



# TOWN OF WATERTOWN HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Administration Building  
149 Main Street  
Watertown, MA 02472  
Phone: 617 972 6417  
Fax: 617 972 6484  
[www.watertown-ma.gov](http://www.watertown-ma.gov)

Minutes of Watertown Housing Partnership Meeting  
June 15, 2021 6 PM, Meeting at Watertown Public Library  
(in person meeting because of expiration of COVID emergency order)

## **Members in Attendance**

Fred Reynolds (Chair), Cliff Cook, David Leon, Helen Oliver, Michael Lara.  
Non-members present: Larry Field (staff), Linda Sultan.

### **I. Review of Draft Minutes**

Minutes of May 18, 2021 were reviewed and approved unanimously.

### **II. Local preference**

Larry introduced the draft local preference policy by saying that DHCD reviews proposed local preference within the context of a specific project with an affirmative fair housing marketing plan. The purpose of having a written policy is to communicate to the public and developers what the Town hopes to do on local preference as projects are proposed. For this reason, the WHP should send this document, if approved, to the Town Council for endorsement.

Members discussed several details in the draft policy and agreed to add the words “based on available data” to the second sentence of section 2 and to delete the phrase “or has a bona fide offer of employment in Watertown” in the first sentence of section 3. Michael moved to adopt the policy and ask the Town Council to endorse it and Cliff seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Larry agreed to write a short transmittal to the Council.

### **III. Municipal affordable housing trust**

Larry said that KP Law completed its review of the draft declaration of trust and ordinance and drafted a third document (an order terminating the WHP after the trust has been formed and trustees in place). He said the next step was for the Joint Committees to finalize the documents and send a report to the Town Council recommending adoption.

One issue remains unresolved—whether removal of a trustee should be at the discretion of the Town Manager or “for cause after the opportunity of a hearing.” KP Law did not make a recommendation between those options; the Joint Committees might find a WHP recommendation useful. Members agreed that removal should be “for cause.”

Members also suggested that staff ask the Joint Committees to consider the pros and cons of requiring that trustees be Town residents. Fred said this would disqualify him and it might be hard to find another realtor to serve. Michael said it would also disqualify him and mean that the Housing Authority’s director would not be a trustee. Helen said that this would disqualify people who work (but don’t live) in Watertown and that this might make it harder to find sufficient trustees with the requisite expertise.

**IV. Meetings after June 15**

Members agreed to meet in July, assuming there are items to discuss, and to skip August unless there is a pressing matter to consider.

**V. Emergency rental assistance program**

Larry summarized the emergency rental assistance program's status. There are now 59 households, plus 20 Housing Authority households, that have enrolled in the program. As we get to the 6<sup>th</sup> month for these households, about 50% of enrollees have applied for RAFT/ERMA and stay in our program until their state assistance comes. The remaining households have a reason to drop out (moved, new job) or are unresponsive. There is no need for additional money at present. Community Foundation money that arrived this spring is still available.

**V. Other business**

Larry confirmed that there are no new housing projects in the pipeline. The status of two projects was discussed: 166 Main Street (the time period on its permit was tolled until June 15 and is now running) and 33 Mt. Auburn Street (the permit lapsed, and it remains to be seen whether and when a new petition is filed). Michael noted that the WHA met with DCDP to discuss options for redeveloping the 103 Nichols site given the zoning constraints.

Meeting adjourned at 7:01 pm.