



AMHERST MUNICIPAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST PUBLIC MEETING

**Thursday, July 11, 2019, 6:30 p.m.
First Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall**

In Attendance

Members: John Hornik, Paul Bockelman, Rob Crouner, Carol Lewis, Erica Piedade, William Van Heuvelen, Nancy Schroder, Tom Kegelman (8).

Staff: Nate Malloy, Rita Farrell, John Page

Guests: Community Members: Gazit Chaya Nkosi, Tamisha Joyner, Stacey (last name not given), and Chad Fuller; Laura Baker of Valley Community Development

Absent: Sid Ferreira (1)

Prepared by John Page

Meeting Called to Order: 6:30PM

Orientation of New Trust Members

The following new members were appointed to the Amherst Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Board of Trustees by the Town Manager on June 20, 2019 and subsequently confirmed by the Town Council on July 1, 2019: Rob Crouner, Carol Lewis, Erica Piedade, William Van Heuvelen for two-year terms expiring June 30, 2021. John Hornik, Nancy Schroder, and Tom Kegelman were reappointed for one-year terms expiring June 30, 2020. Sidonio Ferreira will continue as a member. His term expires June 30, 2020. In addition, the Town Manager serves as a member of the Board of Trustees in the capacity as chief executive officer of the Town. See Town Manager's Memo [here](#).

Chair John Hornik gave a presentation providing new Trust Members context by discussing Housing Trusts in general, review rules and operations of Amherst's Trust, and describing the housing landscape in Amherst using data from the [Housing Production Plan \(2013\)](#), [Housing Market Study \(2015\)](#), and draft housing policy.

Announcements

John Hornik shares the recent news that Craig's Doors Executive Director Jade Lovett and Craig's Door and two staff are resigning as of August 1. There are concerns about the shelter opening on time for the season. John suggests calling a meeting of the subcommittee on Sheltering and Homelessness to discern how to support the shelter in its time of transition.

Business

- 1. Approve minutes from June meeting.**

VOTE: To approve minutes as read.
MOTION: Nancy
SECOND: John
VOTE PASSES Unanimously

2. Letter submitted to the Trust: Gazit Chaya Nkosi, Tamisha Joyner, Stacey were present and gave statements on the topic.

Three residents or former residents came and gave testimony about their struggle with housing affordability in Amherst. Speakers specifically cited the gap between support services for residents at very low-income levels and those that can affordable market rate housing in Amherst. One resident expressed difficulty making ends meet even utilizing Section 8 voucher program. All expressed deep commitment to the community and a desire to remain living in Amherst because of the quality of the primary and secondary education, deep roots, quality of life, and commitment to inclusion of people of color, people with disabilities, and the LGBTQ community. They expressed feeling vulnerable, facing rising rents and may be forced out of their homes because of rising costs. One shared her story of experiencing temporary homelessness and the difficulty transitioning back into permanent housing in the Amherst area where she had strong family support, but prices remained high. The residents demanded that the Trust and Town take bold action to address the housing crisis in Amherst including exploring solutions at the state and federal level.

Tom stressed driving a hard bargain with developers seeking Town support in the future. Erica affirmed this and asked how we incentivize or require this in projects the Trust supports financially including restrictions on rent inflations. Trust members resonated using data to apply maximum pressure to maintain affordable rents. Nate cited the Trust's role in preserving existing affordable units and preventing disparate impact will look into municipal levers and controls. Nancy committed to looking into the status of Section 8 vouchers in specific apartments raised. John concluded that members will bring back information for discussion at the next meeting.

John: Fall Housing forum theme—Housing Crisis in Amherst.

3. Review and discuss feasibility of affordable housing on Town-owned property on Strong Street.

John shared a potential project in the pipeline—town owned land on Strong Street (Parcel: 12A-46, 12A-36, 12A-43) which may be suitable for affordable housing. First step is declaring the land surplus via the new Town disposition policy. Trust can make a request of disposition committee. Habitat for Humanity did look at the project. Nate will inquire their conclusions of the site. There are no utilities on this site currently.

4. Plan for fall housing forum.

John suggests theme of "Housing Crisis in Amherst." The next steps include venue and designing program.

5. *Tabled until next meeting:* Discussion of Trust priorities

- a. Develop CPA-AMAHT joint housing strategy
 - i. Develop 5-year Budget Plan
 - ii. Develop annual announcement followed by hearing
 - iii. Rental Housing - Use Trust RFP
 - iv. Local Housing Voucher - develop RFP
 - v. Homeownership subsidy program - develop RFP
 - vi. Renovate existing affordable housing

- b. Local housing voucher program
- c. Program to support developers implementing inclusionary zoning requirements –
- d. Update Trust’s strategic plan

6. Updates on Current Initiatives

- a. East Street School RFP — Town Manager: Town Hall will be putting out RFP soon.
- b. Draft Town Affordable Housing Policy — John: Policy and contextual appendix draft prepared. This will be topic of next meeting.
- c. Support zoning changes for 40R and Smart Growth planning — Nate: Two Smart Growth Forums have been completed. Karen Sonobourgh is requesting input and direction from the Trust before charting next steps. This will be topic of next meeting.
- d. Valley CDC Supportive Housing at 132 Northampton Road — Laura Baker of Valley CDC: Town Council approved CPA funding. Next step is to apply for project eligibility letter. Valley is not rushing this process and is conducting thorough analysis beyond requirements and plans to submit eligibility letter in Fall.

7. Items not anticipated within 48 hours – None.

8. Public Comments – None.

9. Next Meetings

Housing Coalition, Tuesday, July 23, 6:30 pm, 101 Bangs

AMAHT, Thursday, August 8, 7PM, Town Hall First Floor Meeting Room

Meeting adjourned at 9:25PM