

CAMBRIDGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST
MEETING MINUTES

November 18, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.

Conducted virtually via Zoom

Trustees Present via Zoom: Peter Daly, Florrie Darwin, Elaine DeRosa, Gwen Noyes, Susan Schlesinger, Jim Stockard, Elaine Thorne, Bill Tibbs

Trustees Absent: Louis DePasquale, Chair

Staff Present via Zoom: Iram Farooq, Asst. City Manager for CDD; Chris Cotter, Housing Director; Cassie Arnaud, Senior Housing Planner; Gabby Geller, Housing Development Planner; Janet Haines, Associate Housing Planner; Maura Pensak, Housing Liaison to the City Manager; Emily Salomon, Associate Housing Planner

Others Present via Zoom: Michael Brandon, James Williamson

The acting chair, Jim Stockard, called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. Chris Cotter explained that this meeting of the Affordable Housing Trust would be held virtually pursuant to the temporary emergency orders currently in place, that all votes would be taken by roll call, and that there would be no public comment. Mr. Cotter then coordinated to confirm that each participant was audible to each of the other Trust members.

Elaine DeRosa joined the meeting at 4:07 p.m.

MEETING MINUTES

Upon a motion moved and seconded, with one absent, by roll call of seven in favor and two absent (Mr. DePasquale and Ms. Schlesinger) to approve the minutes for the meeting of Thursday, September 23, 2021.

Susan Schlesinger joined the meeting at 4:09 PM

UPDATE FROM CDD

HomeBridge: Six buyers have active commitments, one home closed last month and one home is under agreement.

Homeownership Resale Program: Since the last Trust meeting, three units have been offered to new buyers. Staff will be marketing three additional units next week. Resale units are being made available to new buyers under a revised process adopted due to the pandemic to offer virtual unit tours.

Frost Terrace: Construction is complete and all 40 units have been leased. The permanent loan closing is expected in November or December 2021.

SquirrelWood: Construction is underway and 90% complete including new and renovated units. All of the new buildings are complete and ready for occupancy, with residents moving in.

2072 Mass Ave.: Capstone/Hope team withdrew their request for a comprehensive permit at the September BZA hearing but remain committed to creating affordable housing at this site and are assessing next steps and options.

52 New St: The first AHO design advisory review by the Planning Board was held last month. An initial design report has been issued and Just A Start is reviewing their comments on the plan.

Park View Cooperative: Staff are working with residents of the Cooperative in preparing to close on the loan commitment.

Fresh Pond: Staff have finalized the closing of funding to preserve this 504-unit property. In coming months, CHA will certify tenant incomes; the new program is expected to officially begin in early 2022.

Rindge Commons: JAS has applied for state funds in order to secure the remaining funding to begin construction in 2022.

Jefferson Park Federal: The first AHO advisory design review by the Planning Board was held this month. The Cambridge Housing Authority is reviewing feedback provided at the meeting; the initial design report is anticipated to be issued shortly.

Inclusionary Housing: The City is preparing to market inclusionary homeownership units at Saint James and Inman Crossing in early 2022, and will roll out an online application. Preparing to offer new units which will soon be complete at 95 Fawcett Street and on First and Charles Street.

OTHER UPDATES

Walden Square II: The Planning Board's first AHO advisory design review for Walden Square II has been postponed at the developer's request and will be rescheduled at a later date.

49 6th Street/Sacred Heart conversion: POAH/Urban Spaces is proposing adaptive re-use of the former Sacred Heart property into 46 units of affordable rental housing. There have been two public meetings for this redevelopment, including one this month. POAH is preparing a proposal for the Planning Board's advisory design review and a Trust funding request.

St. Patrick's: JAS has repaid a \$1.4 million loan to the Trust after receiving an insurance settlement from the 2016 fire.

Incentive Zoning: The City Council Housing Committee met to discuss increasing the contribution rate from the current rate of \$20.31 to \$33.34. It is expected the Housing Committee will continue this discussion at an upcoming Housing Committee meeting.

