

AMHERST MUNICIPAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST
PUBLIC MEETING
Town Room, Town Hall
Thursday, January 10, 2019, 7:00 p.m.

In Attendance

Members: John Hornik, Greg Stutsman, Jay Levy, Sidonio Ferreira, Douglas Slaughter (5)

Members: Nancy Greg, Tom Kegelma

Staff: Rita Farrell, John Page

Guests: Kathy Campbell-LWV, Dee Dice-Valley CDC, Hwei-Ling Greeney-Amherst
Community Connections

Prepared by John Page

Meeting Called to Order: 7:05PM

1. Announcements

2. Approve Minutes

VOTE: Approval of the December 6, 2018 minutes.

MOTION: Douglas Slaughter

SECOND: Sid Ferreira

VOTE PASSES Unanimously

3. Discussion of East Street School
 - a. Review Request for Proposals including Comparative Criteria:

Town's Procurement Officer gave initial overlook. Town Attorneys may be required to look over one more time. Once approved, move forward to Town Council. Trust affirms 15 affordable minimum units but no maximum number of units.

Doug raises question of why lease and not sell the property outright. Rita assures that the building/development can still be taxed noting that 99-year lease is nearly equivalent to a sale. No preference for retaining the school building. Tax incentive financing and who is eligible for them is something we need to discuss further as a way for the Town to appeal to developers.

Members noted that Section VII-A. IX-Proposal Review Process is not too specific on the exact membership of the review committee. In the review process section there is some ambiguity of authority of the Trust, Council, professional staff when using the term "Town." Town Attorney should give final opinion on term. Greg describes and Trust concurs that the AMAHT is not named as actor/agent often.

Jay raised that in the Affordability category is there any way we can incentivize through criteria to serve tenants at less than 30% AMI. Rita explained how on such a small development without offering subsidies it is not financially feasible to serve those tenants.

Request for Proposals accepted with the following amendments

- V-D. Add "Berkshire Gas" and "East Street" as the natural gas provider and location respectively.
- VI-A-2. For clarity replace the 10% of affordable units at 30% AMI with "no less than 2 units."
- VI-F. Adjust the formatting of "F. Terms of Lease" to match rest of document.
- VII-A. Strike "The principal members of the development team must have a minimum of 5 years of experience in the development of affordable housing."
- IX. Change "form" to "from" and "Proposer to "Proposers" in the first paragraph of page 13.

Affordability comparative criteria category accepted with the following changes: Strike "earning less than" in the unacceptable column and replace it with "at."

Developer Track Record comparative criteria category accepted as is.

Financial Feasibility comparative criteria category accepted as is.

Projected Schedule comparative criteria category accepted as is.

Unit & Bedroom Configuration comparative criteria category accepted with the following amendments: strike "maximum of 30 units" and change "is up to 30 units total" in the Highly Advantageous column and replace it with "greater than 24 units."

Development Design category: John raised that there are too many factors to weigh in this category for example a proposal that exceeds green technology dimension but has unattractive design qualities. How do the reviewers grade these factors against each other? Rita argues it's better to leave it as one category because pulling out green technology and sustainability dimension is unusual in an RFP of this type and may be too proscriptive. Doug argues the current structures provides reviewers with latitude. This is the most subjective category and requires a judgement call on the part of reviewers. Terms such as "high-quality" and "excellent" design is intentionally ambiguous and requires reviewers to defend their judgement. Our RFP goes beyond the DHCD requirements. Step back and make the language consistent with DHCD requirements. ***Development Design comparative criteria category accepted with the knowledge that final language will be adjusted by consultant and Chair.***

Management and Maintenance plan comparative criteria category accepted as is.

Community Support comparative criteria category accepted with the following changes: In the Community Support category acceptable column replace "at least one or two" with "at least one" for clarity.

Fair Housing and Equal-Opportunity comparative criteria category accepted as is.

VOTE: Forward the RFP and Comparative Criteria to the Town Manager and the Town Council after recommended changes have been made.

