

**Concord Housing Roundtable – Joint Meeting**

**CONCORD HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
**CONCORD HOUSING FOUNDATION**  
**CONCORD HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**  
**AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUNDING COMMITTEE**  
**February 7, 2019**  
**MINUTES**

**Roll Call:**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by the Chair of each Housing Group in attendance. Lee Smith of the Concord Housing Development Corporation, Richard Eifler of the CHA, and Todd Benjamin of the Affordable Housing Funding Committee, Charles Philipps of the Concord Housing Foundation.

**CHA:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Richard Eifler  
Todd Benjamin  
Edward Larner

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Hester Schnipper  
Fatima Mezdad

**CHDC:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Lee Smith  
Barbara Morse  
Yannis Tsitsas

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Jerry Evans  
Nicole Palmer  
Doug Bacon

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUNDING COMMITTEE:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Todd Benjamin  
Holly Darzen  
Vince Carlson

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Sue Myers  
Ray Andrews

**Concord Housing Foundation:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Charles Phillipps  
Holly Darzen  
Terry Rothermel  
Rich Feely  
Clarice Gordon  
Sara Wilbur

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Nancy McJennett  
Rich Feely

**Other staff and elected persons present, as self-identified**

Marianne Nelson – CHA Staff  
Elizabeth Rust – RHSO Staff  
Linda Escobedo – Select Board  
Tom McKean- Select Board  
Alice Kaufman, Select Board  
Marcia Rasmussen – Town Staff  
Dorrie Kehoe-LWV  
Ingrid Detweiler-LWV  
Clarice Gordon-LWV  
Terry Ackerman-CPC  
Susan Mlodozieniec-WCAC  
Lois Suarez  
Doris Audette

Facilitator Elizabeth Rust from Regional Housing Services opened the discussion by welcoming all of the housing groups to discuss the housing warrant articles that will be presented at the upcoming town meeting in April.

Liz began by sharing a spread sheet that presented the many affordable housing scenarios that could be created from funding if the articles are to pass. These options include small developments, moderate income rentals and/or home ownership and workforce housing.

Todd Benjamin , Chair of the Affordable Housing Funding Committee explained that the role of the AHFC was to identify the needs of the town with regard to affordable housing and to develop strategies to raise money that are equitable and fair as to not to overburden one particular segment of the community. These articles are to be fine-tuned with citizen input that will establish defined perimeters going forward. If these articles are voted in at town meeting, they must go to the state legislature for approval.

**Article 23:** *This article proposes transferring \$500,000.00 to a fund as a temporary function for the purpose of creating affordable housing subject to terms and conditions established by the Select Board.*

Tom McKean informed the group that this would be something voted on each year depending on the revenue stream from other sources.

At this time there was some discussion on increasing the taxpayer contribution to CPC and the distribution to allocate more money for affordable housing. Terry Ackerman informed the group that increasing the contribution had been presented to the Finance Committee at one time it was met with opposition.

**Article 24:** *The authorization for the Town to create a Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund where the above monies dedicated for the purposes of Affordable Housing would be held. The creation of this fund would be under the direction of the Concord Select Board with guidelines to be established at a later date.*

Rick Eifler questioned the process by which these funds would be disbursed. Holly Darzan explained that the plan would be to have these funds disbursed by a group dedicated to affordable housing and one advantage to this fund is not having to wait for a town meeting vote for approval when an opportunity presents itself and the funds could be readily available

***Article 25:** Impose a real estate transfer tax on residential property equal to 1% of the purchase price for the purposes of acquiring, creating, preserving, rehabilitating, restoring and supporting affordable housing in the Town of Concord.*

Tom McKean commented that Governor Baker is currently proposing to raise the real estate transfer tax in Massachusetts to pay for the effects of climate change.

***Article 26:** To impose an affordable housing building permit surcharge on building permit fees for the purposes of “acquiring, creating, preserving, rehabilitating, restoring and supporting” affordable housing.*

The fees would be based on construction costs.

Yannis Tsitsas asked how fees would be determined. He voiced concerns around the burden of an elderly homeowner to make necessary maintenance repairs to a property that would require a permit and subject to this surcharge.

The fee baseline has yet to be established. It will be necessary to hash out by-laws and details once it comes back to the town if approved by the legislature.

***Article 27:** Transfer of a portion of the property at 37B Commonwealth Ave for affordable housing*

Rick Eifler, Chair of the Concord Housing Authority spoke on this Article. The Town proposes to transfer a building lot acquired as part of the Gerow property for the purpose of affordable housing to the HA to develop a small family unit that sits adjacent to an existing CHA property. The HA has agreed to contribute \$2,500.00 toward a feasibility study to investigate building options. Wetland setbacks, easements, and slope make for a challenging building site. It is important that the HA understand any limitations before this property is transferred. If a study shows that construction is possible, the town will work with the CHA to put together a CPC application for development that will be due this September.

Terry Rothermal appealed to all groups for support on these warrant articles as it is critical at this time to come together to educate the community and advocate for affordable housing. Barbara Morse stressed the need for community awareness and the demand for affordable housing in Concord. Dorrie Kehoe suggested clarifying the objectives and missions of each of the housing groups before town meeting. There is some confusion with the so many different housing groups.

Ed Larner commented on the positive step that periodic meetings with all housing groups has accomplished. The meetings take a cooperative approach to addressing the community's needs by updating each other on the status of projects and supporting each other's endeavors.

Many continued to voice concerns over the vagueness of these articles but it was pointed out by Linda Escobedo that it is not unusual that an article gets revised for clarity at Town meeting.

Lee Smith reported that the CHDC is in the very beginning stages of acquiring a house on Main St. and partnering with Habitat for Humanity to rehab it into two units.

Liz Rust updated the groups on Junction Village. The project remains on schedule and the developer is currently completing the final application for funding with DHCD. Awards will be made in July. The third and final request to CPC has been made in the amount of \$300,000.00 and will be recommended at Town meeting.

Marica Rasmussen mentioned a warrant article where the town is considering purchasing a parcel of land from the Ralph Waldo Emerson Memorial Association. The group is looking to sell off some of the land in order to raise money to preserve the Emerson House. This land would be dedicated to open space and possibly the development of more affordable housing as it sits adjacent to CHA property on Walden St. Vince Carlson asked if the amble easement will be preserved in perpetuity.

Steve Carr asked why it appears that commercial property is exempt from these warrant articles. That in Concord, the tax rate is the same for both residential and commercial by not including commercial in these articles, it would appear that commercial property tax rates would now be less.

Upon motion made by Edward Lerner, CHA, seconded by Todd Benjamin, CHA and Todd Benjamin, AHFC it was

**VOTED:** to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

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Marianne Nelson, February 7, 2019