

## HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

March 26, 2019

Brookline Town Hall – Room 111

(As Approved at HAB meeting of May 28, 2019)

**Members:** Roger Blood, Steve Heikin, Michael Jacobs, Bill Madsen Hardy, Jonathan Klein

**Staff:** Virginia Bullock, Edward Bates

**Guests:** Patrick Dober, Maria Maffei, Brookline Housing Authority

**Members of the Public:** Susan Gittelman, Susan Donahoe, Henry Winkelman

Roger Blood called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

### 1. Approval of minutes from the February 26 , 2019 meeting

HAB members **VOTED** unanimously to approve the minutes from the February 26, 2019 meeting with changes. Jonathan Klein and Steve Heikin both abstained from the vote, as they had not been present at that meeting.

### 2. Update on Brookline Housing Authority Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) Project

Patrick Dober and Maria Maffei from the Brookline Housing Authority (BHA) provided an update to the HAB on the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) conversion of the BHA's federal properties. They first presented on O'Shea House, located at 61 Park Street, which they expect to close on the financing as early as June and begin construction on the project immediately after. Currently, the BHA has expended the pre-development loan fund which the HAB provided them and will replenish these funds when they close on O'Shea. The project is on budget and on time, although construction costs are not final as they have not gone out to bid, as of yet.

Maria stated that HUD has begun reviewing the BHA's financing plan for this project. MassHousing is also providing support for the project through their 2019 bond allocation. The BHA has continued to work with the Town's Planning Department and has also appointed a Construction Manager who is identifying cost savings for the project. A relocation firm is also on board and is currently working in the property with residents five days a week.

Maria and Patrick continued their presentation by showing the HAB boards which included architectural details, proposed plantings, and other elements of design for the project. Patrick stated that the project will include aging-in-place details and will be energy-efficient. Steve Heiken asked if the project will include a relocation plan for the residents. Maria responded that the plan is to have no residents leave the building and to divide it into three sections and move residents from one section to the other while renovation work is being done on the project. Patrick furthered that the BHA is providing one-on-one case work for residents who will need to move.

Maria stated that the BHA has also begun working on their second project, 90 Longwood Ave. They have submitted a preliminary application to HUD to perform the construction manager-at-risk process and they have preliminary support from MassHousing's 2020 bond allocation. The BHA hopes to close on this project in the first quarter of 2020.

### **3. Request for waiver of building permit for Phase 1 project at 61 Park Street**

Roger Blood stated that the BHA is requesting that the HAB recommend to the Select Board to waive the building permit fee for the 61 Park Street project. He furthered that the building permit fee was waived for the Dummer Street project in the past and that the Town does not have a current policy of when to waive building permit fees for affordable housing projects. He recommended that there be a policy to vote on at the next HAB meeting.

Patrick Dober provided a memo outlining the BHA's request to waive the building permit fee and stated that Massachusetts state law encourages municipalities to provide tools and waivers to support local housing authorities. He furthered that the building permit fee would be approximately \$270,000, but they currently have \$0 in the pro-forma, based on the Dummer Street project. He also stated that the BHA would be pleased if the HAB could approve the waiver at this meeting due to the plan to close on the project within the next 2 to 3 months.

Roger asked the BHA if it would be appropriate for the HAB to simply fund the building permit fee to the BHA instead of requesting a waiver. Maria Maffei stated that the process for this would not be simple as a new financing plan would need to be approved by HUD and may add months to the project.

Steve Heiken asked the BHA if they will be looking to waive the building permit fee for all RAD projects and what the total anticipated fees for all projects would be. Patrick stated that the total projected fees will be approximately \$1.5 to \$1.8 Million.

Jonathan Klein MOVED and Steve Heiken Seconded:

**VOTED: The HAB voted to recommend to the Select Board to approve waiving the building permit fee for the 61 Park Street Project for the Brookline Housing Authority**

ALL APPROVED (Michael Jacobs recused himself from voting)

Roger Blood continued the discussion concerning possibly creating a Town policy on providing building permit fee waivers for affordable housing projects. He asked the HAB if the Town should adopt such a policy specifically for the BHA's projects which are 100% affordable. Michael Jacobs stated that the BHA is a unique entity, but asked if the HAB should only recommend waivers for the BHA and not for other entities building affordable housing. Steve Heikin furthered that organizations such as 2Life Communities are also building and managing 100% affordable projects. Jonathan Klein asked the HAB if there has ever been a time that organizations, other than the BHA, have requested a building permit fee waiver in which Virginia stated she was not aware of another project on which that has occurred.

Jonathan Klein stated the BHA is a government-created entity, making it different from other non-profits which can engage in private fundraising. Roger furthered that a possible scenario could be to allow non-profits to only pay 50% of the building permit fee. Virginia added that she believes that the Town of Wayland has a policy outlining building fee waivers for non-profits building affordable housing. Bill Madsen Hardy stated that the HAB should research what other towns have done on this topic and that waiving the building permit fee could be a way to attract for more affordable housing development in the Town. Virginia stated she would research this topic and its legality.

Steve stated that a possible scenario could be to only offer a building permit fee waiver policy to the BHA and to non-profits which provide a compelling reason why their fee should be waived by the Town. Roger

furthered that there could also be a line item in the policy stating that only when a project meets a certain level of affordability, would the project be eligible for a building permit fee waiver.

Steve asked Patrick Dober if the BHA has ever formed a non-profit to develop their projects. Patrick stated that they have not done this as of now, but have thought about creating a non-profit to build mixed-income properties managed by the BHA. He recommends that a policy drafted by the HAB contain language which includes non-profits created or managed by the BHA. Roger added that a policy should also contain language stating that the project should be for 100% low-income residents.

#### **4. Update on Waldo Durgin Warrant Articles for Spring Town Meeting**

Roger stated that the Coolidge Corner Study Committee members voted (9 in favor, 1 opposed, and 1 abstention) to recommend that Town Meeting support a mixed-use development in place of a 300-unit Chapter 40B project. The zoning documents and architectural guidelines have all been approved at the committee level, although there are currently issues with the parking plan for the project.

#### **5. Newbury College – Special Town Meeting April 9<sup>th</sup> to consider acquisition of site**

Steve Heikin, also a member of the committee exploring the Town's acquisition of the site, stated that the committee is currently conducting executive sessions and that there is strong support for an acquisition. There is also some discussion among members of the committee that the Academic Building could potentially be utilized for the Brookline Early Education Program and that the rest of the property for other municipal purposes. He added that some former homes on the property could be returned to residential use, including senior and affordable housing. The Town is planning to make an offer on the property, dependent on Town Meeting approval. Newbury College is looking to sell the property soon. Roger furthered that a developer could still purchase and build a Chapter 40B development on the property as well.

#### **6. Kent-Station Street Senior Housing Study Committee – status of draft RFP**

Roger stated that the approval to issue the project's Draft RFP should be on the Select Board's agenda soon.

#### **7. Inclusionary Zoning By-law proposed changed for Fall Town Meeting**

Roger stated that the next step in the process will be to get a revised scope of services and contract from Pam McKinney and to also speak to Ken Lewis about the proposed changes to the zoning by-law.

#### **8. Current 40B and Inclusionary Zoning Projects**

Virginia Bullock discussed with the HAB a list of 40B projects in the Town. She furthered that the 2Life Communities project at 370 Harvard Street should close in April.

**The meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm**