

Westport Affordable Housing Trust Virtual Meeting of May 27, 2020

Participants: Chair Liz Collins (LC), Henry Lanier (HL), David West (DW), James Sabra (JS), Ann Boxler (AB), BettyAnn Mullins (BM). Also participating by teleconference were Housing Specialist Leonardi Aray (LA), recording clerk Robert Barboza. The meeting was called to order at 4 p.m. by the Chair.

1. Meeting Schedule: The upcoming meetings are scheduled for 4 p.m. on June 24, July 22, Aug. 26, and Sept. 23, 2020. HL made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 1, 2020 meeting as presented; seconded by DW and approved on a 6-0 roll call vote. AB made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 22, 2020 meeting as presented; seconded by HL and approved on a 6-0 roll call vote.

2. Invoices: AB made a motion to approve a voucher for staff invoices from Leonardi Aray Architects for \$2,887.00 and Robert Barboza for \$187.00, for a total of \$3,074.00; and a voucher for \$3,000.00 from Roselli, Clark Associates for auditing services; seconded by DW, the motion passed on a 6-0 roll call vote. LA provided a financial report dated 5/25/20, indicating recent expenditures; a motion to accept the report as presented came from BM, was seconded by DW, and the motion passed on a 6-0 roll call vote.

3. Rental Assistance Opportunities: LA presented the Trust with updated information on a possible Rental Assistance Program (RAW – Rental Assistance Westport) for further discussion. The report detailed available affordable housing sites; earnings limits at 80 to 100 percent of AMI (Average Median Income); fair market value rents; and demographic data for Westport renters. LA noted that Noquochoke Village management reports two tenants unable to make their rent payments; no contact has been made with Village Way, Edgewater Apartments, Briggs Landing (private ownership homes) about residents with financial difficulties.

LA also offered some financial scenarios for providing two renters with \$700 TO \$1,200 in rental assistance per month for three months – from \$2,100 to \$3,600 per tenant, plus up to \$7,500 in administrative costs, screening, etc. LC asked for more details on the potential Noquochoke Village applicants and the amounts owed, and whether or not The Community Builders (TCB) might be considering their own rental assistance or “forgiveness” efforts. DW supported further communication with TCB to see if they are planning some assistance for struggling tenants, saying that seemed a likely option for corporations of their size.

LA was directed to continue his investigation of questions asked by Trust members, and it was agreed that discussions would continue at the next meeting.

4. Sodom Road Property Update: LA reported draft P & S agreement seems generally acceptable to the Buzzards Bay Area Habitat for Humanity, but they indicated a desire to extend the 180-day timeline for submitting plans and securing permits because of concerns about the COVID-19 epidemic. There were no objections to being more flexible with the timeline, or signing an extension if needed; LA noted that there is a July 1 deadline for committing Trust funds to the project. DW was concerned there were no design review conditions in the P & S, noting members had expressed their unhappiness with the preliminary design sketches submitted with the RFP response; he wanted a design approval condition attached to the agreement with BBAHH, but LA noted there were no design guidelines or review process mentioned in the RFP. LA was directed to verbally communicate the desire for Trust design review to BBAHH.

5. HAO/Housing Specialist Report: LA reported on his site visit with JS to the home of a potential CRE-HAB applicant, seeking funding to correct health code violations and needed repairs including new roof and attic insulation, kitchen floor, doors and windows, plumbing, and well service. He indicated a house-wide clean-up will be needed before the scope of work can be determined, and estimates sought. The housing specialist made a rough guess that at least \$30,000 would be needed to make the house habitable again; JS suggested the costs would likely be \$40,000. LA said he would ensure all eligibility requirements were met, and the homeowners would agree to clean-up requirements and affordable housing restriction terms before the application process was completed. BM felt that the clean-up work should be a condition of a grant award; JS said both water and septic systems should be tested and assessed, and mold remediation would be needed in the attic; DW suggested a referral to a social service agency might be in order, and said the BOH should be asked to help supervise the clean-up efforts. JS made a motion to move forward with the application process once eligibility is confirmed and there is acceptance of the affordable housing restriction and clean-up conditions to be drafted; BM seconded the motion, approved on a 6-0 roll call vote.

6. Chapter 61A Parcels: There were no requests, so this agenda item was passed over.

With no other business on the agenda, JS made a motion to adjourn at 5:25 p.m., seconded by AB. The roll call vote was 6-0 in favor.

Approved 6/24/2020