



Town of Danvers

Danvers Affordable Housing Trust

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Gardner S. Trask III, Chair
Carla King, Vice Chair
Christen Tipert, Clerk
John W. Alden
Maureen Bernard
Stacey Bernson
Anne Casale-Skinner

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 18, 2023

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:00 PM with Trask, Tipert, Alden, Bernsen present. Members King, Casale-Skinner and Bernard were absent. Land Use and Community Services Director Aaron Henry provided staff support.

1. Approval of Past Minutes

Tipert motioned to accept the minutes of October 19, 2022, which Alden seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

2. Finance Report

- Review & Acceptance of Financial Report

Henry provided the Trust a summary sheet report containing the current year and the last couple of years balances along with the monthly bank statements. The interest rate in the MMDT account has decreased since the decision was made to transfer money from the North Shore Bank to MMDT. But there is the ability to move this money as the rates shift. At the last meeting, the Trust motioned to keep the minimum amount of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) in the North Shore Bank account but may want to consider moving this into the MMDT account.

Alden makes a motion to accept the financial report based on December 31, 2022, which Tipert seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

3. New Business

- Trust Member Comments

Alden mentioned the increase in media coverage of communities statewide finding creative ways to get volumes of affordable housing built. A large community in California and New Jersey have been successful, voting unanimously to abandon all zoning regulations, no square footage requirements for residential single families, allowing for more affordable housing. Alden will forward the link of the article to Henry to share with the Trust.

Henry believes that the city of Cambridge is abolishing single family zoning. Alden stated that due to the legalities, they can't point directly at single families. Instead, they had to modify, eliminate, and rebuild the zoning.

Alden shared with the Trust that the son of former Mayor Kevin White, Mark White who is a Boston Developer, has a large project with almost forty percent (40%) of affordable housing in Cambridge. He

made a deal with the City on how the land would be used, and how the building is built. This development is expected to receive a lot of federal funding.

Alden also shared the announcement that the owners of the old Edaville Railroad in Carver, MA want to operate year round, so they have agreed to give enough land to open space to the town as long as they build sixty percent (60%) of the units as affordable housing and half of them have to be at fifty percent (50%) or below. The land was given to the town in exchange for a permit to make Edaville Railroad a year-round theme park.

Danvers has plenty of open space, but it is advocated for this use. However as more and more communities become creative, one of these options might be suitable for the Town. The Town could probably find the land to donate, but then would need to find a developer who is willing to put in the work for affordable housing. Henry responded that there are developers out there who specialize in affordable housing, one of them is Winn Development.

Tipert shared that there is a big push in Lake Placid for affordable housing because the businesses need staff due to the affordability to live there. Clusters of cottages type affordable homes are being built on a single-family lot. Henry stated that there are cottage type homes, or small homes, that the downtown zoning allows as a residential development in the downtown quarter on streets such as Essex Street, Putman Street. These homes are capped at 1,200 square feet. The Town contemplates with allowing small cottage type homes on a green, such as those in Edmund's Cove.

Henry told the Trust that Dan Bennett, Select Board Member, continually reminds the Town that accessory dwelling units are often allowed that could be an option for Danvers.

Another suggestion was to allow "granny pods", housing that wouldn't require a developer because these types of homes are already prebuilt.

These discussions led into the next agenda item, the Housing Production Plan. Henry asked the Trust what their goals and objectives were for this document. This would allow for Safe Harbor, but should there be discussion of broader strategies for the community such as suggesting different housing types? How do we encourage different housing types? How do we attack this problem say there we are ninety five percent (95%) built out.

There will be another conventional subdivision, but likely not to happen again in the near term. Downtown is in good shape, now up to the private sector. The inclusionary bylaw is strong and in place. Any development going forward must do at least twelve and a half percent (12.5%), maybe fifteen percent (15%), if it is over that threshold side. If in the Spring, 40B is under, it wouldn't be by much and it would be short term. Is focusing exclusively on production is that beneficial currently?

Alden raised the key point, that it helps to complete the look to the community and is not just about the numbers. These developments would create a more rounded community.

Bernsen suggested that the Trust needs to look at production, not necessarily large-scale production, maybe just doing the accessory dwelling units ,with certain parameters. It is small scale but does add units. Maybe being creative and looking at things moving forward so that we are not so far behind. Up to the 90's it was single family homes, multi-family units and then some larger scale. And then zoning

changed to single-family acre lots, and that is where it diminished. We cannot not consider housing production.

