

# Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust

Minutes

May 6, 2015

**Welcome** – Chairman David Carey opened the meeting of the Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust (Trust). Members Marc Johnson, Matt Tobyne, Brian Stein and Peter Britton were present. Also present were Rachel Meketon, Mary Beth Lawton, and Joe Hughes.

**Minutes from April 9<sup>th</sup>** – The Trust voted to approve the minutes with one correction.

**Community Preservation Plan** – Rachel briefly described the Community Preservation Committee's request that Town boards comment on the Community Preservation Plan and present at a public hearing. The Trust members expressed interest in participating. A discussion ensued on the feasibility of raising the surcharge to 3%. Members believe that CPA is well-established in Hamilton with impactful projects completed and underway. With a higher surcharge, the housing projects that the Trust has discussed could be more easily implemented. However, some expressed concern about potential opposition to a higher surcharge.

**Andrew DeFranza, Executive Director of Harborlight Community Partners** – Andrew attended to report on research that Harborlight had done regarding two questions from the previous Trust meeting. The first was details on how a nonprofit developer could partner with a housing authority to improve and increase the number of units through the use of tax credits. Andrew reported that it is possible for a nonprofit developer to partner with a housing authority to renovate federal units, but not state units. This is because the state housing agency, DHCD, has not replicated the structure that was created at the federal level to facilitate such projects, and does not have plans to replicate it. The Hamilton Housing Authority only has state-subsidized units. If Hamilton wanted to pursue this, they would likely have to work through the state legislature to influence DHCD. A discussion ensued about the potential technical details of such a project with a focus on funding and management. Members concluded that the first step would be to speak with the housing authority about this possibility.

The second question was the ability of Harborlight to subdivide the Farnham property. An attorney for Harborlight reviewed a memorandum from the Planning Board from 2010; a legal opinion from a lawyer hired by Jim Farnham; and the deeds for the property. The lawyer concluded that technically Harborlight could subdivide despite the Planning Board's injunction with a 40B comprehensive permit. Andrew described the project again as six farmhouse-style structures that each contain up to four rental units for families. The residents would be at 60% AMI, but could continue to stay in the units if their income increased while they were year. Discussion ensued about who would live in the units and the potential for local preference; and then moved to potential reactions by abutters and other neighbors. Overall, the board supports the project because it offers affordable rental

housing for families, an uncommon housing type in Hamilton. As a next step, Dave offered to set up a meeting with Andrew and Michael Lombardo to discuss the project.

**Next Meeting** – Because the next meeting is not until Wednesday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, Rachel requested the Trust members decide whether or not to present at the CPC hearing on May 21<sup>st</sup>. The Trust unanimously agreed that Dave could represent the group at the hearing.

Brian told the Trust that he is planning to resign. The other members expressed support for Joe to take his place in the group because he works in the affordable housing field and regularly attends the Trust meetings. Dave said that he would contact Scott Maddern so that the Selectmen know that the Trust supports Joe's appointment. Brian will submit a letter of resignation, and Joe will submit an application.

Carey adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Rachel Meketon, Community Projects Coordinator

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

David Carey, Chairman