

Belmont Housing Trust Minutes for July 15, 2010

In Attendance—Gloria Leipzig, Judie Feins, Ann Silverman, Ann Verrilli, Jonathan Jacoby
Guests—Mark Paolillo, Vice-Chair, Belmont Board of Selectmen; Steve Laferriere, Metro West Collaborative Developers

Introductions—Selectman Paolillo talked about his political background in Belmont as a Town Meeting and Warrant Committee member. In light of the recent override vote, he wants to see the Board of Selectmen take a lead in fostering community communication, listening to the public and finding ways to deal with a 3.5 million structural deficit.

The Trust members present introduced themselves, giving a brief outline of their current job, background and particular interests in housing. In response to points raised by Trust members, Mr. Paolillo commented on the need for a better appointment process to Town boards and commissions. He also expressed a great interest in regionalization.

Recent History of Housing Trust—Gloria presented a summary of Trust activity around the Inclusionary Zoning amendment, the B Street project, the Habitat for Humanity house and Waverley Woods. Ann Silverman described the process of bringing together four towns to form Metro West Collaborative Developers. Discussion followed on potential development sites, including Moraine Street, the Purecoat property, Sandler Skate and the Demilla property on Pleasant Street. Mr. Paolillo brought up the various Town needs for the electrical substation, library, police station and skating rink. He also asked about how the process of development might proceed and how marketing and vetting of potential residents is conducted.

40B Repeal Issue—Members explained the ballot initiative for repeal of the State's 40B law and why the Trust is on record opposing this initiative.

Community Preservation Act (CPA) Campaign—Judie talked about the effort to put CPA on the November ballot, mentioning the difficulty faced by the override vote and competition from other needs.

Metro West Collaborative Developers—Steve Laferriere gave an extensive report on his activities; discussion touched on several development sites and ideas, starting with Moraine Street.

- Steve has made contact with the Moraine Street owner and thinks Jeffrey Wheeler is interested in working with the Trust on this project. Steve presented prospective development costs and funding sources and will follow up with the owner about a purchase price. His cost analysis is based on 28 units and said investors are looking for a minimum of 25 units, but it may require a variance on density to reach that number.
- The Sandler Skate property is likely still tied up in court, although there are suggestions that a commercial developer may have entered into an agreement. Steve will try to contact the owner's attorney and see what he can learn.
- Steve thinks that the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) will be flexible about restoring Belmont's "Difficult to Develop" designation.
- The McLean property zoned for a Continuing Care Retirement Community is still of interest to the Trust; Steve will look into its status.

- The former VW business on Trapelo Road came up for discussion. It was suggested that Nancy Marsh may know the Kendall family, owners of the property, to find out what their plans for it may be.
- Steve has had a conversation with Eric Rhodin about ideas in the Palfrey Square Overlay District (Central Square) and will inquire if he is open to cooperating on a development project.

Ann Silverman asked how the Trust wants to proceed on Moraine Street. There was agreement that Steve should proceed on the basis of 28 units, assuming \$500,000 in HOME funds, and will look into an acquisition price. He will keep in touch with the Trust through Ann and Gloria.

Submitted by Jonathan Jacoby