

## **Belmont Housing Trust Minutes of 10/14/08**

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

**Board Reappointments** – Judie reported that it is still not clear what the Selectmen have decided in their recent effort to limit the length of terms and number of terms, as well as the size of town committees, boards and commissions. The by-laws of the Trust stipulate 3-year terms with no term limits; the BOS has the discretion to make 5 to 9 appointments. Currently, there are 8 members of the Trust. Judie will write Tom Younger for clarification concerning the point that Roger Colton should have been appointed to a 3-year term instead of the 1-year appointment he received.

**Inclusionary Zoning** – Carla (not in attendance) has reported that the final draft from the Planning Board will be ready by the end of October.

**Capacity Innovation Grant** – Nancy reported on developments for the MHP (Mass. Housing Partnership) grant to five neighboring communities (Watertown, Waltham, Belmont, Lexington, Lincoln) to hire a consultant to develop a business plan for cooperative development of affordable housing. Interviews will be held Oct. 22 and Roger will attend for the Trust. The goal is to develop a plan that can be presented to the Town Meetings in the spring (if necessary). Judie and Nancy will get the necessary information to Roger for the interviews.

**Waverley Woods** – Nancy reported on status of construction and applications for rental units. Work is on schedule, with painting finishing and carpeting being laid. The grand opening will be around Thanksgiving and move-ins will be staggered by building in early December. There is a need for more applications, including for the Belmont preference, from people who meet the narrow band of income qualifications. Discussion of how to publicize (Nancy was interviewed by the Citizen-Herald; she will draft a letter to be sent by the Housing Authority to their waiting list; contact the Disability Access committee, contact non-profit development organizations in near-by towns; go back to METCO families). Further discussion of reasons for difficulty finding qualified renters (rents not cheap, IRS rules strict on income limits, a requirement of the tax credit financing).

**Council on Housing and Homelessness** – Gloria reported that the interagency council is focusing on homelessness prevention and looking for participation in solutions they have identified (limit evictions, budget trainings, rent payment plans). They are looking for cooperation from Housing Authorities. Discussion turned to Section-8 vouchers and touched back on connection to Waverley Woods applications. Ann Verrilli will talk to Donna Hamilton at BHA about contacting Belmont voucher holders. Judie asked if we can work with the private sector on eviction prevention; Gloria will talk to Fred Berman at the Council about this question.

**Election of Officers for 2008 – 2009** Chairperson Judie Feins called the Trust's Annual Meeting to order for the election of officers. The following officers were elected:

Chair	Judie Feins
Vice Chair	Gloria Leipzig
Secretary	Jonathan Jacoby

Nancy Marsh was thanked for her long and diligent service as Secretary.

**Looking Forward** – A brainstorming discussion was begun of where the Trust might focus after Waverley Woods. The discussion will be continued in the November meeting. A number of ideas were put forward:

- Potential development projects—e.g., Cushing Square; possible 40B project at the Underwood estate; VFW building; transfer station property; parcel of land on Brighton along RR tracks.
- MHP might have funds for locating development sites and to explore improvement or expansion of Housing Authority properties.
- Other topics mentioned: Do we want to discuss forming a non-profit development capability, especially in light of regional involvement (innovation grant)? We should check in with CPA communities and others for ideas.

**Community Preservation Act** – Ann Verilli reported on presentation by the CPA Study Committee to the BOS. The committee was unanimous in recommending Belmont adopt the CPA with a surcharge of 1.5% and exemptions for the first \$100,000 in property value and for low-income residents. The committee will meet with the BOS again to ask for a warrant to put the issue before TM.

**Minutes** – The minutes for the meeting of 9/18/08 were approved as corrected.

**Announcements** – Judie announced an event—to which the Trust will be invited—on Nov. 16 (3-5 PM), to honor those who worked in the past for Belmont Fair Practices. She also mentioned the Belmont Sesquicentennial and will contact Patty Mihelich about plans.

**Next Meeting** –Thursday, November 20, 2008