

ACTON COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION
Minutes Monday, October 19, 2020 – online via Zoom

Pursuant to notice given, a Regular Meeting of the Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC) was held on Monday October 19, 2020 at 4PM via zoom. Present and constituting a Quorum for the purpose of conducting business were regular members Janet Adachi, Bernice Baran, Judy Hodge, Andy Richardt, and Bob VanMeter, and associate members Dan Buckley and Corrina Roman-Kreuze.

Lara Plaskon from RHSO serves as ACHC's off-board Clerk and was present for the meeting; Nancy Tavernier serves as ACHC's off-board treasurer and was also present for the meeting.

Guests:

- Robert Hummel – Town Planner; Liz Rust – RHSO; a few community members also joined the zoom.

Janet Adachi, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:05PM. Janet read the Covid-related guidelines for the meeting.

I. Appointments

4:05pm – Overview of fair housing by Liz Rust, Regional Housing Services Office – Janet provided an introduction, and Liz gave a presentation.

- Liz' presentation is included in the statement of documents presented at this meeting
- Members asked questions and made comments following the presentation re: more information about the HOME Consortium and the possibility of Acton joining as well as other topics; Bob shared his interest in fair housing and some background information as well as his desire to pursue fair housing efforts in Acton; Liz explained that the testing options that are available – informational, diagnostic testing of a relatively small sample of rental housing in Acton is a possibility (would cost about \$3K)

II. Regular Business

- **Minutes** – The minutes from the meeting of 9/21/20 were read. Bernice moved to approve the minutes as amended to mention Lara and Nancy as off board participants, and Janet seconded. Lara took a roll call vote – the motion pass unanimously.

- **Financial Report**

Nancy reported the following:

- Total ACHC assets as of 9/30/20 – \$76,342.94 (includes savings, checking, CD).
- Bernice moved to approve this report, Bob seconded; Lara took a roll call vote – motion passed unanimously.

- Nancy will be getting spending records from the AHA later this week, and ACHC will be making a \$75K payment to the AHA as part of the local share

- **Regional Housing Services Offices Update**

Lara reported the following:

- Liz Valenta has continued her work on the ERAP (rental assistance) program. Renewals of assistance are now being processed. Program will conclude in December.
- Lara will send out the annual monitoring letters to affordable homeowners in Acton this Friday.
- The RHSO in general has been very busy with affordable homeownership lotteries, re-sales, monitoring work, HPP work, and various projects in all of the member towns.

- **Chair Update**

Janet reported the following:

- Janet forgot to mention at the 9/21/2020 ACHC meeting that Selectmen approved an additional \$50,000 from the Town's allocated CARES funds to extend the Emergency Rental Assistance Program grants thru 12/31/2020, when program ends. Extended funds will cover 19 existing recipients and 15-20 new applicants.
- The State's shutdown ban on eviction ended 10/17. Governor Baker has announced a plan for an additional \$171 Million for rental assistance and to prevent homelessness. There are conflicting point of view on this issue – landlords are complaining about having to provide rent-free housing for an extended period; tenant advocates say Baker's plan is not enough.
- Janet and Bob will attend the AHA Board meeting on Tues, 10/27.
- Nancy Tavernier was a panelist at a 10/7 forum on affordable housing. Janet circulated slides and a link to the recording of the forum.
- Janet filed ACHC's annual report with updated officers listed early this month with the MA Secretary of State. The report is due 11/1.
- Janet received a couple of inquiries from developers about potential new developments. One might be on the November agenda.

III. **New Business**

- **Post Office Square: Closing Cost Assistance Request** – Motion to approve the \$2,500 closing cost assistance was approved. Lara will provide a letter to Nancy with details so she can issue a check to the closing attorney.

- **Inclusionary Zoning: Overview & Discussion**
 - Bob led the discussion – Bob thinks it is timely for the Town to think of inclusionary zoning as an option since we are now in Safe Harbor, so 40B will not be as much of an option for creating affordable housing.
 - Inclusionary zoning requires that developers of all properties of a certain size to include affordable units in their developments.
 - Inclusionary zoning would need to be proposed and then approved by Town Meeting.
 - The Planning Department has done some exploratory work on this in the past. Inclusionary zoning does not always generate affordable housing, so there is work to be done to assess whether it would make sense as an option in Acton.
 - Janet may invite members of the Acton Planning Department to ACHC provide some additional information.
 - Bob provided an inclusionary worksheet document from Mass Housing Partnership (MHP) that contains additional information – this is included in the statement of documents below.
 - There were some questions from ACHC members – Bernice asked if there were any communities near Acton who have successfully adopted inclusionary zoning – Bob will look into this; Andy asked some specifics about inclusionary zoning; ACHC will revisit this topic at a future meeting
- **Special Needs Housing: Overview & Discussion** – There were a couple of ideas mentioned on this topic, but it was decided that the main discussion would be moved to a future meeting
- **Community Preservation Acton application, 2020-2021**
 - The Planning Department is going to submit an application to cover RHSO fees
 - Janet will try to draft a potential application for ACHC; Bob and Andy requested ACHC consider applying for funding to forward the special needs housing feasibility study
- **Fair Housing: Further discussion** (optional) – there was no further discussion

IV. Old Business

- **348-365 Main Street**
 - Thursday, 10/15, 6pm – AHA Board public information/outreach meeting to solicit input about Windsor Architects design and site plan for project – the

meeting went well until the dog park on a parcel adjacent to the AHA property came up; A large portion of the meeting was devoted to listening to different sides (those in favor and those opposed to the park)

➤ The issue of the dog park will be discussed at tonight's Select Board meeting

- **Other project updates**

➤ 184 Main Street – construction of one of the two buildings is far along; the other building just has a foundation; It is unknown what is happening with the lottery for the two affordable units – lottery agent, Maureen O'Hagan will be managing that lottery

➤ One Stop application for the Mass Ave. project was submitted

➤ There is a lingering issue of possible non-compliance in a Quail Ridge homeownership unit – RHSO is working with the Town to try and resolve it.

V. Future Agenda Items

- **ACHC grant programs (capital assistance & closing costs)** – Janet is still working on updating forms for the capital improvement program

- **Fair housing: Continued discussion**

- **Other suggestions:** Janet let members know they can tell her if they have any ideas for future agenda items.

Bernice moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:45pm and Andy seconded. Lara took a roll call vote – motion passed unanimously.

The next ACHC meeting will be on November 16, 2020.

STATEMENT OF DOCUMENTS PRESENTED AT THIS MEETING:

Agenda, October 19, 2020

Minutes from September 21, 2020

Financial Report through 9/30/20

Inclusionary Housing Worksheet

Memo re: Inclusionary Housing, 10/19/20

RHSO Fair Housing Presentation to BOS, 10/5/20

WestMetro HOME Consortium Fair Housing Summary, Executive Summary draft, 9/20