

Affordable Housing Trust

Meeting Minutes of March 4, 2024 10:00 am

Hybrid meeting on Zoom and attended in-person in Hudson room, Cary Hall

Affordable Housing Trust Board Members present: Elaine Tung, Chair; Mark Sandeen, Tiffany Payne, Linda Prosnitz, William Erickson

Staff present: Carol Kowalski, Assistant Town Manager for Development; Liz Rust, RHSO Director; Ragi Ramachandran, Administrative Assistant

Other attendees: Lester Savage, Bob Burbidge, Sarah Morrison, Tara Mizrahi, LexHAB

Ms. Tung chaired the hybrid meeting and called the meeting to order at 10:05 am.

- 1. Executive Session (Minutes to be considered once purpose of Executive Session is public per Open Meeting Law.)**
- 2. Approve Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Tung requested a motion to approve the minutes of 1/3/24, 1/12/24, 1/17/24, 1/22/24 and 1/31/24 AHT meetings, as amended. Mr. Sandeen moved. Ms. Prosnitz seconded. The Trustees voted in favor of the motion 4-0-1, by a roll call vote (Sandeen – yes, Payne – yes, Prosnitz – yes, Tung – yes, Erickson – abstained). Meeting minutes approved.

3. Chair, Select Board, Board/Committee Liaison and RHSO/staff report

Ms. Tung shared the update from the presentation to the Conservation Commission that they were very supportive of Article 33. Ms. Tung and Mr. Sandeen presented to the League of Women Voters on Mar. 1.

For Housing needs assessment, Ms. Kowalski shared that the stakeholder groups are scheduled to make their designations to the working group, and the working group planned to meet in March. Ms. Rust stated that Christina McKenna Lok will be the contact from RHSO, and will start once the working group is assigned.

Mr. Sandeen shared that the Town Manager's report from Mar. 1 stated Lexington's SHI is at 11.05% with the addition of 13 units at 186 Bedford St.

4. Lowell Street and North Street

Ms. Mizrahi, LexHAB Board Member, recited her letter to the Affordable Housing Trust clarifying the comments made at the Feb. 27 information session to Town Meeting Members and neighbors, on the affordable housing development process, unit count, and finances.

To a question if housing developers pay real estate taxes or payment-in-lieu for an affordable housing development, Ms. Mizrahi responded that the developers do pay real estate taxes even when they are availing state resources and low-income tax credits. Ms. Rust added that it varies based on the project, and depended on the terms negotiated with the Town. She stated that the projects pay real estate taxes and the real estate taxes are discounted, based on the restriction of the property, and the income that will generate.

Based on the advice from Town counsel, the Trustees agreed to change the language in the motion under Warrant Article 33 to state "100% affordable" in place of "all affordable".

There was discussion on why the berm on the site was considered non-buildable. Mr. Erickson clarified that the slope really prohibits any construction, and it would require extraordinary efforts and expense to develop that area. Mr. Erickson agreed to write the response to the question on the berm. The Trustees will review Mr. Erickson's response, and send their feedback to Town staff. It will be consolidated and updated in the FAQ's later.

Mr. Sandeen stated that Select Board will be reviewing the goals for the project at an upcoming Select Board meeting.

5. New Business

Ms. Tung shared that the Housing Partnership Board has formed an informal group to talk about prospective acquisitions, and to gain a better understanding of each other's goals and objectives. Ms. Tung and Mr. Erickson will represent the Trust and attend the group's first meeting in March.

6. Confirm future meeting dates

The Trustees agreed to coordinate with Town staff to decide the next meeting date.

7. Adjourn

Mr. Sandeen moved to adjourn, which was seconded by Ms. Prosnitz, and on a roll call vote: (Erickson – yes, Prosnitz – yes, Sandeen – yes, Tung – yes, Payne – yes), the meeting adjourned at 11:55am.

List of documents reviewed:

50 Valleyfield LexHAB AHT 3.4.24 slides presentation