

# Minutes of Manchester Affordable Housing Trust Joint Meeting with Manchester Housing Authority

**APPROVED**

Date: March 23, 2021  
Time: 5:30 PM  
Location: Virtual Meeting through Zoom as posted  
Present: Muffin Driscoll, John Feuerbach, Nancy Hammond, Sarah Mellish, Chris Olney, Joan McDonald, Peggy Hegarty-Steck Technical Support Staff: Sue Brown  
Absent: None  
Also Present: Manchester Housing Authority Board Members: Gretchen Wood, Elaine Persons, Nancy Hammond and MHA Director: Irene Frontiero

## **I. Call to Order**

John called the MAHT Meeting to order at 5:35

Gretchen called the MHA Meeting to order.

## **II. Discussion of MHA/MAHT Study Outreach and Next Steps**

John provided an abbreviated overview of the MHA and DPW Site Study noting that the preliminary study results were presented at the Feb 24 Meeting. Since that meeting members of the Trust produced, circulated and posted a Housing Vision and Study Summary. The Cricket also ran a story using the information.

The Trust discussed next steps for engaging with the community on this project noting they wanted to target residents, abutters as well as the general community. It is important to let everyone know that future steps will include issuing a Request for Proposals to find a Development Partner. It will be important for the Partner to understand that the concepts in the Study are feasible and have been vetted with the community.

Engagement opportunities include:

- noticing residents of the Housing Vision and Summary and the Report Summary
- presenting to the Select Board
  - The DPW site is an important element of the redevelopment plan so it's important to know the Select Board and Finance Committees preference on this.
  - There may still be a path forward without the DPW site, but it would require considerable more units on the MHA sites
  - Sarah had a preliminary discussion with the FinCom.
- Small groups discussions for residents with social distancing and masking
- Public workshop for wider engagement
- Mail notices sent to abutters

Sarah noted that she will discuss the idea of four story buildings on the MHA sites with members of the ZBA.

In response to a question about the process, John noted that the Study is the beginning of a long public process and redevelopment would take years.

**The MHA adjourned the MHA meeting at 6:00.**

**I. Citizen's Group Presentation (Bill Cross and Leslie Hammond)**

Before beginning the Presentation, John addressed the misinformation in the Gloucester Times report on the Citizens Initiative to create affordable housing. He noted that the Citizens Initiative was not working with the MAHT to produce an RFP for the MHA sites, rather the MAHT was working with the MHA.

John also noted that the Trust's evaluation of the request from the Citizen's Group would be disconnected from the Shingle Hill Development Project.

Leslie Hammond outlined the Citizen Group's initiative to work with the North Shore Community Development Coalition (NSCDC) to purchase existing apartments on Powder House Lane and convert them to subsidized units serving households at 50% AMI. She noted that the Capital Campaign Subcommittee was nearing their campaign goal to support the purchase and requested that the MAHT accept pledges earmarked for the project to show municipal support for the project.

The Trust discussed the request and whether and when the units would be able to be counted on the Subsidized Housing Inventory. Trustees also agreed that preserving affordability of existing units was part of their mission.

Trustees want to confirm that it is legal for the Trust to accept earmarked funds, and the process for returning funds if needed.

Trustees also noted that it is important for the Trust to consider the potential for disappointed residents if the project did not meet the Citizen Group's goal to get the Town to Safe Harbor.

The Trustees agreed that they wanted to meet with Mickey of the NSCDC before taking a vote on the request. Sue will try to schedule meeting within the next week.

**II. Administrative**

**a. Approval of Minutes (February 24, 2021)**

Approved with identified changes in opening and adjourning times.

**b. Technical Assistance Hours and Tasks**

Sue noted she averaged 2.5 hours a week, focus on Housing Vision and Report Summary review and distribution, meeting preparation, minutes and correspondence.

**c. Treasurers Report**

Joan reported an account balance of \$653,631.93 and no activity since last month. She has not yet released the additional \$50,000 to ACTION, INC for the Emergency Assistance Program.

**d. Update on Emergency Rental and Mortgage Assistance Program**

Peggy noted that residents are still accessing the fund. Peggy and Sue will coordinate to finalize the contract amendment so Joan can release the funds. Trustees voted unanimously (with Peggy abstaining) to allow John to sign the contract amendment as voted on at the Feb 24 meeting on behalf of the Trust.

**III. Discussion of Planning Efforts as may be relevant including 40B LIP Application, 40R LCD Study and Zoning Recodification and Update**

Sue reported:

- The Select Board is still negotiating with SLV on the LIP Application and a decision is expected by early April.
- It is likely that the Town's comfort level with a 40R Overlay District that allows housing by-right is very low given the possibility of around 150 units in the 40B Project. The PB is considering other options including an overlay district that doesn't require by-right housing and changing the zoning throughout the Limited Commercial District.
- Zoning Recodification and Update is still proceeding with the next public workshop on April 14<sup>th</sup>. Proposed Zoning changes will be presented to Town Meeting in the Fall.

**IV. Other matters, as may not have been reasonably anticipated by the Chair (Discussion only) N/A**

**V. Next Meeting Date**

Sue will coordinate with NSCDC to meet next week (Monday or Tuesday) and will confirm via email.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 PM.

Meeting notes recorded and submitted by Sue Brown  
Meeting notes approved at MAHT meeting on April 21, 2021