

## **Meeting Minutes, October 16, 7:30-9:00 PM (via Zoom)**

**Committee members present:** Jonathan Klein (chair), Teronda Ellis, Marion Freedman-Gurspan, Alice MacGarvie Thompson, Rita McNally and Amy Schectman.

**Public attending:** Bob Van Meter, Bonnie Bastien and Karin Weaver.

Jonathan moves to accept the minutes from the July 17 meeting, Alice seconds and all approve. Jonathan asks everyone to introduce themselves since this is Rita's first meeting. Introductory highlights:

- Jonathan is a real estate attorney specializing in affordable housing development, a member of the Brookline Housing Advisory Board, and he helped draft the warrant article to create our committee.
- Rita moved to Brookline in 1958, was the tenant representative on the Rent Control Board until it was dissolved, lives in Brookline Housing Authority apartment and has been working diligently her whole life to actualize a vision where everyone can find housing they can afford in Brookline and to combat the sense of shame some feel when living in subsidized housing.
- Alice is one of the students who wrote the AHOD warrant, is a freshman at Smith College, and is committed to more affordable housing in Brookline.
- Teronda grew up in the South End and has worked in the affordable housing field for ~30 years with a focus on fair housing. She is currently the CEO of the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation.
- Marian is a social worker who worked to site group homes for developmentally disabled folks and those suffering from mental illness. She's resided in Brookline 36 years, represents the Council on Aging in this forum, and is especially worried about services for people with mobility limitations.
- Amy has lived in Brookline since 1985 and been involved in Town government or politics since 1987. Her career has been in the affordable housing field and she is currently CEO of 2Life Communities.

**Public Comment:** Bob Van Meter pointed out that the front page of the Globe had a story about the AHOD in Cambridge. Jonathan will send a link to all members.

**Vote:** unanimous vote (moved by Amy, seconded by Miriam and Teronda) to change these sessions from "zoom webinars" to "zoom meetings" which simply means non-committee members can "be in the room" during meetings.

**Jonathan provided an update on the progress on the MBTA communities act** implementation. At the November Town Meeting, members will consider several proposals to comply with the law including:

- Rezoning M districts to allow more density
- Rezoning the land near the BHA housing near High Street to allow adding ~100 units
- Rezoning the Harvard Street corridor to allow up to 4 stories of housing over commercial.

Select Board member Paul Warren is attempting to bring all the parties advocating one or more of these propositions together to develop a consensus proposal. Since our job as the AHOD committee is not to influence that vote but rather to consider an overlay upon it, we do not debate the merits of the approaches here. However, the League of Women Voters, Town Meeting Members Association, and the Brookline Neighborhood Association are co-sponsoring a forum on October 25 at 7 p.m. on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of Town Hall—it will also be streamed on Brookline Interactive Television. They are accepting written questions in advance.

**Consultant to help AHOD:** Jonathan succeeded in having the HAB allocate \$50K (subject to final approval by Select Board) for a consultant to guide our work. Given the size, we can do an informal procurement.

Jonathan had drafted a document that would seek proposals from consultants. The committee generally thought it was an excellent RFP, and made the following suggestions:

- Be explicit in asking the consultant to evaluate whether an AHOD is good or bad.
- Add an equity and inclusion lens.
- Someone with experience in Brookline or similar towns.
- Be informed by data on Brookline—such as that 50% are renters and that there are dramatic needs for seniors.
- Clarify (maybe during the work, not this document) that we can recommend an overlay on part of a zoning district, not necessarily the entire district.
- Include in background materials what other communities have done, including Cambridge.
- Clarify that our committee's goal is to develop a recommendation for Town Meeting on an AHOD.
- Ask for their budget and explanation of how they will use the funds.
- Make clear that the consultant can use committee members to help with the work—there is considerable expertise here.

**Next steps:** Jonathan will revise the document to reflect comments and submit it to the Planning Department (and procurement staff) for their review. He will bring a revised, hopefully final, version for our final review and sign off at our November meeting. If because of staffing pressures of managing Town Meeting the team cannot review the RFP by then, we'll cancel the meeting and reschedule when a final RFP is ready.

**Committee adjourned.**