

CAMBRIDGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST  
MEETING MINUTES  
October 27, 2016

Ackerman Room, Cambridge City Hall  
795 Massachusetts Ave.

Trustees Present: Lisa Peterson, Chair; Peter Daly, Florrie Darwin, Gwen Noyes, James Stockard; Elaine Thorne; Bill Tibbs

Trustees Absent: Cheryl-Ann Pizza-Zeoli, Susan Schlesinger

Staff Present: Louis DePasquale, Assistant City Manager for Fiscal Affairs; Iram Farooq, Assistant City Manager for Community Development; Chris Cotter, Housing Director; Cassie Arnaud, Housing Planner; Anna Dolmatch, Housing Planner; Linda Prosnitz, Housing Planner

Others Present: Robert Macarthur, Lee Farris, Samuel Gebru

The meeting was called to order at 4:05.

Upon a motion moved and seconded, it was:

VOTED: To approve the minutes for the meeting of Thursday, September 22, 2016 as submitted.

#### **PROJECT UPDATE**

**Porter Square** – The site is acquired and pre-development is underway.

**Concord Ave.** – The site is acquired and pre-development is underway. The first public meeting was held in September.

**Briston Arms** – Renovation is expected to be complete soon.

**Jefferson Park State Public Housing** – Relocation and demolition are complete. Construction is underway.

**131 Harvard Street/Port Landing** – Occupancy is to begin November 1. An event is to be held the week of November 14.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### Vail Court

Lisa Peterson described the status of Vail Court since the City has taken possession of the property. Currently, the City is conducting an environmental review of the building. The

plan is for the building to then be demolished. However, in order to get a demolition permit, plans are usually needed for the site for review by the MCNDC, but there will likely not be a designated developer or design by then. The taking order requires the site be used for housing such as affordable, senior, or transitional housing, or for municipal purposes if housing does not work. Trust members encouraged that the demolition occur as soon as possible.

The potential role of Trust in the development of Vail Court was discussed. The property could be transferred to the Trust which has played a similar role in projects where affordable housing has been built on City-owned land. Trust members discussed how the Trust could conduct the community process, holding community meetings and discussions of various affordable housing uses. The process would narrow the uses. The advantage of the Trust holding the process would be the focus on affordable housing. The role of the Planning Board, zoning considerations, design, and financing were also mentioned. The Trust could review the feasibility of different types of housing which would likely need funding commitments from the Trust, determine the best, or then seek to identify a housing developer through an RFP process. It was encouraged that the land be permanently kept in the public domain with the possibility of a ground lease. Discussions will continue on how the Trust might play a role in this effort. When more information is known about the demolition, the City will bring recommendations to the City Council for funding for the demolition. This could also include recommendations on how to best proceed with creating affordable housing on the site including suggested role for the Trust.

## **OTHER**

It was announced that applications are being taken for volunteers to serve on the new Housing Advisory Group for Envision Cambridge. The deadline for applications is November 18. Everyone should get the word out to people interested in housing issues in the city.

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for November 17 at 4:00 p.m.

- Meeting Minutes from the Trust's September 22, 2016 meeting.
- Project Update