

CAMBRIDGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST
MEETING MINUTES

June 25, 2026 at 4:00 p.m.

Conducted via Zoom and in person (City Hall, Ackermann Room)

Trustees Present in Person: Teresa Cardosi, Elaine DeRosa, Krissandra Robinson

Trustees Present via Zoom: Yi-An Huang, Chair; Alyson Stein, Jim Stockard

Trustees Absent: Raffi Freeman, Susan Schlesinger, Elaine Thorne

Staff Present: Melissa Peters, Assistant City Manager for Community Development; Chris Cotter, Director of Housing; Cassie Arnaud, Senior Manager of Housing Development; Janet Haines, Housing Development Planner; Alexis Turgeon, Housing Development Planner; Christine Yu, Associate Housing Development Planner

Others Present: Jean Hannon, Sue Reinert, Ed Henley

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. Mr. Cotter explained that this meeting of the Affordable Housing Trust is being held in a hybrid fashion pursuant to applicable requirements, and that all votes would be taken by roll call. He noted that there will be no public comment. He then confirmed via roll call that each remote participant could hear the meeting and was audible to others.

MEETING MINUTES

Upon a motion moved, seconded, and approved by roll call of five in favor and four absent (Mr. Freeman, Ms. Schlesinger, Mr. Stockard, and Ms. Thorne), it was voted to approve the minutes for the meeting of May 28, 2026.

HOUSING DEPARTMENT UPDATE

52 New Street: JAS held a ribbon cutting on June 8 to celebrate the opening of the building. Residents have already begun to move in.

4 Mellen Street: HRI continues to accept applications for its 29 units at 4 Mellen Street. Applications will be accepted until July 31st at 5 p.m.

Jefferson Park Federal: The construction of Jefferson Park Federal is nearing completion.

87-101 Blanchard Road: The demolition of the existing buildings is underway with construction to follow shortly.

1826 & 1840 Massachusetts Avenue: Just A Start (JAS) is preparing to begin the AHO process for this project soon.

1648 & 1654 Massachusetts Avenue: 1648 & 1654 Massachusetts Avenue was purchased by the Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) in May 2026 with Trust funding.

729-755 Concord Avenue: 729-755 Concord Avenue was purchased by Homeowners Rehab, Inc. (HRI) in early June with Trust funding.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Community Preservation Act (CPA) Funds: The FY27 funding allocation process for CPA funds is underway. Teresa Cardosi was appointed to the Community Preservation Committee. Staff are planning for the July meeting to be a joint meeting with the Community Preservation Committee.

Social Housing Task Force: The Cambridge Social Housing Joint Task Force held its first meeting on June 24 to begin to explore how social housing models might work in Cambridge to create new housing including affordable housing. The Task Force will consider finance and governance models in use in social housing programs in other cities. The next meeting will be held August 5.

Brown et al. Zoning Petition: A zoning petition was filed in June that would make amendments to the Multi-Family Zoning, as well as changes to the Affordable Housing Overlay Zoning. Public hearings are expected to be scheduled in July at the Planning Board and Ordinance Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Five-Year Progress Report

Mr. Cotter presented the AHO Five-Year Progress Review, which assessed the effectiveness of the AHO in increasing production of affordable housing in its first five years, as well as the effectiveness of the community engagement and the design review process. The report has been shared with the City Council and the Planning Board where it received positive comments. Mr. Cotter noted that the AHO, in combination with the City's financial commitment, has enabled a significant increase in affordable housing development over the last five years.

Trustees commended staff on the report, noting that it was written in an accessible way which made the report easy to read. They also commented on how great it was that the AHO has allowed developments to be built in almost all neighborhoods. It was noted that the success of the AHO has allowed other cities to look at Cambridge as a case study and emphasized the importance of zoning.

In response to a question regarding the size of affordable housing developments prior to the passage of the AHO, Ms. Arnaud responded that Finch Cambridge, with 98 units, in Cambridge Highlands had been the first project of its size in decades and that most new buildings prior to Finch were less than half that size. With the AHO, affordable housing developments have been a variety of different sizes and in different parts of the city.

In response to a question regarding whether the AHO has enabled affordable housing developers to be more successful in acquiring properties, Mr. Cotter answered that affordable developers have been able to make more competitive offers for sites, knowing that there is a clear permitting path to development under the AHO.

65 Chilton Street Funding Request

Mr. Cotter presented a funding request for up to \$400,000 in construction and permanent financing for the creation of 2 three-bedroom fully accessible affordable rental units at 65 Chilton Street, a currently vacant building last used as a hospice by a non-profit. This project is sponsored by the Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) which will be acquiring the property.

The existing five bedroom facility will be reconfigured into 2 self-contained fully accessible three-bedroom units with private entrances, in-unit laundry, and access to a shared elevator. Along with the reconfiguration of the interior units, other work will be conducted as well, including replacing the HVAC system and moving one of the stairs. Both units will be affordable to households making at or below 60% of area median income.

The total development cost (TDC) is currently estimated at \$955,000 (\$477,500 per unit), including \$155,000 of existing assumed City and CEDAC debt. Hard costs are budgeted at \$241 per square foot. Soft costs are budgeted at \$87,035 per unit. The CHA is contributing \$400,000 in their own funds to support the project.

Trustees expressed support for the project and noted that rehabilitation can begin quickly since there is no private bank loan. They also noted that the location of the property in West Cambridge is great as there aren't that many affordable housing opportunities in that neighborhood.

Upon a motion moved, seconded, and approved by roll call of five in favor, one abstaining (Ms. DeRosa), and three absent (Mr. Freeman, Ms. Schelsinger, and Ms. Thorne), it was:

VOTED: to approve the request for up to \$400,000 in construction and permanent funding to assist with the rehabilitation and reconfiguration of 65 Chilton Street, as detailed in the memo provided.

MOVE TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Cotter indicated that the next items for discussion before the Trust pertained to details regarding the potential acquisition of real estate. Due to the sensitive information to be discussed, continuing in open session might have a detrimental effect on the negotiations. At 4:29 PM, Mr. Cotter entertained a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss this matter and indicated that the Trust would adjourn at the conclusion of the Executive Session.

Upon a motion moved, seconded, and approved by roll call of six in favor and three absent (Mr. Freeman, Ms. Schlesinger, and Ms. Thorne), it was:

VOTED: for the meeting to go into Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion moved, seconded, and approved by roll call of five in favor and four absent (Chair Huang, Mr. Freeman, Ms. Schlesinger, and Ms. Thorne), it was:

VOTED: to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 23, 2026 at 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Materials:

- Agenda
- Minutes from the Trust's May 28, 2026 meeting
- Project Update
- Affordable Housing Overlay Five-Year Progress Report
- 65 Chilton Street Funding Request – 6.25.2026 memo