

Minutes for Weston Affordable Housing Trust (approved at Trust meeting on February 6, 2023)
Tuesday, January 24, 2023
Virtual meeting held over Zoom

Present:

Members - Sarah Like Rhatigan (Chair), Susan Haber, Michael and Buzzy Price, Neil Levitt, Tom Timko, Jonathan Schwartz
Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO) folks - Liz Rust and Christine McKenna Lok
Town staff - Leon Gaumont

Meeting called to order at 8:05 AM

Welcome and introductions

Public Comment: none

RHSO update: Christine McKenna Lok is the new RHSO person taking over the duties of Liz Valenta. Her email: christine@rhsousing.org. Going forward, RHSO will poll members for meeting times, draft agenda for review by Sarah, get Zoom link, send agenda to town to post, prepare meeting packet and send packet to trustees, open the Zoom meeting, draft minutes for review by Sarah, and circulate minutes in advance of next meeting. This support is in addition to any project-specific work outside the Trust meetings.

Outstanding minutes: Susan and Neil have sent their minutes to Sarah. Christine will reconstruct missing minutes from other agendas (May through Sept) and Sarah will circulate for any additional notes to be sent to Sarah and Christine. Next agenda will set aside time for review, revision, and approval.

Meeting format: Discussion about value of in-person meetings, mindful of any outbreaks. Hybrid might be more inclusive but tech challenges exist. Art and Innovation Center has great filtration system in meeting room. State COVID-era regulations allow virtual meetings to continue through March. State would need to take action to extend those regulations or mandate hybrid options, otherwise all public government meetings will revert back to in-person after March 31.

Trust next meetings: Several members wanted a consistent day/time each month. Some interest expressed for evening meetings in future. For now, meetings remain virtual at 8 AM.
Dates: February 6 and 27, March 13.

Existing Projects

Warren Ave:

- Trust has organized potluck social this coming Sunday for tenants and trustees from 2 to 4 pm. Everyone is invited but not required to attend. Thanks Jonathan and Susan!
- 2023 Budget: Manager Monyette Vickers has meeting scheduled with town treasurer about finances after delay due to town staffing issues.
- Communication with tenants: Summer meeting highlighted need for a system for gathering feedback about needed repairs before things get to crisis stage, and broader vision for community. Sarah will get budget information together before reaching out to residents and scheduling another tenant meeting.

0 Wellesley Street (now 1 to 11 Wellesley Street):

- ZBA review process is going well
- How to pay balance of Trust commitment? Trust hired attorney who recommended \$120K at closing of land sale from town to Habitat; \$40K at closing of sale of each unit (when affordable deed restriction is recorded) with \$10K of that going directly to condo association for Common Area Fund. Sarah waiting for response to that proposal from project manager.
- Want clarification about:
 - Restriction to affordable use when land conveyed to Habitat with Comprehensive Permit?
 - Structure of condo association and rules/regulations for spending Common Area Fund
 - Marketing and lottery process: Habitat has already submitted a marketing plan to DHCD and typically their staff manage process, incorporating some of the Habitat model with town's lottery requirements. Have they identified a staff person in charge?

Potential Projects

- Amend Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) zoning: might be ready for fall Town Meeting but unclear how much support exists
- Brook School expansion: Tom has heard lukewarm support from some quarters but not lots of energy. They didn't submit to Community Preservation Committee for funding this year.
- 657/659 Boston Post Road: The church was sold to a Buddhist temple and the home was sold separately. Taking it off our list.
- Sunrise: Percolating along. Developer may be able to make finances work with 23-30 units. Sarah will invite developer to future meeting when he's ready.
- Former Christian Science Church: Now owned by archdiocese but their plans are unclear; entirely built on rock so construction and septic not easy.
- Campion Center: rumor that they're thinking of selling their parking lot

- Town owned land behind old Liberty Mutual site: Trust earmarked money for site evaluation and now in Select Board's hands. Liberty Mutual area is busy construction site now.
- 751 Boston Post Road: Sarah will get an update. She's thinks they're in permitting stage.

Future meeting topics:

- More focus on big picture! Folks had hoped Housing Roundtable would provide that. Sarah is Trust representative to Housing Production Plan (HPP) Steering Committee that's meeting soon to ensure plans are followed.
- Joint Trust and Planning Board meeting? HPP had recommendations about zoning.
- Get maps back out to identify town property that could be used for affordable housing, perhaps with Town Planner Imai Aiu during an in-person meeting
- Homeownership Opportunity Fund

Meeting adjourned at 9:56 AM