Henry clarified that he is not considering housing production but thinks the housing production plan will come back around to how do we support the small-scale development. Maybe this touch on some of the themes being discussed by the Trust.

Alden stated that the inclusionary will keep the Town at or above what is needed. The big thing now is to stop hovering and once one or two of a big development comes through during next year there will be a vulnerability period, may get closer to eleven percent (11%). But any production plan needs to look at a bigger picture than just the 10.3 - 10.9%. And create the tools in the toolbox to work with when the time comes.

Alternative housing should also be considered. For those who own larger homes, where they raised their families but are now wanting to downsize, are not able to remain within the community because the inventory is not available.

The dates will need to be adjusted at least four (4) weeks out.

Alden asked what pool is out there and how busy are they. Henry stated that MAPC will no doubt offer a timely and thorough submission to the RFP. And their product is very good. There are consultants out there who would be competitive with MAPC.

Bernson suggested that this should be a housing strategy rather than a housing production plan. Henry explained to the group that DHCD will only sign off on housing strategy that contains very particular requirements.

Henry stated that another area to review is the cost and a decision as to whether the budget amount of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) should be shared. Suggestion is to maybe change the wording, not to exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) or list a budget range such as between thirty-five thousand dollars (\$35,000) to fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000). With a Request for Proposal the price proposal is separated, it comes in a separate envelope and all respondents will be evaluated, and then the procurement staff is notified of the rankings, and then the price proposals are opened, and this could affect the rankings.

The plan may require acceptance, not approval, by the Select Board, but Henry will confirm.

Henry will get the date straightened out. This will assist with the town managers office with the bids coming in because a two-week notice must be given.

Bernson motioned to approve the Request for Proposal Housing Production Plan as discussed which Alden seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

- [Open Projects](#)

Those projects listed on the distribute project sheet are not official at this time, and only rumors.

Henry shared with the Trust that the Maple Square developer has asked to reduce the number of units from 147 to 145. This change will require another hearing before the Planning Board. The problem is with this permit, there is a specific plan with 147 units with 30 affordable units. If they drop to 145 units, twenty percent (20%) of 145 is 29 affordable units. There is a potential that they will be applying for a special permit to drop to 145 with the loss of one affordable unit. There are making other changes, lose two (2) units that were probably unmarketable and convert them into storage. If they apply, the Trust will be notified. They Trust would like to weight in, and the developer promised thirty (30) so the expectation is thirty (30).

The Chair would prefer not to show that Danvers is currently over the 10 percent affordable units because they would not want to the fight and may choose to develop in another city or town.

48 Crane Brook, the Trust did offer their support to this project. They have continued a few times in front of the Zoning Board of Appeals. There was a concern of lack of parking on the lot. There was mention of demoing one of the units the lot and turning it into a surface parking lot to not only alleviate the number of units but also to increase parking. ZBA wanted the developer to think strategically about the parking because Costco will not allow for overflow parking. This project is beneficial even if it were downsized because even if ten (10) units are eliminated, it only affects the SHA by one (1).

Nothing has been filed from the New England Homes for the Deaf. It did go before the Conservation Commission for a Resource Delineation which is simply identifying the resources on this lot. We know the size of the proposed development is in the triple digits, over 50 percent inclusionary requirement. They are partnering with Winn Development. And at this number the Town would get 100% of the units. They are hitting a lot of levels, 30% AMI, 60% AMI, 80% AMI, would have preference for the blind and deaf. It is a boom to the Town on the SHI because the Town will pick up all the units.

The Chair asked if the Trust should go into Executive Session, if speaking about rumored projects. Henry will check with Town Counsel on this request.

20 Locust Street -is very close to getting this through DHCD.

44 Maple Street was recorded this week, so DHCD should be giving the Town credit for this one.

64 Holten Street has had progress on their Local Action Units (LAUs).

114 Sylvan Street, DHCD will approve.

5 Laurine Road, DHCD will approve but Henry is a little skeptical on this one.

6 Cherry Street is still at zero. Henry will follow up with the developer. This was a conversation of three (3) units to four (4) units, which would give the Town the affordable unit, rather than cash. The project has been sold and this buyer has not decided. There is no deed restriction, but it appears the developer would prefer to pay cash, but the Town is trying to encourage him to proceed with the unit.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.