

AMHERST MUNICIPAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST
PUBLIC MEETING

Thursday, December 6, 2018
First Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall
7:00 p.m.

In Attendance

Members: Nancy Schroeder, Greg Stutsman, Tom Kegelman, John Hornik, Jay Levy, Sidonio Ferreira, Douglas Slaughter (7)

Staff: Nate Malloy, Rita Farrell, John Page

Guests: Carla Lacrosse, George Ryan, Hwei-Ling Greeney, Shalini Bahl-Milne, Paul Bracciotti, David Williams, Chad Fuller, Joanne Campbell

Prepared by John Page

Meeting Called to Order: 7:05PM

1. Announcements

Introduce John Page.

Resignation of Laura Quinn.

Membership issues. Only seven members. Seeking new members to get involved as well as extend terms of existing members. The Trust will continue to need FIVE MEMBERS PRESENT FOR A QUORUM.

2. Approve minutes

VOTE: Approval of the October 11, 2018 minutes.

MOTION: Jay Levy

SECOND: Sidonio Ferreira

VOTE PASSES 6-1 Abstention (Greg)

VOTE: Approval of the November 8, 2018 minutes.

MOTION: Jay Levy

SECOND: Sidonio Ferreira

VOTE PASSES 6-1 Abstention (Greg)

3. Discussion of East Street School

- a. Review Request for Proposals including criteria

Discussion of the relationship between the developer and the Town. Current recommendation is a 99-year lease of the land.

Rita notes that the discussion planned for this meeting is only the Comparative Criteria. The minimum criteria are excluded for the purpose of this discussion, but will be a part of the full draft RFP to be reviewed at the next Trust meeting.

Affordability: Consensus on 50% affordable to households earning 60% AMI. Jay raises the idea of increasing the percentage of 30% AMI units. Rita and Nate respond that the level proposed was considered the financially feasible level. Tom suggests for the “Highly Advantageous” should include “greater than 10% of units at 30% AMI. ***Unanimous vote on Affordability category with amendment.***

Developer Track Record: Tom notes that Highly Advances expectation of 7 of the past 10 years is very high and could eliminate smaller including local developers from applying. Amendment proposed 3 for Advantageous and 5 for Highly Advantageous. ***Unanimous vote on Developer Track Record with amendments.***

Financial feasibility category discussed and unanimously accepted.

Projected Schedule: After discussion, Trust concludes to amend Advantageous category to 18 months and Highly Advantageous to 12. Zoning/planning/permitting process was raised as a barrier. ***Unanimous vote on Projected Schedule with amendments.***

Development Concept:

Greg Stutsman proposes the following amendments:

- In the second bullet-“reusing or demolishing” and keep consistent throughout.
- In the third bullet-strike “design.”
- Strike “multi-family.”
- Add “to Town” after Easement in final bullet.

The Trust concludes that this category encompassing too many competing factors and it is necessary to decouple the number of units, the composition of units, and desirable design elements.

Regarding number of units and their composition: John shares his concern that this is our opportunity and the Trust must make the most of it. Nancy raised the example of Valley CDC Main St. of high quality all affordable units that fits in the character of the town. Nate shares concerned that we are not specific enough and furthers that criteria must include number of units must be paired with type of units. Rita notes that in the RFP she limits applicants to 1-3 bedrooms. John cites the Wayfinder waiting list reveal highest need is for two-bedroom apartments.

Nancy, Jay, Hwei-Ling and Chad raise the importance of quality of life for the prospective tenants. Discussion included storage, outdoor space, parking, and soundproofing. It emerges that quality of life and maximizing units may

be adversarial goals which must be delicately balanced Tom stresses that management determines quality of units there.

Group raises the issue of requiring design criteria. The Trust differentiates their role from that of the Planning Board and ZBA. John clarifies the process: For better or worse the Trust is the first stop, then Town Council, then Planning Board. If requests for CPA or tax-incentive financing requires TC approval, the project returns to TC. DHCD funding will add another layer of criteria. Greg suggests the following language: “adequate, high quality, and excellent design for mitigating building massing”.

