

CAMBRIDGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST
MEETING MINUTES
January 21, 2016

Citywide Senior Center
Cambridge, MA

Trustees Present: Richard Rossi, Chair; Peter Daly, Florrie Darwin, Michael Haran, Cheryl-Ann Pizza-Zeoli, Susan Schlesinger, Bill Tibbs

Trustees Absent: Gwen Noyes, Jim Stockard

Board of Zoning Appeals Members: Constantine Alexander, Chair; Timothy Hughes, Vice Chair; Slater Anderson; George Best; Janet Green; Alison Hammer; Andrea Hickey; Jim Monteverde, Douglas Myers; Thomas Scott; Brendan Sullivan; Laura Wernick

Staff Present: Iram Farooq, Assistant City Manager for Community Development; Ranjit Singanayagam, ISD Commissioner; Chris Cotter, Housing Director; Cassie Arnaud, Housing Planner; Linda Prosnitz, Housing Planner.

Others Present: Seble Kidane; Sue Reinert

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

The City Manager opened the meeting by welcoming members of the Board of Zoning Appeals and the Trust. Following a brief overview of the City's affordable housing programs, given by Housing Director Chris Cotter, members of both Boards proceeded to discuss the ongoing need for new affordable housing in Cambridge, particularly family-sized housing.

Members discussed ways in which the City's affordable housing production goals could best be achieved, including ways to streamline the permitting process and updating zoning to incentivize and support the production of affordable housing. BZA members shared their experiences with affordable developments which came before the Board for comprehensive permits. While most 40B projects had been well received, they noted that it was often helpful to the process if supporters were present at hearings, particularly in cases where there was some neighborhood opposition.

Both Boards discussed how affordable housing goals could be incorporated into the City's overall zoning code, possibly as a product of the ongoing Envision Cambridge citywide planning process. Members of both Boards expressed interest in the concept of establishing explicit zoning relief to support affordable housing, and agreed that it would be useful to meet again in the coming year to continue the discussion.

At 8:05 p.m., the meeting adjourned. The next regularly scheduled Trust meeting will be held on Thursday, January 28, 2016 at 4 p.m.

OTHER MATERIALS

- Handout: Packet of materials with cover memo dated January 14, 2016 from Community Development Department Staff to Members of the Board of Zoning Appeal and Trust