

**TOWN OF FRANKLIN
MUNICIPAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST**

**March 14, 2023
10:00 AM
Meeting Held via ZOOM**

Meeting Notes

Members Present: Chris Vericker, Maxine Kinhart, Susan Younis, Judith Pfeffer, Chris Feeley
Members Not in Attendance: Jamie Hellen, MaryAnn Bertone

As stated on the agenda, due to the ongoing concerns regarding the COVID-19 virus, the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust will conduct a Remote/Virtual Meeting. In an effort to ensure citizen engagement and comply with open meeting law regulations, citizens will be able to dial into the meeting using the provided phone number, or citizens can participate by using the Zoom link also provided on the agenda.

1. Approval of Minutes – February 14, 2023 – Motion by Chris F. to **Approve** minutes, **Second** by Judy. **Roll Call Vote:** Maxine: Yes, Susan: Yes, Judy: Yes, Chris F.: Yes, Chris V.: Yes **Vote:** 5-0-0

2. Letter to Dell - Draft

We want to create an opportunity for affordable housing by asking DELL CEO what is going on with the building at 55 Constitution Building. JPP stated that as soon as she came up with idea to send letter, she put the building up for rental. JPP thought draft letter should be more enticing to convince DELL that they should be entering into an arrangement with the Housing Trust in order to go forward with something brand new which is DELL and the Housing Trust working together to put senior units in that building. JPP will come up with more enticing language for letter.

3. Discussion: Guest list for Housing Forum

Chris V. stated we should have a general discussion about what should be done at this point and how we should move forward. We need an agenda and a place to hold forum. Susan wants to know if we should contact Danielle at the Senior Center. Maybe in advance of scheduling a meeting, or setting a date. Maybe pinpoint one or two of the key people and invite them to the table to come up with an Agenda. We might get some more robust topics if we involve a few other folks rather than just ourselves. Chris V. agrees and we have a guest list and now we only have to schedule a date and come up with an Agenda, pick a place. He is not convinced that we are the ones to set an agenda. We need to bring some people in to a Housing Trust meeting to help us lay out an agenda and some topics for discussion. Susan stated that we should include the head of the Fire Department for public safety, the Franklin Housing Authority, and the Board of Health. We should pick 2 or more key leaders within the community and ask where they would take this. Come up with an agenda, a date and space that will work for all. Judy states that we need to know what we want to get out of this meeting because, according to our Town Attorney, we cannot give money to individuals or organizations. We should be concerned about seniors in the area. Problem is Franklin and Bellingham is part of the Boston MSA which means that an affordable housing rent for a one bedroom apartment is \$1,300 per month and that is not affordable. We should contact our State Rep and our State Senator before we even have a meeting. We are trying to find housing for these seniors to live and we can't find affordable housing because the cost is too high. Bellingham is putting up a huge complex on Rte. 140 and their rent is \$1,300 for a 1 bedroom. We need the Senator and State Rep to see what they can do to help us and the area towns to be able to get affordable housing. Chris F. thought our discussion was to be about the short term issue, not the

long term issue. Chris V. agreed with this statement and stated that we are not the Senior Housing Affordable Housing Committee we are the Municipal Affordable Housing Committee. We are currently supporting the Franklin Ridge Senior Housing project. He agrees with Chris F. that this discussion came about to put together a discussion about transitioning from emergency term to longer term solutions and that period between which seems to be a challenge. We all care deeply about senior housing, but that is not our exclusive focus. He believes we were putting together a platform for that intermediate need. Maxine thought Tina Powderly, Food Pantry Director, would be a great addition to the meeting. Susan stated she just went to an event to support the new Food Pantry where she met some of the key people. They will certainly have knowledge of the needs out there. Before inviting the State Rep and Senator, we should have more discussion and have some solid ideas, then engage them so they can help facilitate long term solutions. Chris V. stated that this may turn into a quarterly or semi-annual meeting. Wants to bring in those who have their finger on the pulse of the issue and who can educate us on resources available and who is doing what and where is the need and what would they like to see addressed. Doesn't think we should go further with the scheduling process until we really have a broad agenda outline. He agrees that Tina Powderly should be asked and Danielle from the Senior Center should be approached and limit that group to three or four. All agreed on getting together Tina Powderly, Danielle, Fire Dept. Rep and possibly a Police Dept. Rep to work on an agenda. Chris V. asked what do we think should be the next steps? Do we continue month to month or every two weeks? Chris F. suggested that we form a sub-committee to meet with those people on a more regular basis then bring constructive ideas back to the Trust body. With a smaller meeting, they could meet in person and not have to worry about posting a meeting or having a quorum.

