

Concord Affordable Housing Funding Committee

Meeting Minutes: January 16, 2018 meeting (*Revised 1.30.18*)

Committee members present: Holly Darzen (clerk), Todd Benjamin (chair), Ruth Bennett, Sue Myers (by phone)

Others Present: Mary Hartman and Linda Miller, Finance Committee Observers; Karlen Reed, League of Women Voters observer

1. Todd Benjamin reminded the committee that funding strategy summaries are due prior to the next (1/30) meeting. Please share them via email with other committee members for information purposes.
2. Todd stated that the Select Board (rather than Town Meeting) needs to extend our time as a committee. He has asked Andrew Mara to put it on their agenda for an upcoming meeting.
3. Todd and Holly will attend the Thursday March 8 Finance Committee hearing to update them on our progress. The Select Board public hearing is Monday March 5. Ruth Bennett will attend this and present our committee's update.
4. We decided to meet with other affordable housing groups *in the spring*. *Liz Rust may be asked to coordinate this meeting.*
5. Todd will go to the committee chair breakfast 1/17 and update them on what we are looking at and next steps.
6. We need to get more members. Holly will try Chris Upton, a realtor who was recommended by a member of the Concord Housing Foundation. More are needed!
7. New strategy: Todd brought up the idea of PILOTs, payment in lieu of taxes. He reviewed the 6 largest nonprofit property owners in the town, who collectively own over \$228 million worth of assessed real estate value, over 1000 acres. They are Middlesex School, Concord Academy, Emerson Hospital, Harvard University, Fenn School, and Nashoba Brooks. Todd reported that it is not unusual for other towns to approach non-profit owners of more than \$4million in property to negotiate payment in lieu of taxes, however Concord has not done this. Linda Miller suggested that we discuss this with Chris Whelan, since the Finance Committee has already raised this issue with him. Holly noted that some of these nonprofit groups, especially the hospital and schools, employ people who need affordable housing given their salary levels. Linda mentioned that some of the schools have some affordable housing; it is unknown if this is on the SHI as affordable.
8. Holly stated that it came up in a Concord Housing Foundation meeting that the towns on Cape Cod regionally got a 0.5% transfer tax approved for water system improvements, so there is a precedent for this.
9. Sue asked if there is any guideline for how much money is needed to supply additional affordable housing in Concord. It was suggested the minimum might be to maintain our 10% state mandated level. The wait-list time for CHA units might provide insight on this – we can

check with them at the joint meeting. Liz Rust also might know. Holly added that there are probably limits on what can reasonably be built per year.

10. Sue Myers said Laurie Livoli deferred to the Finance Committee when asked to meet with us on the building permit fee surcharge. Holly suggested we send her the summary for that strategy when it is complete, so that she is not blind sided if that goes forward to public hearings.
11. Meeting Schedule: next committee meetings 1/30 (possibly location change depending on 1/29 weather) and 2/13 meeting at the Assessors office 24 Court Lane. Then 3/5 Select Board hearing and 3/8 Finance Committee update.
12. Public comment: Mary Hartman noted that the Housing Production Plan has a section on the wait list for affordable housing on p. 35. Linda Miller suggested we include the CPC in the joint housing meeting. There is one member of the CHA that is also on the CPC. Karlen Reed asked that we inform the League of Women Voters about the joint meeting, which we will.
13. All voted to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted, Holly Darzen clerk