 SEP 23 AM 9:34

Present: Helen Bakeman, Judie Feins, Barbara Fiacco, Gloria Leipzig, Tomasina Olson, Alisa Gardner-Todreas

Absent: Ann Verrilli

Guests: Jeffrey Wheeler, Senior Town Planner; Anne Covino Goldenberg and Julie Perkins, League of Women Voters, Committee on Planning and Housing

Minutes The minutes for the June 18, 2015 meeting were approved as amended.

Update from the Town (Jeffrey Wheeler). The Town of Belmont will receive approximately \$52,000 of FFY2015 HOME funding, which will revert to the local HOME consortium if not spent by June 2016. Jeffrey explained that the MWCD St. Joseph's Hall project in Watertown has developed serious roof leaks, with the roof likely to need replacement, which will cost approximately \$400,000. MWCD has gotten funding commitments from a number of towns but is still short. The Housing Trust voted unanimously to approve the following motion: that Belmont's FY2015 HOME funds allocation be directed only to the emergency roof replacement and associated repairs at the St. Joseph Hall in Watertown. Jeffrey will meet with MWCD and complete the necessary paperwork to make this happen.

Jeffrey reported that the Town is in final negotiations with the Cushing Village developer on the land disposal agreement of the parking lot and that soon the demolition, foundation and other related permits will be issued. Community Development will host a web page to document project progress.

Judie asked Jeffrey to check if the Subsidized Housing Inventory for Belmont includes the 3 Oakley units and the Habitat unit. Jeffrey will check; in addition, the 298 Acorn Park units can be added since the building permit has been issued. The 11 affordable units in Cushing Village can be added when that permit is issued.

Housing Production Plan update. The League of Women Voters has expressed interest in the Plan moving forward and has convened an action committee to assist. Judie is drafting a summary version of the HPP based on previously developed materials, focusing on forming a strategy for housing production in Town. The detailed data and other materials will be attached as an appendix.

First-Time Homebuyer Assistance Program (HAP) update. The lottery was held on June 23. The plan was to select 2 applicants for one-bedroom units and 1 applicant for a two-bedroom unit. However, since there was only one applicant for a one-bedroom grant (and 12 applicants for the two-bedroom grant), only two applicants were chosen. After discussion, the Trust agreed that we would re-advertise for the one-bedroom slot and hold another lottery in the fall.

Planning Board updates. The primary issues that the Planning Board has been addressing are related to zoning. The trend toward "mansionsization" results in tear-down of most units that sell for \$650K or less and then the construction of new units that do not fit the neighborhood. Jeffrey feels that our current zoning does address this issue, but because of non-conforming use and grandfathering we still have problems.

General Administration. The group discussed possible applicants for Trust membership. The following officers were elected unanimously:

Co-Chairs: Judie Feins and Gloria Leipzig

Vice-Chair: tabled until new members added
Secretary: Helen Bakeman

Gloria and Helen will be at our table at Meet Belmont on August 25.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Submitted by Helen Bakeman (with heavy reliance on notes from Tomi Olson)