

CAMBRIDGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST
MEETING MINUTES
June 27, 2019

Ackerman Room, Cambridge City Hall
795 Massachusetts Ave.

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

Trustees Absent: Susan Schlesinger

Staff Present: Chris Cotter, Housing Director; Cassie Arnaud, Housing Planner

Others Present: Hallimu Docmanov, Gary Jackson, James Williamson

The meeting was called to order at 4:11.

Upon a motion moved and seconded, it was voted unanimously to approve the minutes for the meeting of Thursday, May 23, 2019 meeting, along with attached guidelines which have been amended to incorporate the suggestion by the Trust that eligibility for funding of cooperatives be restricted to limited equity cooperatives created by the City.

PROJECT UPDATE

50 York Street – Just A Start held a ribbon cutting event to mark the completion of reconstruction of building destroyed by fire in 2016; Trust members shared their recollections of the outstanding response by the City and greater community to the fire and expressed pleasure that as many as 11 of the 16 displaced families had chosen to move back.

Concord Highlands – Construction is ongoing and moving along quickly. It is expected to be complete in early 2020.

Squirrelwood – Just-A-Start held a ground breaking on May 9. Construction will begin soon.

Frost Terrace – Capstone/Hope has begun site work with full construction to begin later this summer.

Homebridge – There are eight approved buyers seeking units with more under review. One buyer just closed on a three-bedroom on Concord Avenue. The Trust noted that despite the initial high cost of the purchase, this family-sized unit would not be a permanent part of the City's affordable housing stock. Given the success of the program and its continued demand, Staff said that they may be bringing a request for more funding in the coming months.

Inclusionary – The Covenant for the next phase of the Alexandria PUD has been recorded and several other new projects are being reviewed.

OTHER UPDATES

100%-Affordable Housing Overlay

Staff updated the Board on the status of the proposed Affordable Housing Overlay, including an overview of the public process to date as well as a summary of upcoming hearings. Staff said that Trust members had been sent a link to new materials which had been posted on the City's AHO webpage. These materials included a detailed memo that was sent to the Planning Board in advance of its meeting on the AHO, as well as a detailed memo sent to the City Council responding to a policy order on the AHO. Trust members said that both memos were very thorough and expansive and should help inform future discussions. Trust members who had attended the Planning Board meeting shared their takes, noting that they felt that the discussion at this second meeting was more successful due to the Planning Board members having more information. Staff walked members through the upcoming schedule of meetings, including the Ordinance Committee when the petition would become active. Staff will continue to hold informal open houses for interested residents to share their comments and ask questions.

Resident Selection Process Meeting

Staff provided a brief overview of the Housing Committee meeting held to discuss the City's tenant and buyer selection processes for Inclusionary units. Trust members who had attended the meeting said that they felt it had been a thoughtful and helpful discussion. Much of the meeting was spent discussing emergency need. An idea of including a preference for veterans was also raised. Trust members asked staff to inquire how often the CHA encounters applicants with veterans' preferences. It is anticipated that there will be a follow up meeting in the fall to respond to the recommendations raised, with a goal of getting updated preferences in place as quickly as possible.

Trust 30th Anniversary Celebration

A celebration to mark the Trust's 30th anniversary was held on May 30. Trust members said that it had been a great event.

Community Preservation Act

Staff informed the Trust that the FY20 CPA process is underway, with the first CPA committee meeting held in May and the first CPA public hearing held on June 20th. The next CPA meeting is scheduled for July 31, 2019.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 25, 2019.

Materials:

- Meeting Minutes from the Trust's May 23, 2019 meeting
- Project Update