John Hornik summarizes and suggests the following consensus amendments promising to return next meeting with a revised version of the category:

- Decouple number of units/bedroom configuration and design/development concept.
- Add the word “site design”
- Minimum of 16 affordable units.
- Minimum of 50% 2 bedrooms or more.

A small group will meet with Rita to provide guidance on further revisions in the areas where there is the greatest ambiguity.

Management and Maintenance Plan category unanimously accepted.

Community Support category unanimously accepted with the following considerations: What metrics will the Trust using? The Trust will be measuring the ability of the developer including track record/tool kit/activities for dealing with community. John cites community meetings by Beacon as an example. Rita notes that submitting letter on past performance from another community will be a requirement of submission.

Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity category unanimously accepted with the consideration of adding timeframe and focus on resolution of complaints rather than number.

b. Material for Town Council

Comprehensive report to Town Council and to bidders is necessary for the best results. John has drafted a memo to Town Council for review at the next meeting

c. Neighborhood Meeting

Trust concludes that at this point in the process they do not have anything to present at a neighborhood meeting. Nate argues that they need targeted

outreach because they have not heard from those in the immediate neighborhood. Greg: Current place could cement an expectation. Doug recommends communicating about the process to community and how they can provide feedback. The Trust will review a specific plan at next meeting.

4. Discussion of Housing Trust CPA proposals

John outlines elements of the proposal he has drafted. Trust concludes that coordination with Valley CDC and their proposal for CPA funds is important. Therefore, specific citation to Valley CDC are removed. Request for capital funding will not cite any particular project(s)

VOTE: \$400k for AMAHT Capital fund with amendment to not reference specific projects. ***Unanimously accepted.***

VOTE: \$40k for consultant. ***Unanimously accepted.***

5. Letter of support for Valley CDC CPA proposal

Request discussed at last meeting.

VOTE: Approve letter of support

MOTION: Tom Kegelman

SECOND: Greg Stutsman

VOTE PASSES 7-0

6. Plan for Landlord Forum

Status Report by Nancy Schroeder: Weather caused the cancelation of the Housing Forum scheduled for November 1. The event has been rescheduled for Wednesday, Jan 9th – Large Activity Room at Bangs; Snow date: Tuesday Jan 15th Panel not yet confirmed. Over 700 landlords contacts. Large interest by landlords. Nate will reserve room for the 15th as a precaution.

7. CHAPA initiative: forming an advocacy coalition for affordable housing Agreement with CHAPA and Consultation with Whitney Demetrious presented.

John explains how this coalition will differ from Trust. Specifically,

- Not a Town Committee with inherent restrictions
- Not bound by Trust agenda; can set broader goals *e.g.* how do they support families in town with income above 80% AMI including Town and University employees who cannot afford to live in Amherst. Additionally, the related issues of rents and all the stakeholders involved in that.
- LWVA participation: Kathy Campbell, Elisa Campbell, Rebecca Fricke

- YIMBY participation: Sara Duncan. There is a network to tap into here.
- Different leadership than Trust, ideally sooner than later. Engaging millennials is a priority.

John will send out request for availability via email on Friday for the week of December 17. Everyone present was invited. Whitney Demetrious expected to attend and serves in an advisory role.

Trust concludes that a broader coalition of support is essential and advantageous to all the Trust goals. Including having coalition support at neighborhood meetings, Planning Board meetings, ZBA, etc. Questions of such a groups composition or structure remained.

Trust members and guest provided their critiques: Greg pointed out that there is CHAPA staff time in this agreement and recommended using this time to further existing Trust goals. Tom raised the question of who is going to do the work and if they need to hire an organizer. If so, they should seek funding to that goal, he concluded. Rita noted CHAPA has done this before noting Acton as an example. Jay shared need more information to chart a pathway forward but praised such a coalitions potential. Guest Shalini Bahl-Milne committed to help build this coalition person by person.

8. Updates. None.
9. Items not anticipated within 48 hours. None

Next Meeting:

Thursday, January 10th

Landlord forum: Wednesday, Jan 9th or Tuesday, January 15th

Thursday, February 14th (also Valentine's Day)

Meeting Adjourned: 9:12PM