Chris F. made a **Motion** to form a Sub-Committee for the purpose of contacting key people to meet with to create a platform for a larger meeting. **Second** by Maxine. **Roll Call Vote:** Maxine: Yes, Susan: Yes, Judy: Yes, Chris F.: Yes, Chris V.: Yes. **Vote: 5-0-0.**

Chris V. asked for volunteers for sub-committee. Chris V. appointed Judy, Susan, Chris V. for the sub-committee. The sub-committee will schedule their own meetings and report back to the Trust. Susan stated that she thinks we should bring the School Dept. in on this as they would have a pulse on need. This would be for the larger group. Chris V. stated that there was not harm in bringing any social services group, including the school, to this meeting.

Maxine suggested having co-chairs for the larger meeting. Chris V. agrees that someone else should lead the meeting as our hands are pretty much tied as to what we can actually do.

Bryan Taberner suggested that Maxine could staff the sub-committee. If the sub-committee needs help you can approach her. She could post meetings if necessary. He suggested that the Veteran's Agent and the Health Director be included in the guest list.

Chris V. wanted to pass on that he had received an email from Alan Earls about the existence of the old modules behind the old St. Mary's Church. They could possibly be donated to the Trust and put on Town owned land for housing. Units are 20 to 25 years old.

4. Donation to the Franklin Housing Authority (FHA)

Chris F. stated that the Franklin Housing Authority has acquired the building and land at 813 Summer Street. They acquired the house from Bank of America and the land from the Metacomet Land Trust. The home has been vacant for many years and they are currently rehabbing the property. When completed that home will be an affordable unit in perpetuity. They have received quotes and rehabilitation will cost \$190,000. In order to have a mortgage on that property that is feasible given the rent they are allowed to charge, they will need a donation of \$50,000 to make the

project work. The FHA is asking if the Trust would consider donating that to them. Judy is in favor of that but would like language to cap the donation at \$50,000.

Chris F. stated that 5 years ago the Trust gave \$150,000 to the Housing Authority for a Hilap grant so they could update and repair some of the units. With the Hilap grant they got 3.5 times the amount of the \$150,000 donation. Chris F. was asked when the home would be ready for occupancy. He stated July 1.

Maxine made **Motion** to give the Franklin Housing Authority \$50,000 for the purpose of rehabbing 813 Summer Street so that it would be available as an affordable housing unit. **Second** by Susan.

Discussion: Susan asked how long the list for housing was. Chris F. stated that the list of 12,000 that you hear about is actually a State list compiled from all people and includes people who list that they wish to live in Franklin. List is ever changing, The FHA asks for a list and will get 100 names who have stated that they wish to live in Franklin and possibly that they are emergency. He stated that they may ultimately get 5 names that are qualified or may have to get another list of 100 names.

Roll Call Vote on the **Motion:** Maxine: Yes, Susan: Yes, Judy: Yes, Chris F.: Yes, Chris V.: Yes.

Vote: 5-0-0

5. Future Agenda

Judy has two suggestions: #1: there is a vacant condo on Grey Wolf Drive that has been vacant for many years. Thinks we should contact of State Rep and State Senator for their help with the situation.

#2: Suggests we should begin a Second 60 unit senior housing building behind Franklin Ridge because of the length of time that it takes to bring one online. It takes 7 – 8 years for a project. We still have ½ million dollars and still have land available. That would make 120 units of senior housing in the next 10 years.

Maxine commented that she attempted to contact the daughter of the owner of the Grey Wolf Drive condo (who passed away) and she has not gotten back to her. Maxine also contacted DHCD to see if they could help and they have not responded. The unit is privately owned and there is a Mass Health lien on it. **(Added to minutes per April 11 meeting)* Bryan asked Maxine to forward him information on 144 Grey Wolf Drive. That is the over 55 condo that has been vacant for several years due to the owner passing away. He will contact Jamie Hellen with information to see if perhaps our Representative can do something.

Bryan Taberner suggested that part of the Franklin Ridge Project includes a roadway to be constructed. Was going to be part of Jon Juhl's project but that road was to only go to the Franklin Ridge bldg. The town received a 3+ million grant for design and construction of the road. The road will go to the subdivision behind Franklin Ridge. There will be two parcels, one on each side of the road. Once we have an approved subdivision, we can talk about what is buildable and what is not on those parcels. Once Planning Board approves the subdivision plan it will be presented to the Trust. We do not know what the size of those parcels will be yet. This road design project is ongoing and should be completed in the next month or so. Then the Trust can decide what they want there. Mike Maglio is managing the grant for the design and construction of the road.

MOTION by Chris F. to **Adjourn**, **SECOND** by Maxine. **Roll Call Vote:** Maxine: Yes, Susan: Yes, Judy: Yes, Chris F.: Yes, Chris V.: Yes. **Vote: 5-0-0.**

Meeting Adjourned at 11:03 AM.

Minutes prepared by: Maxine Kinhart