

- **Belmont Housing Trust Minutes for 6/16/09**

- **In Attendance**—Judie Feins, Nancy Marsh, Carla Moynahan, Ann Silverman, Ann Verrilli, Alisa Gardner-Todreas, Charles Laverty, Jonathan Jacoby

- **Minutes**—The minutes for the meeting of 5/21/09 were approved as corrected.

- **Membership Changes**—Judie reported that the Selectmen had reappointed Roger Colton and appointed Alisa Gardner-Todreas and Charles Laverty to the Housing Trust Board. Alisa and Chuck were introduced.

- Judie thanked Nancy Marsh for her years of service on the Trust since its founding, including her work as secretary. Her support and insights will be missed. Nancy said a few words about how her position with Maloney Properties at Waverley Woods has made her aware that it is not enough to offer affordable housing to low-income residents who come from other communities if they are not prepared for the differences in social relationships they will find living in Belmont. She also raised the question of what can be done to make Belmont more diverse? The discussion that followed touched on how Belmont Against Racism might do outreach to the minority population that already lives in Belmont. Ann S. reminded the Board that Belmont is served by the Community Dispute Resolution Center in Cambridge which coordinates landlord tenant mediation. They have been put in touch with Belmont's Human Rights Commission.

- **5-Town Grant**—Carla reported on the June 3 meeting of the towns considering the establishment of a consortium to develop affordable housing. There have been 5 or 6 meetings to date and the consultant will be making a final report by September to the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (MHP), the funder for the planning process. There is still concern that there are not enough large development opportunities to ensure financial feasibility unless other sources of outside funding can be found.

- The Board reviewed the summary memo defining the proposed collaboration, its organization, the need for more development opportunities, financial feasibility and information about related development organizations and support in Greater Boston. These include an assessment by the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) of the operating budgets of 18 Boston area Community Development Corporations (CDCs) and MHP's interest in a new development support organization or system. The next meeting of the 5-town group is July 8 before which time the Trust needs to formulate answers to several questions raised in the summary memo. After some discussion of these

questions the members of the Trust present agreed that the definition given of this collaboration was acceptable and that Belmont was willing to participate.

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- **Inclusionary Zoning**—Carla brought the board up to date on the work with the Selectmen and the Office of Community Development about the inclusionary by-law and the rules and regulations proposed by the Planning Board. The by-law requires, on average, about 25% of developed housing units be affordable if there are more than six total units. However, the requirement is expressed as a formula, not a fixed percentage. Questions have been raised as to whether Belmont’s provision is too severe and impedes development, or if there are other ways to promote affordable housing such as a “buy-out” provision. A subcommittee of Carla, Roger Colton and Gloria Leipzig has had one meeting with Jay Szklut and Jeffrey Wheeler in the Development Office and is meeting again on June 26 to review information from other communities about their inclusionary zoning requirements. The goal is to bring the rules and regulations back to the to the Board of Selectmen in July with this new information and, perhaps, regulations that provide a procedural guide to implementing whatever the by-law requires, rather than expressly including those requirements, making it more flexible if the by-law is amended. Because of the expected Cushing Square development, it is important to have the rules and regulations in place soon.

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- Carla also laid out the next steps in the work on the Comprehensive Plan, building on the results of the recent survey of town residents. There will be public meetings on affordable housing, historic preservation and financial stability. The plan is slated to be completed by April, 2010.

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- **Community Preservation Act**—Judie, as a private Belmont resident, is pursuing a discussion about a campaign to pass the CPA in Belmont in 2010. She has arranged a meeting with Sue Bass, Paul Solomon and Will Brownsberger on June 22. Others are welcome to attend.

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- **40R Development**—The Housing Trust has submitted its comments on the Oakley Neighborhood Proposed 40R Development. These included questions about the number, size, location and pricing of affordable units, financial feasibility, condo fees, marketing of affordable units, monitoring and the proposed small condo association plan. It was remarked that the Oakley Neighborhood Association has objected to the quality of the design. The next Planning Board meeting is June 24.

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- **MBHP “Housing Conversation”**—Judie discussed the notes from the June 3 “Belmont Housing Conversation” held under the auspices of the Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership. No one from the Trust was able to attend. There

were a number of inaccurate statistics and statement of facts. Judy is going to write up and submit some corrections as needed; others are encouraged to review the summary and make suggestions for corrections.

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- Submitted by Jonathan Jacoby