

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
January 27, 2016  
Brookline Town Hall – Room 111**

*(As approved at the HAB meeting of February 11, 2016)*

Members Present: Roger Blood, Rita McNally, Steve Heikin, Kathy Spiegelman

Staff Present: Virginia Bullock, Joe Viola

Members of the Public: Henry Winkelman, Regina Frawley, Robin Koocher, Judy Leitchner, Janice Kahn, Margaret Murphy

Minutes:

Roger Blood called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Members reviewed the minutes of the December 15th HAB meeting and made several corrections. Steve Heikin MOVED, Kathy Spiegelman seconded, and the Board then

**VOTED** to accept the minutes of the December 15, 2015 HAB meeting.

Roger noted that there would be no discussion on agenda item number 5 regarding the comprehensive permit at Hancock Village.

HOME Funding

Virginia presented information on how the changes in the HOME Program will impact how Program Income (the repayment of HOME funds to the Town) has to be spent. She noted that any Program Income received during a particular fiscal year has to be spent on the same timeline as the entitlement funding. The Town received \$237,214.99 in Program Income during FY16, which will need to be committed by July of 2016. Originally \$186,893.53 of the FY17 entitlement was to be used to pay Waltham back for the second half of a loan for the Dummer Street project.

She suggested that current FY16 Program Income be used for that purpose instead and that we continue to identify a project for FY17 funds, which will need to be committed by July of 2017. This will give us a longer timeline to figure out what to do with our HOME funds. Alternately Program Income could be used to revive the Homebuyer Assistance Program immediately.

Virginia noted that, at this time, no specific project has been identified to utilize FY17 HOME funds and that we expect to be level-funded in FY17. Overall, the WestMetro Consortium receives about \$1.125 million per year. New rules require HOME funds to be committed within 24 months. They also change the definition of commitment which can only happen when all other funding sources are in place. Given this, it is likely that the staff will need to work more closely with other Consortium communities to develop a pipeline of projects in the various communities, sharing the funds as projects arise.

In the past the Town has been able to save its entitlement over a number of years and spend it on one project. This was the case in St. Aidan's, Olmsted Hill, and Dummer Street. Going forward funds will need to be committed within the annual funding cycle, after all other project sources are committed. Other potential uses for HOME funds for the Town to investigate include supporting the preservation of state public housing, reviving the Homebuyer Assistance

Program, or starting a tenant-based rental assistance program (as has been done in other communities). Roger MOVED, Steve seconded and HAB members then unanimously:

**VOTED** to recommend that FY16 HOME Program Income be used to repay the City of Waltham \$186,893.53 still outstanding from a loan made in 2014 in connection with the Dummer Street Project and to continue to identify a project for FY17 HOME entitlement funds.

#### Housing Production Plan

Roger passed out the draft schedule for public meetings and deliverables for the Housing Production Plan, noting that there will be total of four larger community meetings as well as two presentations before the Board of Selectmen. The initial meeting will focus on housing needs and goals, then move on to site suitability criteria, site selection, and recommendations and strategy. In addition, the consulting team will conduct interviews and focus groups with various stakeholders in the community. The Housing Production Plan is scheduled to be completed, approved by the Selectmen, and submitted to DHCD by July 8<sup>th</sup>.

Kathy Spiegelman asked about ways to connect with the public beyond the large public meetings, including a website for the project with an email address for people to send comments to and possibly a blogsite. Staff agreed to follow-up on this.

#### Current Proposed 40B Projects:

Virginia noted that there were currently three 40B projects in various stages currently being proposed in the Town, including:

- 21 Crowninshield Road (8 rental units/2 affordable units);
- 1180 Boylston Street (45 age-restricted rental units with 9 affordable units); and
- Hancock Village Phase 2 /Puddingstone (226 rental units with 46 affordable units)

The Town also expects the owner/developer of 40 Centre Street to soon submit a 40B proposal for 45 rental units, including 9 affordable units.

Virginia noted that it would be appropriate for the HAB to discuss conditions related to affordability that could be imposed on all of these 40B projects, including such things as local preference, permanent affordability, and monitoring by the Town once the subsidizing agency completes its monitoring period.

HAB members asked what types of affordability conditions could be imposed beyond what is required under the law. Virginia noted that the two HAB members with the most experience in 40B – Mike Jacobs and Karen Kepler – were unable to attend the meeting. She suggested that the HAB meet again in early February in order to discuss this issue more thoroughly and send feedback to the Town’s Planning Director and the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Virginia then presented an overview of the Puddingstone project (Hancock Village Phase II). The project will include 226 new and substantially rehabilitated units located along Gerry Street on the Boston border. Steve Heikin noted that, during Phase I, this site was identified as a place where a larger building could be built.

Robin Koocher discussed shortcomings of public transportation serving Hancock Village.

Judy Leichtner noted that both phases combined would total about 380 new units and 900 units in total at Hancock Village. She also noted that the Fire Chief is adverse to so many total dwelling units so remote from the nearest Brookline fire station.

Regina Frawley asked that one of the Hancock Village meetings be held in South Brookline. She feels that the new 40B proposal for Hancock Village is very misleading regarding public benefits/amenities of the project.

Janice Kahn questioned how this 40B project could be characterized as “infill” and asked why there must there be so many 4-BR units.

Judith Leichtner stated that this Phase 2 application reinforces why Phase 1 needs to be litigated. She asked what happens if the Town reaches the 10% while other 40B applications are still in process.

Virginia noted that any applications in the process at that time would still need to go through the hearing process and could not be rejected as inconsistent with local needs until such time as the Town has 10% of its housing units on the SHI prior to a 40B application being submitted.

Judith asked if the Town could ask for an extension of the 30 day limit for replying. Staff noted that the question would need to be directed to the Director of Planning. The Board of Selectmen will hold a public meeting on this project on February 9<sup>th</sup> to receive comments on the project in response to a request for a project eligibility letter.

Roger asked if HAB members had any reasons to favor one or the other of 40B’s two basic options, i.e., 20% of the units affordable at 50% of AMI or 25% of the units affordable at 80% of AMI. Virginia noted that the rents were such that Section 8 certificates could be used in either case and that the latter would provide a higher number of affordable units. Unfortunately, most developers have already decided which they will pursue before approaching the Town.

The proposed 40B project at 1180 Beacon Street was summarized by Virginia and then discussed. The project will contain 45 units of age-restricted housing (55+) with 9 affordable units. It is located directly across the street from a supermarket and pharmacy and is within 2 blocks of an MBTA station.

Steve said the building seems decent looking but questioned the ‘stacker’ parking, especially in support of the ground floor proposed retail space. He’d never seen such a dense stacker parking configuration. HAB members view housing for 55+ at 1180 Beacon as a positive. The Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing on 1180 Boylston on February 2<sup>nd</sup> to receive comments on the project in response to a request for a project eligibility letter.

Virginia noted that another 40B proposal was about to submitted an application for a Project Eligibility Letter. The project is at 40 Center Street and will have 45 units with 9 affordable. It is anticipated that the developer will be using MassHousing as its subsidizing agency.

Virginia noted that marketing of the affordable units at the 45 Marion Street 40B will begin in February. There will be 13 affordable rental units there including two studios, ten one-bedroom and one two-bedroom units.

Virginia reported on The Village at Brookline: The owner is following the Town's suggestion to convert the property to two separate condos which will enable them to pursue maintaining permanent affordability at the 99 Kent Street property.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.