Cherry Street: A second public meeting was held in September. The City also convened focus groups with neighbors and community members with language barriers to engage more voices in the planning process and to discuss ideas for creating housing on the site. At the public meetings there was strong support for family sized homeownership units. In the focus groups, there was more interest in rental housing for low-income households. Staff are convening the small groups again to review the comments from the community meetings.

NEW BUSINESS

Lancaster Apartments - loan extension request

The Cambridge Housing Authority, on behalf of its affiliate, Kennedy Management, Inc., has requested that payment due on a \$500,000 Trust loans for its Lancaster Apartment property be deferred from November 2021 to July 2055. The extended loan maturity date would make the loan due when the balance of other Trust and City financing on the property is due.

The Cambridge Housing Authority is making substantial capital improvements on this 65-unit building, which was purchased with city assistance. Modifying the loan repayment will help CHA undertake their capital plan over the next 5-10 years.

The Trust agreed with the recommendation that the amended loan terms maintain repayment provisions which require repayment from 50% of available cash flow after payment of approved asset management fee.

Upon a motion moved and seconded, by roll call of seven in favor, one abstaining (Ms. DeRosa), and one absent (Mr. DePasquale) it was:

VOTED: to approve extending the maturity date for the \$500,000 to July 31, 2055 as outlined in more detail in the Trust's November 2021 briefing materials.

35 Harvey Street – funding request

Homeowner's Rehab, Inc., on behalf of Cascap Realty, Inc., and through its subsidiary Cambridge Community Housing, Inc., is requesting up to \$2,917,664 to assist with converting this 16- unit SRO with shared facilities to 12 affordable self-contained affordable rental units.

Before launching the discussion of 35 Harvey Street, Mr. Daly provided background information on HRI's relationship to Cascap. Mr. Daly explained that HRI's non-profit subsidiary Cambridge Community Housing, Inc (CCHI) will be assuming operational control of a portfolio of 250 affordable units owned by Cascap. As part of this process, the existing CASCAP board will be replaced by the CCHI board, which is appointed by HRI, to ensure HRI's control of Cascap and its properties.

Following this explanation, Mr. Daly recused himself from the discussion at 4:38 pm.

Staff presented the request on Homeowner's Rehab Inc (HRI for up to \$2,917,664 in Trust funding to reconfigure and renovate 35 Harvey Street and to convert it from SRO units with shared facilities to larger studio units with separate bath and kitchen facilities. The property will continue to be permanently affordable and to serve low and very-low-income households. The current property configuration has 16 small SRO units with shared kitchen and bathroom facilities. Through the renovation, these units would be converted into 12 enhanced SROs, with private baths and kitchenettes, in order to better meet the needs of its residents. HRI is working with Heading Home to develop and offer services to residents to assist them in stabilization services and other needs.

In addition to the \$2.9 million in Trust funding, HRI is requesting \$1 million in state funding and \$100,000 from the Cambridge Historical Commission to assist with the costs of façade work and other historic upgrades to the building. HRI requested that up to \$180,000 of its requested Trust funding be made available prior to construction closing for predevelopment funding.

Upon a motion moved and seconded, with Mr. Daly and Mr. DePasquale absent, by roll call of seven in favor and two absent it was:

VOTED: to commit up to \$2,917,664 in Trust funding, of which up to \$180,000 may be available early for predevelopment uses, to HRI's subsidiary CCHI to assist in the reconfiguration and renovation 35 Harvey Street as outlined in more detail in the Trust's November 2021 briefing materials.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion moved and seconded, Mr. Daly and Mr. DePasquale absent, by roll call of seven in favor and two absent, it was voted to adjourn the meeting at 4:55 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for December 16, 2021 at 4:00 p.m..

Materials:

- Agenda
- Meeting Minutes from the Trust's September 23, 2021 meeting
- Project update: Status of Active Commitments

- Community Development Department Memo November 18, 2021: Lancaster Apartments - loan extension request
- Community Development Department Memo November 18, 2021: 35 Harvey Street – funding request