

Belmont Housing Trust Minutes for 1/15/09

In attendance: Judie Feins, Gloria Leipzig, Ann Silverman, Ann Verrilli, Nancy Marsh, Jonathan Jacoby

Minutes for 12/16/08—The minutes were approved as corrected.

Capacity Innovation Grant—Judie reminded the members of the board to complete the survey for the 5-Town Housing Consortium. Gloria had done so and gave a brief report on its contents.

Waverley Woods—Nancy reported that the effort is intensifying to fill all the units by January 31st. 13 units are leased and another 9 have leases pending. The 4-bedroom unit has been taken by a Belmont resident and there is good minority representation among the tenants. Gloria offered to submit names of potential tenants and there was a question raised as to whether Donna Hamilton at the BHA (Belmont Housing Authority) had contacted all the Belmont Section-8 voucher holders.

The sign problem is not yet resolved—there is no sign for Olmsted Drive at Pleasant St. (Route 60). Nancy sets up a temporary sign each day. Judie had talked to Tara Mizrachi (Project Manager at Affirmative Investments) about this and will contact Tom Younger to get the Town to act. The road is being plowed but there is still no agreement that McLean is responsible for this cost. The BHA parking lot will be completed in the spring.

Judie and, possibly, Ann Verrilli will try to visit the site and take pictures. The Waverley Oaks residents will likely have a chance to take a tour at a later date.

Community Preservation Act—Comments by Judie and Ann Verrilli indicate that the Board of Selectmen is not going to hear further from the CPA Study Committee and its report was being filed. Judie proposed that the BHT go ahead with the idea presented in December that an “exploratory meeting” be scheduled in late February for purposes of hearing from interested parties about the practicality of putting the CPA recommendations on the ballot in Belmont. Invitees will include representatives from the Study Committee, Land Preservation Trust, Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission, Historical District Commission, Sustainable Belmont, Vision 21, Citizens Forum and some other individuals with an interest in issues of open space, affordable housing, historical preservation and recreation. The meeting has been called for February 24, 2009, from 7:30 to 9 PM at Beth El Temple Center, 2 Concord Ave., Belmont.

Planning Board Report—Carla Moynahan reported via conference call on the following items:

- The proposed Inclusionary Zoning Rules and Regulations will be submitted to the BOS in February; the BHT will be included as recommending their adoption.
 - No plans have yet been submitted for Cushing Square development.
 - Jay Sklut had asked where things stood about the Olmstead Drive road issues. Judie was able to bring Carla up to date.
 - The Planning Board will be meeting next week on the Comprehensive Plan to prepare a report to go to Town Meeting in April for the second year funding.
 - The planning consultant's report may be ready for TM in April on the Waverley Square zoning overlay proposal, including a discussion on the use of the "doughnut hole" over the MBTA tracks.
 - The first open forum on residential parking in Belmont is scheduled for January 22, 2009.

Other Business—Judie reported that the Housing Corporation of Arlington is potentially interested in participating in the 5-Town Consortium. They have Community Development Block Grant and HOME funding. Their experience with renovating small-scale units leads them to advise against this approach. They would like to have access to a development entity for larger-scale projects.

The discussion turned to issues of funding and development opportunities—the impact of the faltering economy, the lack of a market for tax credits, where things may go with a new federal administration, local mortgage foreclosures, the status of the Our Lady of Mercy property. Roger Colton had sent an e-mail indicating he had information about "condo conversion fees" that he could share; Gloria and Ann S. offered to meet with him.

Finally, Judie raised the idea of adding a resident of Waverley Woods to the Trust. That led to mention of a couple of names of other people who work in housing and have shown an interest in serving on the Trust.

Submitted by Jonathan Jacoby