

**Belmont Housing Trust
MINUTES
Meeting of June 24, 2004**

Present: Roger Colton, Chair; Sallye Bleiberg, Jonathan Jacoby, Ann Silverman, and Judie Feins, Geof Tillotson, members. Absent: Andy McClurg and Steve Savarese. Also present: Donald Mercier, Town Meeting Member.

MINUTES: Roger Colton.

Meeting commenced; 7:50 p.m.

1. Presentation by Don Mercier: Mr. Mercier requested that the Housing Trust consider ask the Town to sell the Brighton Street property and devote the proceeds of that sale to the purchase of housing in other parts of town for use as affordable housing. Roger Colton noted that this proposal did not differ from the proposals that Mr. Mercier offered when meeting with the Trust in December 2003 and again in January 2004. After an extended conversation with Mr. Mercier, the Trust chose not to revise its support for the use of the Brighton Street property for affordable housing.

Roger Colton asked the Trust to affirm its June 3, 2004 decision to recommend that the Brighton Street property be conveyed to Habitat for Humanity consistent with the Request for Proposals released by the Town of Belmont and the proposal received in response thereto by Habitat for Humanity. Adopted by a 6-0 vote, with three members absent.

Roger Colton asked the Trust to affirm its June 3, 2004 decision to recommend that the Trust communicate its views on pending legislation regarding reform of Chapter 40B to Senator Tolman and Senator Murray. Adopted by 6-0 vote with three members absent.

Ann Silverman provided an update on the LISC funding awarded in response to a joint application from the Belmont Housing Trust, Watertown Community Housing (WCH), and Waltham Alliance to Create Housing (WATCH). A memorandum of understanding (MOU) will be developed detailing the agreement between the organizations. WATCH will be the fiscal agent for the grant. Ann Silverman was appointed to represent the Belmont Housing Trust, and authorized to take actions on behalf of the Trust, with respect to the LISC grant. Judie Feins agreed to be the back-up for representing the Trust at LISC grant meetings.

A discussion occurred with respect to the impact of Open Meeting laws on Trust operations. Trust members identified the following steps to promote Open Meetings compliance: (1) a greater reliance on formally constituted subcommittees; (2) the conversion of the Trust to a private nonprofit organization independent of Town government; (3) the formal appointment of an Executive Committee to act between Trust board meetings; (4) inclusion of Sandra Curro, Tim Higgins and Jeffrey Wheeler, all Town staffmembers, in all future correspondence that is sent to all Trust members.

Ann Silverman suggested that the Trust consider, at some future point in time, whether it would benefit the Trust to reconstitute itself as a private nonprofit organization independent of Town government.

By consensus, the Trust decided to schedule and post biweekly meetings between July and November. Should the Trust decide at any given time that a scheduled meeting was not necessary, that meeting will be cancelled.

A discussion occurred with respect to the Town of Belmont's letter to Mass Development regarding the O'Neill Chapter 40B project eligibility application. Ann Silverman moved, and Judie Feins seconded the following motion: moved, that the Belmont Housing Trust communicate to the Board of Selectmen that the Board of Selectmen should adopt a position that welcomes affordable housing in an O'Neill development. The Town is encouraged to include in comments about the proposed 40B development its range of specific concerns and call for positive negotiation with respect to resolving those specific concerns. Motion passed: 6-0 with three members absent. Roger Colton to communicate this Trust position to the Board of Selectmen.

Roger Colton passed along a communication from Jeffrey Wheeler, Belmont Planning Coordinator, about potential state funding for the development of affordable housing for disabled individuals. Ann Silverman agreed to follow-up and report back to the Trust.

By consensus, the Trust decided that no specific action is needed at this time to follow-up with the Archdiocese with respect to affordable housing at the Our Lady of Mercy church site.

Sallye Bleiberg communicated to the Trust the news about Boxborough obtaining substantial funding to be devoted to affordable housing development from a 40B developer who exceeded his/her profit limitations. She encouraged the Trust to seek to include such a provision in any future negotiations with O'Neill. No action taken.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.