

CAMBRIDGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST
MEETING MINUTES
December 9, 2010

Ackerman Room, City Hall
795 Massachusetts Ave.

Trustees Present: Robert W. Healy, Peter Daly, Florrie Darwin, Michael Haran, Gwen Noyes, Susan Schlesinger, Jim Stockard, Bill Tibbs

Trustees Absent: Beverly Bates

Staff Present: Susan Glazer, Acting Assistant City Manager for Community Development; 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 from the October 28, 2010 meeting.

Upon a motion moved and seconded, it was voted to approve the minutes from the executive session of October 28, 2010.

PROJECT UPDATES

Inman/CAST – HRI is preparing to acquire properties and begin renovations. Trust approved a predevelopment loan at the September meeting. The current owner approved an extension of the purchase and sales agreement through February.

Cambridge Court – Owner resubmitted an application for financing to the state in the September funding round.

YMCA Central House – Caritas submitted an application to the state for the September funding round. They were approved for 4% tax credits and bond financing.

Lincoln Way/Jackson Gardens – Construction is underway at both sites.

Cambridge YWCA – The YWCA is awaiting word on their application to the state in the September funding round. A request for an extension of the Trust's loan commitment is outlined below.

78-80 Porter Road – CHA is also awaiting word on its application to the state for the fall funding round.

625 Putnam Avenue – Contractor has been selected, and HRI is preparing for a full tax credit closing in December. Demolition is expected to begin in December, with construction underway in the spring.

7 Temple Street – Appeal process is underway. CHA resubmitted to the state for funding in the fall round.

1066 Cambridge Street – Construction is underway. Completion expected spring 2011.

424-430 Windsor – JAS continues to conduct predevelopment activities. A request to the Trust for predevelopment funds was approved at the October meeting.

125 Harvard Street (Print Shop) – Almost all units sold or under agreement; working to identify buyers for 4 remaining units.

NEW BUSINESS

Cambridge Neighborhood Apartment Housing Services (CNAHS) Rental Rehab Loan Pool recapitalization request

Mr. Daly left the room for the discussion of this request.

Staff presented a request for \$200,000 in Trust funds to recapitalize the CNAHS loan pool. These funds are used to make loans to owners of multi-family rental buildings for rehab work. In exchange for the no-interest loans, the owners agree to place a 20-year affordability restriction on the units that receive funds.

The most recent Trust recapitalization was in January 2008. The award of \$150,000 was used to fund rehabilitation of eleven units. CNAHS currently has one approved project of two units, and a pipeline of twelve units. The requested loan pool recapitalization will allow CNAHS to move forward with all of these projects.

The Trust requested that staff continue to closely monitor the administrative costs of the program.

Upon a motion and seconded, with Mr. Daly absent, it was:

VOTED: to approve CNAHS's request for \$200,000 to recapitalize the CNAHS Loan Pool, as described above and in the recommendation memo dated December 9, 2010 from staff to the Trust. This commitment is contingent on the following:

1. CDD staff approval of each new CNAHS case;
2. CDD staff approval of construction budgets, plans and specifications;
3. Additional terms and conditions as described in the Affordable Housing Rehab Loan Program contract between the City and CNAHS.

YWCA Loan Extension

Staff presented a request to extend the term of the Trust's commitment of \$3,101,962 in permanent financing for the YWCA's rehabilitation of the Tanner Building as further described in a memo from staff to the Trust dated December 9, 2010. The Trust's commitment to the YWCA redevelopment currently expires December 31st. The YWCA is requesting an extension to March 31, 2011.

The project consists of a major rehab of 103 units of SRO housing. The YWCA will put a new Affordable Housing Agreement on the property, securing long-term affordability for all of the units. All of the units are currently rented to low- or very low-income women.

While the project budget has not changed, the YWCA requires the extension of the Trust loan while they await decisions on rental funding awards from the state. The YWCA has requested an extension to March 31, 2011 to ensure that the loan commitment remains current while the state makes its funding decisions.

Trust members discussed the term of the loan extension request and the expectation that state decisions might be made in January 2011. Trust members suggested that the loan be extended until the first Trust meeting following the announcement of the state rental funding awards.

Upon a motion and seconded, it was:

VOTED: To extend the existing loan commitment to the YWCA in the amount of \$3,101,962 until the first Trust meeting after the announcement of rental funding awards by the state Department of Housing and Community Development, and, other than the term of the extension, as otherwise described in the memo prepared by staff for the Trust dated December 9, 2010.

Other New Business

Zoning for Housing in low-density neighborhoods

Staff and the Trust discussed the recent request by Councilor Decker for the Trust and CDD staff assist the City Council in looking at ways to remove barriers to creating affordable housing in lower-density neighborhoods.

The Trust discussed the need to look at current zoning and successful projects that have been completed in lower-density areas, as well as projects that were not able to proceed because of more restrictive zoning and resulting high development costs in these areas. Staff stated that they are preparing data on housing starts throughout the city, as well as the distribution of new affordable unit development versus purchase of existing units for affordable housing.

Trust members stated that they would like to discuss ways in which zoning might further support affordable housing development in low density areas. Staff stated that the next step was to prepare for a meeting with the Trust and the Housing Committee in early 2011.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:53 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for January 27 at 4pm, date to be confirmed.

OTHER MATERIALS

- Draft Meeting Minutes from the Trust's October 28, 2010 meeting
- Status of Active Projects – Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust