



**Minutes
Housing Partnership
July 16, 2019
Town Administration Building**

Members In Attendance

Fred Reynolds (Chair), Cliff Cook, David Leon, Helen Oliver, and Andrea Adams (Senior Planner, Department of Community Development & Planning (DCDP))

Others in Attendance: Martin Cafasso and Vincent MacNutt, (Petitioners, 85-101 North Beacon Street), and Elodia Thomas (Resident)

I. Review of Draft Minutes: June 2019

Mr. Reynolds asked for a motion to approve the June 18, 2019 draft Minutes. Mr. Cook moved to approve the draft Minutes as amended. Mr. Leon seconded, and the Minutes were unanimously approved.

II. Review of 85-101 North Beacon Street Redevelopment Per Section 5.07 of the Zoning Ordinance

Ms. Adams noted that a one-page sheet (A20) showing the proposed locations, sizes and distribution of the proposed onsite affordable units had been distributed to the Partnership Members by Email from staff prior to this meeting.

Mr. Reynolds asked the Petitioners to describe the project.

Mr. Cafasso summarized the proposed project, noting that it was a condominium (ownership project) and highlighting the relatively small (28) number of units. He noted the affordable one-bedroom units had been increased in size, to 700 square feet, to meet the Department of Housing and Community Development's required minimum unit size.

Mr. Cook and Mr. Leon noted that in terms of proportionality, it was closer to 3 two-bedroom units and 1 one-bedroom units as affordable (rather than the proposed two of each type).

Mr. Leon also expressed a concern that all of the designated affordable units faced North Beacon Street, suggesting that at least one should face the rear (relative to overall noise).

The Partnership Members discussed the various criteria in Section 5.07 relative to the initial affordable units offered by the Petitioner.

Mr. Cafasso and Mr. McNutt noted that if the Partnership desired two of each type, it would make it cost-prohibitive to include interior Universal Access features, such as lowered sinks and counters, which the Petitioner had planned to do in at least one of the proposed affordable units.

Mr. Cook, Mr. Leon and Ms. Oliver stressed that the proportionality is closer to provision of 3 two-bedroom units and 1 one-bedroom unit.

The Partnership and Petitioners discussed various combinations and configurations of units, so as to achieve the required proportionality. The Petitioners noted they were loath to make the Beacon Street units and corner units as affordable, because they would generate the most income to the development as market rate units.

The Partnership Members noted they were sensitive to the Petitioners' fixed costs and the cost per square foot to construct the project, but held firm on the proportionality issue.

Mr. Cook moved that the Housing Partnership recommend to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals that per the Housing Partnership's discussion, the Petitioner's proposal met requirements of Section 5.07 of the Watertown Zoning Ordinance, namely that:

1. The affordable units offered for sale shall be:
 - A. Unit 105
 - B. Unit 207
 - C. Unit 308
 - D. Either Unit 101 or Unit 203 (at the Petitioners' choice).

As shown on *Sheet A20, AFFORDABLE UNITS, by EMBARC*, dated 7/3/19 as annotated by Ms. Adams during the meeting (attached to these Minutes).

Ms. Oliver seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

III. Review of Draft 2019 CAPER (Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report)

Ms. Adams reviewed the proposed draft 2019 CAPER. She noted that three questions dealt with the Housing Authority, and she was awaiting Mr. Lara's response. She noted the rest of the CAPER acknowledged Watertown's inability to achieve HOME housing goals, primarily due to lack of a steady funding. Ms. Adams also noted the CAPER discussed recent changes, such as Watertown's adoption of the Community Preservation Act in 2016, and the work being done by the Council Human Resources Subcommittee on housing issues.

Mr. Cook moved to endorse the draft CAPER and to send it to Newton, including a note that additional information will be coming pending the Housing Authority reviewing the relevant questions. Mr. Leon seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

IV. Update/New Housing Production Plan

Ms. Adams noted the Partnership had received copies of the Goals from Watertown's 2014 Housing Production Plan (HPP) and the Housing Element of the 2015 adopted Comprehensive Plan as background data for the discussion.

Mr. Cook also distributed a copy of draft Goals he created, using Mr. Reynolds' proposal as a starting point (attached to these Minutes).

Mr. Leon suggested two changes to Mr. Cook's draft:

- Add "Create studios/SROs/Low Cost Units" under the list of Strategic Priorities
- Add "Those with Disabilities, particularly Developmental Disabilities" to the list of Target Populations

Ms. Thomas asked about the concept of local preference. She questioned why Cambridge and Boston had a 70% local preference in the first round of affordable lotteries, and Watertown did not?

Mr. Cook noted that both Boston and Cambridge had already achieve 10% (or more) of the municipality's housing stock as affordable. As such, both municipalities are not bound by the state Department of Housing and Community Development's requirements. He noted that Watertown has only approximately 7% of its housing stock as affordable, so Watertown is largely bound by what DHCD

requires. He noted that DHCD does not like local preferences because it runs counter to affirmatively marketing fair affordable housing.

Mr. Reynolds noted that the data on Watertown provided by Shelly Goehring from the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (during her workshop on Housing Trusts) indicates that a significant number of Watertown residents are still cost-burdened when it comes to paying for shelter.

Mr. Cook agreed, suggesting that the Partnership also look at ways to address this, perhaps including further lowering the income threshold in rental projects.

Ms. Oliver suggested perhaps adding another income tier. She also asked staff to research what other municipalities have tiered income levels in Inclusionary Zoning projects, both rental and ownership.

Mr. Cook noted that Cambridge had been discussing other concepts, such as density bonuses and altered or reduced dimensional requirements (in zoning) as ways to incentivize development of more affordable units.

Ms. Adams noted that there may also be synergies developing between new monies being made available by the DHCD to Housing Authorities (via a specific grant to develop or redevelop Housing Authority units) and other funding sources, such as the HOME Program, CPA monies, and Low Income Tax Credits. She suggested this might lead to new opportunities to create affordable units at lower income levels.

Mr. Reynolds suggested the Partnership continue to work on a new/updated HPP during the summer, with the hope of finalizing a new/updated HPP by the Fall. As such, he suggested the Partnership meet again in August. He also requested that Mr. Cook send Ms. Adams his draft set of Housing Production Goals, so that she could send it on to the Members.

The Partnership Members and staff discussed available dates in August, noting that the scheduled meeting date of August 20, 2019 did not work for staff nor at least one Member. Based on this, the Partnership decided to hold its next meeting on Tuesday, August 27, 2019, but at the regular time and place (6:00 PM and at the Town Administration Building).

Adjourn

Mr. Reynolds asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Cook moved to adjourn the meeting, and Ms. Oliver seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.