



AMHERST MUNICIPAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST
EXECUTIVE SESSION

Thursday, December 10, 2020

8:30 PM

Virtual Zoom Meeting

IN ATTENDANCE

Members: Sid Ferreira, Francis Goyes, John Hornik, Carol Lewis, Erica Piedade, Will Van Heuvelen (6)

Absent: Paul Bockelman, Rob Crowner (2)

Staff: David Ziomek, Nate Malloy, Rita Farrell, John Page

Prepared by John Page.

Meeting reconvened in executive session at 8:39PM

Assistant Town Manager David Ziomek explained that final signatures should be on the purchase and sale agreement by tomorrow. The agreed purchase price is \$735,000, below the appraised value of \$772,000.

The purchase and sale agreement calls for an inspection period now through December 30th. Any due diligence that the Trust wants to do to inspect the property can occur during this period. An appraisal and wetlands analysis has been conducted so far. David said that they are leaning on the in-house expertise of Rob Morra for the site assessment. Since the wetland scientists have completed their report, there is quite a bit more developable land than anticipated enabling the possibility of 40+ units on the property.

VOTE: To authorize expenditures for technical services including title and legal work, survey, appraisal, wetland delineation, 21E evaluation, zoning assessment, and buildout/development scenarios and other costs for both Belchertown Road and East Street sites.

MOTION: Carol

SECOND: Erica

VOTE PASSES unanimously, 6-0-0 (*Ferreira – Y, Goyes – Y, Hornik – Y, Lewis – Y, Piedade – Y, Van Heuvelen – Y*)

Trust members reviewed the timeline for property acquisition and development of RFP, beginning with the public meetings.

Because the CPA allocation to purchase the property requires bonding, a vote by Town Council is needed by February 1. The proposal has been referred to the Finance and Community Resource Committees of the Council. The Community Preservation Act Committee already voted unanimously to recommend bonding up to \$800,000 in order to purchase the property.

The Trust reviewed planned sources of payment for the property. The Town has recommended a reduction to bonding of \$555,000 with remaining funds to purchase come from existing Trust resources.

There will be a hearing on the proposal at the Monday, January 4th Meeting of the Council with the Chairs of Housing Trust and CPA Committee present. The Finance Committee is scheduled to review and vote on the bonding for this proposal the next day with the CRC vote a week later. Town Council's final vote is scheduled for January 25th. The closing date on the property has been set for February 16th.

Draft Timeline of Events for Property Acquisition and Development of an RFP:

- Dec. 14 – Purchase & Sale agreement signed
- Dec. 10 – Begin work on RFP, continued in January-February
- Dec. ? – Appraisal and wetlands reports completed
- Dec. ? – Other technical tasks completed for property acquisition
- Dec. ? – Plan for replacement of culvert behind East Street School
- Jan. ? – Determine whether to ask Amherst Historical Commission for waiver to demolish school building
- Jan. 29 – Closing of property purchase
- Feb.? – Meet with Conservation Commission on Wetlands delineation for both Belchertown Rd. and East Street School site
- Feb. 25 – Completion of drafting of RFP by Trust
- April 1 – Release of RFP by Town

David identified one of the challenges and opportunities of the property. Of the three buildings on the three adjacent lots, two are rentable. One (15C-60) is currently rented through May and the Town will need to honor that. Since site work will not begin immediately, he explained, the Town could continue to rent the property and make income while the pre-development process continues. The modular duplex on is 15C-58 not currently rented – there is a possibility of moving that house to a new lot.

Discussion turned to the development of a combined Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Belchertown Road and East Street School Sites. John explained the rationale behind the combined RFP as reducing the soft costs/ transaction costs for developers as well as the total number of units attracting more bidders. There is likely, no advantage in terms of permitting, the ZBA would consider a 40B application separately for each, but there is significant savings in financing of the project as a combined project.

Reflecting on the East Street School site RFP process, John noted that the only partial submission from Valley Community Development and their citing lack of critical information including

hazardous materials (21E) and wetlands analyses. Additional new information on the site since the issuance of the RFP, is that a culvert on the site needs to be replaced. The Town is responsible for replacing that. Regarding the former school building, if keeping it is not feasible the Trust or developer could initiate the demolition review and request to the Historical Commission early, thereby, allowing the historical significance and possible one-year demolition delay to be imposed during the pre-development stage and thus not further delay site work.

John asked for Trust members interest in forming a subcommittee to work on drafting the combined RFP in advance of the January Meeting. John explained that the RFP is application of values and an expression of what the Trust would like to see developed on each site, levels of affordability, and mix of unit types. Francis, Erica, and Carol expressed interest. Francis warned against being too prescriptive in the RFP, because having expertise in financing affordable housing development, she confirmed that the funding sources in the end often dictate the affordability and unit makeup of a successful project.

Concluding, John thanked David and staff for their work and quick action in securing this property.

VOTE: To adjourn

MOTION: Erica

SECOND: Will

VOTE PASSES unanimously, 6-0-0 (*Ferreira – Y, Goyes – Y, Hornik – Y, Lewis – Y, Piedade – Y, Van Heuvelen – Y*)

Meeting adjourned at 9:20PM.