

CAMBRIDGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST  
MEETING MINUTES  
July 22, 2009

Ackerman Room, City Hall  
795 Massachusetts Ave.

Trustees: Robert W. Healy, Peter Daly, Florrie Darwin, Michael Haran, Susan Schlesinger.

Staff: Beth Rubenstein, Assistant City Manager; Chris Cotter, Housing Director; Cassie Arnaud, Housing Planner; Anna Dolmatch, Housing Planner; Linda Prosnitz, Housing Planner.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm.

Upon a motion moved and seconded, it was: voted to approve the Minutes of the June 24, 2009 meeting.

**PROJECT UPDATES**

Six applications from Cambridge were submitted to the State for the summer rental funding round. The projects are 625 Putnam Ave., YWCA, YMCA Central House, Temple Street, and 191-195 Prospect Street, and Cambridge Court/411 Franklin Street.

**Lincoln Way/Jackson Gardens** - CHA received approval for the requested state funding. They have applied to HUD and an announcement is expected in September.

**Cambridge YWCA** – YWCA is submitting to the Trust a request for rehabilitation of the Main and Tanner buildings to the Trust.

**78-80 Porter Road** – Over the next 18-24 months CHA will assemble financing and convert the building to affordable housing.

**625 Putnam Avenue** – HRI held a second community meeting and presented a design for a 40 unit building. They are applying for a Special Permit for an August 18 hearing.

**7 Temple Street** – Trial date for the appeal of the comprehensive permit is in October. FHLB funds have been awarded. CHA applied for DHCD funding in the summer rental round.

**95-97 Pine Street** – Construction bids have been received and are under review.

**1066 Cambridge Street** – Just a Start is reviewing options including as-of-right design.

**35 Harvey Street** – Construction is underway and CASCAP expects to complete the project this summer.

**424-430 Windsor** – The Planning Board Decision is still under appeal.

**823 Main Street** – Construction completion is expected in September. Lotteries were held and buyers are selecting units and signing purchase and sales agreements.

**FTHB Buydown Assistance** – Looking at buyers of inclusionary, non-profit, and resale units for FTHB assistance.

**125 Harvard Street (Print Shop)** – Construction is going well with an expected completion of fall 2009. The first round of marketing is complete. Applications are under review.

**VFW** – Buyer selection for final unit is underway.

**191-195 + 203 Prospect Street** – CHA reapplied for state funding for the summer rental round. CHA is considering options for developing 203 Prospect separately.

**Bedrick Properties** – Rehab of units ongoing.

**Harvard Properties** – Rehab of units ongoing.

## **NEW BUSINESS/ UPDATES**

### **YMCA**

Staff presented a request from the Caritas Communities for a loan of \$600,000 for Central House, an existing 128-unit rental (SRO) development sponsored by the YMCA. The project is at the end of the 15-year tax credit period and the YMCA is proposing refinancing and moderate rehabilitation of the project. Total development costs of the project are estimated at \$7,412,000.

The proposed scope of rehab work includes areas that require repair or updating. These include plumbing and surfaces in kitchens and baths, window and floor replacement, and extensive exterior work including restoration of historic elements.

The YMCA has entered into a Development Services Agreement with Caritas Communities, a non-profit SRO developer and owner, who will manage the project. Central House will be separate from the YMCA Health and Fitness facility and will be sold to Newco. Newco is an LLC formed by Caritas and the YMCA with Caritas as the majority partner. The Trust discussed the merits of having Caritas manage the property.

Central House provides an important housing resource of affordable rooms for a diverse population of low-income men. Rehabilitation of this property will help to maintain this housing over time.

Upon a motion and seconded, it was:

Voted: To approve the YMCA's request for a development loan of \$600,000 with standard terms and conditions.

### **YWCA**

Staff presented a request from the Cambridge YWCA for a permanent loan of \$3,101,962 for the rehabilitation of their existing rental development in Central Square. The YWCA will be rehabilitating both the residential and non-residential space in the development. Total development costs are estimated at \$12,093,723, of which the residential portion is \$8,604,089.

The Trust loan would be for the rehabilitation of the residential portion of the property – the entire Tanner building and about half the Main Building. For the residential portion, in addition to the request to the Trust, the YWCA has applied for \$4 million in state funds and \$2.8 million in federal and state historic tax credit equity. They have already been awarded \$720,000 in state historic tax credits.

The scope of work includes new elevators, environmental work, new plumbing, electrical, and fire safety systems, exterior work, renovated kitchens and baths, and HP accessibility. The number of units will be reduced from 107 to 103 with 102 SRO's and one studio.

Staff described the challenges of the rental structure of the property. The units are leased through several subsidy programs with the terms of the contracts and rents varying according to the service providers. As with other management issues, the YWCA will monitor and keep current with the rents and requirements of these various contracts.

The Trust discussed the current and future oversight and management of the development. Staff reported that the YWCA has been working with the city, DHCD, and CEDAC staff on the management of the property, assessing the capital needs and planning for the long-term viability of the property. The YWCA has contracted with the Women's Institute, a non-profit development consultant, on the modernization of the buildings and has hired S-C Management as the property manager. The YWCA also agrees with the prior Trust recommendation to involve an experienced Cambridge-based development partner. This partner is likely to be the CHA.

Upon a motion and seconded, it was:

Voted to approve the YWCA's request for permanent financing of \$3,101,962 subject to the following: 1) Trust's standard terms and conditions; 2) the commitment of state funds

in the current funding round, and the commitment of all other sources of funding necessary to complete the project by March 31, 2010; 3) that the ownership team be structured to involve an experienced development partner who has the ability to assume responsibilities of the owner if necessary in the judgment of that partner or the City.

### **Davis Street**

Bob Healy and Michael Haran left the room.

Staff presented a proposal developed by the City (DPW and CDD) and Cascap for the reconstruction of the portion of Davis Street adjacent to Cascap's Harvard Street homeownership development. The Department of Public Works plans to reconstruct Davis Street next spring; however, DPW and CDD recommend that the work on the portion of Davis Street adjacent to Cascap's project be completed while the housing development is still under construction. The work will include street, sidewalk, and drainage improvements. Completing the work now will benefit Cascap's housing and eliminate the possibility the work needing to be replaced next year.

Staff explained the plan developed by CDD, DPW, and Cascap. DPW has approved design plans and an approved budget of \$155,890 for this work. Cascap will contribute \$25,379 toward this work, which had been budgeted for improvements to Harvard Street. The City, through DPW, will commit \$130,511 to fund the remainder of the planned work. It is proposed that the Trust enter into a contract with the City, under which the City would provide the Trust with \$130,511 to undertake the street reconstruction, sidewalks, and drainage improvements. The Trust would then commit the funds to Cascap, so that Cascap could perform the reconstruction while construction is underway at the Harvard Street development.

Upon a motion and seconded, it was:

Voted: to approve entering into a contract with the City for \$130,511 and committing the funds to Cascap for street reconstruction adjacent to its housing development project.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 4:51 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for September 24, 2009, at 4 pm in the Ackerman Room. Confirmation of this time and date will follow.