

**Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust**

October 9, 2018 – 6 p.m.  
Town Hall—Memorial Room  
Hamilton, MA

HAHT Members Present: Chair Russ Tanzer, Marc Johnson, and William Olson

HAHT Members Absent: William Massos

Town Manager: Joe Domelowicz

Town Staff Present: Hamilton Community Projects Coordinator Dorr Fox

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Chair Russ Tanzer opened the Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust (HAHT) meeting at 6:02 p.m. with a quorum present.

MINUTES—AUGUST 13, SEPTEMBER 5, AND SEPTEMBER 24

The Sept. 5 minutes were pulled from the vote because they had only just been circulated and the Trust hadn't yet had a chance to review them.

Marc Johnson made a motion to approve both the Aug. 13 and Sept. 24 minutes. William Olson seconded the motion. The Trust voted (\*3-0) to approve the Aug. 13 minutes and (4-0) to approve the Sept. 24 minutes. \*Town Manager Joe Domelowicz did not vote on the Aug. 13 minutes because he was not a Trust member at that time.

LONGMEADOW PROJECT—LONGMEADOW WAY NEAR BAY ROAD—DISCUSSION OF TOWN MEETING WARRANT ARTICLE

Mr. Tanzer reported that Mr. Johnson was going to give a PowerPoint presentation. The meeting will only last an hour because the Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting will start at 7 p.m.

Mr. Domelowicz instructed Mr. Tanzer that Town Counsel Donna Brewer had advised he not sit on the panel. Mr. Tanzer moved and took a seat in the audience.

Mr. Johnson said he and Bill Olson had gone over how to write the motion for the Special Town Meeting (STM) script with Mr. Domelowicz and Ms. Brewer. The motion is as follows:

**Funding for 40 units of Affordable Housing at Longmeadow Way**

*I move that the Town transfer \$600,000 from Certified Free Cash to the Affordable Housing Trust for the purpose of creating housing units to be developed by Harborlight and/or its partners at the Longmeadow Way location, such award to be subject to developing no more*

*than 50 affordable units and no less than 40 affording units, and not to be used for legal fees, and upon such other terms and conditions as are acceptable to the Affordable Housing Trust.*

Mr. Johnson said the four of them had discussed the concerns raised by Bill Shields, 721 Bay Road. He said Town Counsel felt strongly that asking for \$600K (instead of \$1M) was fine, and that with the smaller ask they didn't need any of the money to come from the Stabilization Fund. She did not think it had to be written as the original motion with an amendment added. As Mr. Domelowicz noted, the purpose of the warrant article is to put Town funds into the discussion for the Longmeadow Way project.

Mr. Johnson said this is a much simpler ask and it doesn't change terms previously voted on by the Trust (\$300K was already committed to Longmeadow). Another \$400K will come from the Canter Brook Estates developers. The total for the project is \$1.3M; that hasn't changed. [Mr. Shields had been concerned with language about buying down or reducing the size of the affordable housing project.] Mr. Johnson clarified at no point was the Trust saying that the 200 units being discussed would be affordable units.

**Decision:**

Mr. Domelowicz made a motion that the proposed question by Mr. Johnson be the question they pose at STM under Warrant Article 2-6. Mr. Olson seconded the motion. The Trust voted (\*3-0) to approve the motion. \*Mr. Tanzer had recused himself and did not vote.

**Further Discussion:**

Mr. Shields took the podium and commented on the change that had been made, citing the original motion presented in the warrant, which is as follows:

*To see if the Town will appropriate or transfer a sum of money from available sources to the Affordable Housing Trust for the purpose of reducing the number of housing units to be developed by Harborlight and/or its partners at the Longmeadow Way location...*

He said this new motion would appear to be outside the scope of Article 2-6.

Mr. Olson commented that the Town was not reducing the number of affordable units. It was reducing the size of the project by not building 200 market-rate units.

Mr. Johnson said Town Counsel was prepared to address that question.

Mr. Shields noted Mr. DeFranza of Harborlight Community Partners has said he won't do the Willow Street project without the Longmeadow Way project so the cost is \$1.3M plus \$300K for Willow Street.

Mr. Johnson said a check was already cut for the Willow Street project.

Mr. Shields asked Coordinator Dorr Fox if the check had been cashed or picked up. Mr. Fox said no. He added that Mr. DeFranza has said he would be willing to go forward with a

smaller project on that site (7-9 family housing units) if Longmeadow doesn't get approved at Town Meeting.

Mr. Olson noted Willow Street was not on the posted agenda for tonight. Mr. Johnson said he didn't object to talking about Willow Street, but the discussion felt like an interrogation/deposition.

Mr. Johnson said in the presentation they will address that Willow Street is a different transaction that's part of the total spend.

Mr. Shields asked if they were also going to inform the public that the Canter Brook payments aren't going to be made until Dec. of 2019. Mr. Domelowicz said that's a matter of public record. The first Canter Brook payment will be made when the first 10 units are built or by the end of Dec. 2019, whichever comes first, and the second payment would be made when the project is completed, or by the end of Dec. 2020, whichever comes first.

Mr. Johnson continued with his PowerPoint presentation. The next slide he looked at was a clarification of what 40B is. He said 40B requires each town to have 10% of its housing set aside for affordable housing. In Hamilton there are 2,800 houses; 10% is 280. They have 90, which is going to drop to 84. So, unless the Town makes steps to work on its deficit of 190 units, it won't receive much help from the State if it wants to fight a 40B.

Next he discussed 2016 U.S. Census data, saying a quarter of Hamilton residents automatically qualify for affordable housing. Mr. Olson clarified that somewhere between 24-36% of Hamilton residents would meet 60% of AMI [Area Median Income].

