

MINUTES
Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust
March 16, 2016

Members present: Michael Lombardo, Marc Johnson, Fred Mills, and Peter Britton.

Other people present: Patrick Reffett, Director of Planning and Inspections, Joseph Hughes, Chair, Hamilton Housing Authority, Kate McGuire, Executive Director, Hamilton Housing Authority and Dorr Fox, Community Projects Coordinator.

Fred Mills opened the meeting at 6:15 pm.

MINUTES

Marc Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2016 meeting. Mr. Mills seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Fred Mills reported that Donald Preston of Habitat for Humanity NorthShore had given him an update on the 270 Asbury Street project. Mr. Preston had written that there was a site visit which was necessary for their upcoming Comprehensive Permit application to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). The site visit was attended by a representative from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Planning Director Patrick Reffett, the Chair of the ZBA, Mr. Preston and their architect. It was also noted that they were awarded \$80,000 in HOME funds from the North Shore Home Consortium for the project. Mr. Reffett explained that this is a very competitive grant program.

The Affordable Housing Trust discussed the Harborlight project and noted that they would like to meet with Andrew DeFranza to discuss it. They noted that Harborlight has not secured a purchase agreement with the back portion of the property which may cause conflict during the permitting process. Mr. Mills mentioned that he is concerned about waiting for the project and not funding other projects.

DISCUSSION WITH JOSEPH HUGHES AND KATE MCGUIRE, HAMILTON HOUSING AUTHORITY

Mr. Hughes and Ms. McGuire discussed the new ramps at the Housing Authority property on Railroad Avenue. They showed the Trust members photographs of the completed ramps.

They noted that they were awarded Community Preservation funds for roof repairs. However, the bids came in high, so no contractors were selected. They are planning to put out bids again in the near future.

They noted that they will be putting locks on the exterior doors of the Railroad Avenue buildings. There will be an intercom system. The bids have been awarded and the work will begin soon.

There was a discussion on creating new units for seniors and people who need affordable housing. Mr. Hughes stated that the Housing Authority needs to know what the community is looking for. There may be a need for a market analysis. Members of the Trust noted that the Town created a Housing Production Plan in 2014. There may not be hard data from a survey in the plan, but it notes that there are many housing burdened households in the community. There are also not many units available to seniors for downsizing. The Trust members noted that Selectman Shawn Farrell is developing a town-wide survey. When this survey is completed, the Town may be able to embark on a survey focusing on housing.

Peter Britton inquired whether there were funding sources to create new housing. Mr. Hughes stated there are not. Trust members inquired whether floors could be added to existing Housing Authority buildings. Mr. Hughes and Ms. McGuire stated that this could not be done and would require a total redevelopment. Mr. Hughes stated that there was six million dollars available in the state to do design studies, however, there are no funds for construction. They would need to use tax credits.

Mr. Mills noted that there is not a lot of knowledge about the Housing Authority in Town. He stated that they need to solve this issue. Mr. Hughes concurred. He stated that he and Ms. McGuire would like to meet regularly with the Affordable Housing Trust. They would like to meet twice each year to coordinate.

APPLICATION TO CPC FOR FUNDS – UPDATE

The Community Preservation Committee has recommended approval of the application of the Affordable Housing Trust for \$250,000. Dorr Fox stated that the Community Preservation Committee chair will do the presentation, but would like representatives of the Affordable Housing Trust present to answer questions.

SELECTION OF NEW CHAIR

Dave Carey has decided to step down as chair of the Affordable Housing Trust. Michael Lombardo moved to select Mr. Mills as the chair of the Trust. Mr. Britton seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Lombardo noted that there needs to be a dialog to change the statute establishing the Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust (Chapter 97 of the Acts of 2005) so that the Affordable Housing Trust has more authority over its financial decisions. There needs to be a change so that the Affordable Housing Trust will not be required to obtain Board of Selectmen approval to release funds for land acquisition projects they approve. The members determined that they will target this change for the Fall 2016 Town Meeting.

Mr. Lombardo made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m. Mr. Mills seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.