

DRAFT Minutes
Amherst Municipal Affordable Housing Trust
Thursday, June 9, 2022
7:00 PM

<https://amherstma.zoom.us/j/84347196966>

Present: Allegra Clark, Aschleigh Jenson, Paul Bockelman, Carol Lewis, Erica Piedade, Risha Hess, Rob Crowner, Sid Ferreira

Staff: Nathaniel Malloy, Rita Farrell

Guests: Rep. Mindy Domb, Maura Keene <missing other guests>

1. Announcements

Allegra has joined her second/third Town committee since becoming a member of the Housing Trust. She is a member of the Community Safety and Social Justice Committee.

Nate initiated a discussion of John Hornik's contributions to the Housing Trust and the Town. He read a letter from Tom Kegelman which was followed by comments by Paul Bockelman, Mindy Domb, Rita Farrell, Erica Piedade, and Carol Lewis.

2. Review minutes from May meeting – Minutes accepted as distributed.

3. Discussion and election of new Chair of Housing Trust

Carol and Erica spoke briefly about how they will share leadership of the Housing Trust between themselves and by actively seeking the contributions of other members of the Trust, as well as other Town entities.

The Trust voted 9-0 to accept Erica and Carol as the co-chairs of the Housing Trust.

4. Report from May 25th Housing Forum with Pioneer Valley Planning Commission – Future Housing Needs of Older Adults

John presented housing-related slides from May 25th. See slides #3-22 link below.

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1dee0ewi-Rfjr-MrYqc0G9_ViNjWaKdnM/edit#slide=id.p22

In discussion, Allegra briefly outlined the need to assist people who seek to become new homeowners, as houses formerly owned by older adults come into the market. Carol also spoke to the need to reach out to older adults who are considering selling and interesting persons in selling to the next generation, rather than limited liability corporations.

Aschleigh suggested creating rental opportunities in larger houses that come up for sale. Risha asked about whether there are groups seeking to create opportunities for students to move into an older person's and assist in maintaining it. Nate suggests that John consider initiating research into these types of initiatives after "retiring" from the Housing Trust.

Rita located relevant study from the Metropolitan Area (Boston) Planning Commission:
link= <https://metrocommon.mapc.org/reports/10>

5. Report from Gerry Weiss about changes at Craig's Doors

Kevin Noonan and two other managers have resigned. A search for a new director has been initiated.

Craig's Doors continues to operate a shelter at University Motor Lodge in Amherst and Knights Inn in Hadley. Shelters at Emmanuel Lutheran Church and UU have closed for the season.

Craig's Doors is applying for a new grant from DHCD to maintain its shelter program into the future.

6. Updates and Discussions on:

- a. Strong Street property evaluation. Nate is planning to hire a botanist and possibly a wetlands consultant to evaluate the site in response to questions about the priority habitat. The hope is that the area allowed for development can be maximized.

Also the Town is evaluating whether the two existing houses on Belchertown Road can be moved to Town-owned property on Old Farm Road.

- b. East Gables (aka 132 Northampton Road). Construction is underway. The existing building has been removed and a foundation has been poured.
- c. Legislative advocacy. We can still support pending legislation on tenant representation. Housing Trust votes 8-0 with one abstention to support this legislation. John will draft and send a letter.

7. Items not anticipated prior to the meeting. Ashleigh asked about what the system is that allows people to get into affordable housing and whether we could describe the high and low barrier opportunities and work on what the Housing Trust could do.

Erica spoke briefly about a past subcommittee that was created which was similar in intent and could be reformed.

John mentioned a new system called the Housing Navigator that did not exist 2-3 years ago that is now available to identifying affordable housing for rent.

8. Upcoming Meeting: Housing Trust, July 14

Meeting Adjourned