Rosemary Kennedy, 61 Rust St., had a question on local preference. Mr. Johnson said it would be 70% local preference. Ms. Kennedy said the way she understood it, it depended upon how much the Town put in to the project.

Mr. Johnson showed maps of the project and discussed the terms and conditions of the grant agreement with Harborlight and where the money was coming from. He noted the project allowed for the 20 senior rental apartments to be developed at 59 Willow St. The total Town contribution for both projects would be \$1.6M. Mr. Johnson explained that additional density might be allowed at Longmeadow if Harborlight were unable to sell the existing houses for \$250K each. The two houses could be deed-restricted and added to the affordable housing stock for purchase.

Jack Lawrence, 105 Rock Maple, asked whether Mr. DeFranza would be attending Town Meeting. Mr. Johnson didn't know. Mr. Fox said based on conversations he'd had, he didn't think so.

Mr. Johnson said a yes vote at Town Meeting would provide the funding to allow the proposed grant agreement with Harborlight for Longmeadow Way to go forward. He went over the conditions. If Harborlight is sued by the neighbors, it wanted to reserve its right to

revisit some of the conditions. However, by the time the Town funds the project, it will know what the conditions are.

Next Mr. Johnson went over the Pros and Cons list.

Mr. Olson asked about the average cost per unit. Mr. Johnson said it is \$32,500 for the 40 units, and if they include the 20 senior units, it drops to \$26,700.

Mr. Lawrence asked if the \$600K would come back to the Town if the project doesn't go through. Mr. Domelowicz said if the purpose of creating the housing units at Longmeadow isn't achieved, the money comes back to the Town.

Mr. Johnson said the motion prohibits funds to be used for legal fees. He listed other conditions, as well. To the extent that 40 units stresses the infrastructure, impacts will be much greater with 200 units, he noted.

If the 40-unit project at Longmeadow goes through, Harborlight's funding source will require 10 percent of those units to house families that are homeless. 10% of 40 is 4 units. There are already more than that number of families in locations already in Hamilton that would qualify.

Mr. Johnson said that at no point has the HAHT said it wanted to build 200 units. It has consistently said it wants to structure a smaller project. An email that was circulated wasn't true or fair.

Mr. Lawrence asked if it were true that Mr. DeFranza was going to file a PEL for 200 units. The Trust didn't know. Mr. Lawrence said the Town would probably end up with 200 units anyway because there isn't anything to stop further development on the other parcels. It was agreed by many of those present that the risk is already there.

Mr. Domelowicz asked the question: Do we want to get the developer to focus on a smaller project or do we want to wash our hands of it and let whatever happens happen? He asked: Isn't it better to try and work with a developer to keep the project at 40-50 units?

Mr. Lawrence noted there are other sites in Town that should be looked at as potential affordable housing sites. He said he knew an interested developer. Mr. Domelowicz said to give him his name and number.

Susan Lawrence, 105 Rock Maple, asked if the total cost of the project was \$1.3M or \$1.6M. Mr. Domelowicz responded \$1.3M was for Longmeadow, but that would allow the project at Willow Street (at \$300K) to go through. He explained the State frowns on housing projects just for seniors and prefers family housing. Therefore, the 20-unit senior project would probably only go forward if it were paired with the family housing project at Longmeadow. While Mr. DeFranza is still willing to do a smaller 7- to 9-unit family housing project, Mr. Johnson said if that happened, another \$200K would likely be required.

Ms. Lawrence said she didn't think anyone in the room was against affordable housing and they shouldn't be at each other's throats. She said if they built at Longmeadow, they closed that parcel off for future school development, fields, etc. She said they should all be working together.

Ron Huth, 34 Maple Street, said if they voted for the 40 units without an appeal, they will get 20 senior housing units at Willow Street. If they don't vote for it, they could get 7-9 family units at Willow Street. He said Harborlight has said it is going to do a project at Longmeadow one way or the other. He said he can't wrap his head around why they don't want 40 units when they know that the alternative is more than 40 units.

Mr. Johnson said Selectmen Scott Maddern was trying to get the Finance and Advisory Committee (FinCom) involved in calculating the impact on the school system and FinCom had said it wasn't ready to do it. Mr. Johnson explained that kids entering the school system would change the ratio or the part of the \$27M school budget that went over to the Hamilton side. Forty units will drop in a certain number of kids to the schools, but it far less than adding the kids from 200 units.

Mr. Shields asked if it were true that no money would be spent until all appeals had run their course. Mr. Johnson said he thought yes that was true. Mr. Shields said Mr. Miller has said nothing can be built for 5-7 years on Lot 5 until his lease is over. Mr. Johnson said whatever that might imply, the question is still if it is worth doing the smaller project at Longmeadow. Mr. Shields asked the question if it were true that after the money was encumbered, there would be nothing left in the Trust coffers. Mr. Fox said it wasn't completely true, that there might be some money left, which had been given to the Trust by the CPC.

Mr. Tanzer was asked by Mr. Domelowicz to rejoin the Trust on the panel, which he did.

#### CANTER BROOK ESTATES—354 HIGHLAND STREET, HAMILTON, MA

The Trust spelled out the terms for the \$435K from Canter Brook. The first payment will be made when the first 10 units are built or by the end of Dec. 2019, whichever comes first, and the second payment would be made when the project is completed, or the end of Dec. 2020, whichever comes first. The company was looking for construction to start in the spring.

The Trust needed to wrap up the meeting because the BOS meeting was going to be starting.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

The Trust set its next meeting date for Thursday, Nov. 1 at 6 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Olson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7 p.m. Mr. Domelowicz seconded the motion. The Trust voted unanimously among those present (4-0) to adjourn the meeting.

*Wang Allen Cook*

12-10-18

MINUTES SECRETARY

Attest: *Don Fox*

12-10-18