MOTION: Sid Ferreira

SECOND: Douglas Slaughter

VOTE PASSES Unanimously

- b. Memo and Materials for Town Council:

Greg raises whether the Town Attorney should review the letter as well. Doug concurs that we need to be very careful here. Specifically, the line "By approving the RFP the Town Council is authorizing the Housing Trust and the Town Manager to move ahead with the development of affordable housing at the East Street property. In doing so, the Town Council is signing off on transferring the property to the developer via a 99-year lease once

conditions described in RFP, which becomes a part of the contract between the Town and the developer.” The Town Council needs to take two action: first, releasing the land and second, allowing the Town/Trust to engage in a long-term contract with a developer. Under Key Design Requirements Included in the RFP. Make sure DHCD language “elements of green design and conservation of energy resources.” Under Proposal Review Process Doug suggest seeking the advice the of the Town Manager on composition of the Committee. Review by Town Attorney. Memo may in the end more appropriately come from the Town Manager. John will make the final revisions to the memo and present it to the Town Manager.

VOTE: Approve the Memo and associated materials to be sent to the Town Manager and the Town Council as a with aforementioned amendments.

MOTION: Sid Ferreira

SECOND: Douglas Slaughter

VOTE PASSES Unanimously

c. Tabled: Neighborhood Meeting Discussion.

4. Discussion of Housing CPA Proposals:

Total CPA \$850,000 in available funds after debt service to be distributed for Community Housing, Open Space, Historic Preservation, and Recreation. CPA funds are in high-demand and competitive. A complete list of this year’s applicants available [here](#). For the housing category, the Housing Trust provides a letter of support/endorsement with respect to housing, as well as outlining its priorities.

This year’s submissions on housing are:

- [Development & Consulting Support for Affordable Housing](#) - Municipal Affordable Housing Trust, Town of Amherst
- [First Time Home Buyers Mortgage Subsidy Program](#) - Valley CDC
- [Studio Apartment Supportive Housing](#) - Valley CDC
- [Rental Subsidy Program](#) - Amherst Community Connections
- [Phase III Supportive Housing Program](#) - Amherst Community Connection

John would recommend all of these projects receive a letter of endorsement. However, the Trust would be remiss to not identify priorities since combined the proposals are over a million dollars. John has a preference for permanent, sustainable, housing and therefore places the Valley CDC Studio Apartment project as the first priority. Make sure to emphasize the need the bond this proposal. Second, the \$40,000 for consulting

support for the AMAHT. Third, Valley First-Time Home Buyers program—permanent and sustainable once purchased but remain forever affordable housing. Leaving the Community Connections projects while very important the Supportive Housing Program fourth—the most at risk/need group then fifth the rental subsidy program. Leaving the additional funds for the work of the AMAHT last with the recommendation to come back with this proposal as the East Street School project proceeds.

Hwei-Ling Greeney of Community Connections shared about the work of her organization and gave her pitch for prioritizing her CPA funding requests. Jay provides some background and rationale behind the importance of the ACC Phase III Supportive Housing proposal. Jay suggests moving the Phase III Supportive Housing program be moved up to third place. Greg suggests the final four be funded to a certain percentage not ranking. Any fund entrusted to us can then be given to any of these projects.

VOTE: Approve letter CPAC with endorsements, setting priorities for two projects and ranking all of the others equally.

MOTION: Douglas Slaughter

SECOND: Greg Stutsman

VOTE PASSES Unanimously

5. Updates

- a. CHAPA Initiative—forming an advocacy coalition for affordable housing – Brief summary, January 15 meeting sent to members earlier . Housing Coalition Meeting on Tuesday night 5-7PM in the South Meeting Room at the Bang Center. Open up by sharing housing testimonies of their own and others they know. Showing up to advocate for projects near to us at the Trust.
- b. First annual Landlord Forum—12-15 landlords of 30 people present. Wonderful evening. Services explained, on display. Pat Kamins testimony on the value of working with service providers. Next steps to be determined in subcommittee on homelessness and Town Homeless systems committee..
- c. Housing Trust membership—Down two members with others likely to rotate off. Need new members, go to website, appointments settled in February Process: Apply CPA Form [here](#). Interview with Town Manager. Appointed by Town Manager with confirmation by Town Council.

6. Items not anticipated within 48 hours: None.

Next Meeting: Thursday Feb 7, 2018 at 7p.m. Meeting Adjourned 9:20 PM.