

Westport Affordable Housing Trust Meeting of Sept. 25, 2019

Present: Liz Collins (LC), Henry Lanier (HL), James Sabra (JS), BettyAnn Mullins (BM), David West (DW), Ann Boxler (arrived 4:07 p.m.); former member Warren Messier; Housing Specialist Leonardi Aray (LA) and recording clerk Robert Barboza.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Liz Collins at 4 p.m. and commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Reorganization: LA was designated as the nominations coordinator for the reorganization of the Trust. DW made a motion to have LC continue as chair, seconded by HL; the vote was unanimous, 5-0. BM made a motion to elect James Sabra as vice chair, seconded by LC; the vote was unanimous, 5-0.
2. Minutes: After a review of the Aug. 21, 2019 meeting minutes, LA suggested that paragraph two of Item 7 be amended to read: ... “the HOPP applicant is currently looking for a home in Westport.” BM made a motion to approve the minutes with that amendment, seconded by HL. The vote was unanimous, 6-0.
3. Meeting Schedule: Future meeting dates were confirmed for Oct. 23, Nov. 20, and Jan. 8, with no meeting in December scheduled.
4. Financial Report/Invoices: LA presented a financial report dated 9/20/2019 indicating a balance of 1,030,544.85 after land purchase is completed and current invoices paid. BM made a motion to accept the financial report as presented, seconded by JS; the vote was 6-0 in favor. HL made a motion to approve a voucher totaling \$3,466.00 for 9/18 invoices from Robert Barboza (\$561.00) and Leonardi Aray Architects (\$2,905.00); seconded by BM, the motion passed 6-0.
5. CPC Meeting Report: LA reported on his presentation of potential Trust funding requests for Community Preservation Act housing reserves, totaling \$972,300, explaining that it was basically a two-year funding plan. LA indicated that there was good support from CPC members for another large scale development like Noquochoke Village, and less enthusiasm about funding requests for small scale home ownership programs. It was highly unlikely that the full list of potential funding requests could be honored, he was told. While the CPC was uncertain what the CPA revenues would be for FY2020, LA indicated about \$120,000 is currently in the community housing reserve account, and suggested a revised CPC request for \$147,000 to fund Housing Office operations (\$47,000) and the SEED program (\$100,000), to be available to the Trust in July 2020.

HL suggested the funding request should include money for a feasibility study of housing options for the high school or other large parcel considered as a site for large scale community housing. LC noted that the Montessori School property on American Legion Highway is vacant, and was just put on the market by the Diocese of Fall River; she indicated that Rep. Schmid is making inquiries about the property with diocesan officials. AB thought LA made a good presentation on Trust programs, but felt the Trust should revise its funding request to an amount the CPC would favor, not seeking monies for projects without definite plans for action. DW suggested that the Trust needs more “purchase money” in the budget to act on future plans, and wondered if alternate funding sources could be found.

LA indicated that the high school site would have to be transferred to Trust custody before feasibility funds could be expended; his revised recommendation for the CPC funding request was for \$347,000,

including \$47,000 for office operations and \$300,000 for SEED programs. JS made a motion to file a \$447,000 CPC request, consisting of \$47,000 for office operations and \$400,000 for large scale development programs; seconded by AB, the motion passed on a 6-0 vote. AB departed after this vote, at 5:12 p.m.

LC noted that group residences also count on the town's Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) and there is such a new facility on Main Road, with a second reportedly coming to a State Road location soon.

6. HAO Report: LA reported that there is one qualified applicant for the CRE-HAB rehabilitation grant fund, and outreach continues to get more applicants in the pipeline. There is also a qualified applicant for a HOPP (Home Ownership Purchase Program) buydown grant, currently searching for a home in Westport. LA also reported the signing of the Quinn parcel deed transfer from the Trust to the Westport Land Conservation Trust. He proposed re-opening the application period for the SEED program, hoping to keep \$300,000 in that budget line for future applications. He indicated that the Sodoam Road purchase will close soon, and recommended that the Trust issue a press release, advising the public that the Trust is seeking large parcels of land for future affordable residential development.

With no further business on the agenda, JS made a motion at 5:30 p.m. to adjourn the meeting; seconded by BM, the motion passed on a 5-0 vote.

Approved: 10/23/19