

Westport Affordable Housing Trust Virtual Meeting of Aug. 23, 2023

Participants: Chair James Sabra (JS), Craig Dutra (CD), Ann Boxler (AB), Henry Lanier (HL), David West (DW), Teri Bernert (TB); Interim Housing Specialist Robert Barboza, and Housing Consultant Leonardi Aray of LAA.

1. Call to Order

The virtual meeting was called to order by the Chair at 4:30 p.m. with JS, HL, DW, CD, AB, and TB participating via computer link. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Vice Chair HL as the Chair was having difficulty maintaining his internet connection.

JS introduced new member Teri Bernert, recently appointed by the Select Board to fill a vacancy on the Trust. A Drift Road resident, she is currently the Real Estate Director for the Island Housing Trust. The Chair indicated she had not been sworn in yet, so she would participate as a non-voting member.

2. Minutes: June 28, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes.

The minutes were reviewed by members, with no questions or comments.

MOTION by AB to approve the minutes of the June 28, 2023 meeting as presented. Second by CD. The motion passed on a 4-0-2 roll call vote: AB aye; HL aye; BM aye; JS aye; CD aye; TB and DW abstained. The Chair was not available for this vote.

3. Meeting Schedule

Future meeting dates were discussed, and it was agreed that the next virtual meeting would be scheduled for 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 27 and Wednesday, Oct. 25, 2023.

4. Proposals for Legal Services

During discussion of quotes for legal services received by the Trust, AB was asked to get information on the rates KP Law was charging for town counsel services. TB provided a reference to a New Bedford firm she has used for housing matters. As the Chair was unavailable at this time, members decided to continue discussions until the next meeting.

MOTION by DW to table the matter until the next meeting. Second by CD. The motion passed on a 5-0 roll call vote: HL aye; CD aye; DW aye; TB aye; AB aye.

5. Financial Report/Invoices/Office Matters

Mr. Barboza reviewed the financial report dated 8/23/23, showing current expenses of \$1,725.00 and a balance of \$617,640 in Trust accounts. Mr. Barboza asked for ratification of vouchers approved by the Chair after the July meeting was canceled.

MOTION by CD to ratify approval of the 7/21/23 voucher from Robert Barboza for \$780.00 for professional service; the 7/21/23 voucher from Leonardi Aray Architects for \$1,260 for consulting services; and the 8/09/23 voucher for \$115.00 from CRE-HAB applicant #2202 for inspection expense reimbursement. Second by AB. The motion passed on a 5-0 roll call vote: HL aye; AB aye; CD aye; DW aye; TB aye.

Mr. Barboza asked for approval of current vouchers: the 8/16/23 voucher for invoice from Robert Barboza for professional services, \$960.00; and the 8/18/23 voucher from CRE-HAB #2203 applicant seeking \$650.00 reimbursement for a Title 5 inspection.

MOTION by HL to approve payment of the two vouchers. Second by CD. The motion passed on a 5-0 roll call vote: HL aye; AB aye; CD aye; DW aye; TB aye.

HAO Report: Mr. Barboza presented updates on various ongoing matters: the Sodom Road duplex, the last Long Term Building Committee meeting, the Housing Production Plan, zoning matters, and the Community Preservation Committee annual report on uses of CPA funds. AB indicated that she is the Select Board delegate to the reorganized Long Term Building Committee, and provided more details on the committee's next steps. It is believed that the town might be able to avoid expensive "change of use" building code updates by proving the school has never been abandoned and remains in municipal use. DW maintained that the Trust should actively advocate for an affordable housing component for any municipal re-use plan.

MOTION by DW to send a letter to the Community Preservation Committee expressing Trust interest in a proposal for affordable housing at the school site, including LAA's presentation on housing options for the site, and stressing the importance of developing new affordable housing in Westport. Copies of the letter and presentation to be sent to the Select Board and the Long Term Building Committee. Second by HL. The motion passed on a 6-0 roll call vote: HL aye; CD aye; AB aye; DW aye; TB aye; JS aye.

6. BBAHFH Request

LAA provided a history of Trust funding for the BBAHFH duplex on Sodom Road, and a construction timeline. He also provided an opinion on the Passive House standards required by the project proposals, and the request for additional financing for solar panels. He did not support consideration of additional funding without BBAHFH being asked for more information on construction cost overruns. JS noted BBAHFH's fundraising efforts to help cover overrun costs; he and TB asked for an updated project budget report from BBAHFH. Mr. Barboza was asked to draft a letter to BBAHFH indicating no decision on additional funding, and asking for a project budget report.

Housing Consultant – LAA on CRE-HAB Program

Consultant Leonardi Array of LAA updated the Trust on proposed revisions to the Deferred Payment Loans (DPL) used to guarantee the recapture of CRE-HAB grant funds. He detailed the proposed eligibility requirements, designed to help preserve existing housing stocks, and the 10-year Affordable Housing Restriction to be used for the program. Members wanting more time to review the document, the Chair asked that this item be included on the agenda for the September meeting.

7. New Business

None. DW left the meeting.

MOTION by CD to adjourn the meeting at 5:32 p.m. Seconded by HL. The motion passed on a 5-0 roll call vote: JS aye; AB aye; CD aye; TB aye; HL aye.

Approved Date: 9/27/23