

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SOMERVILLE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

Mary Cassesso, Managing Trustee

Trustees

Ben Ewen-Campen
Michael Feloney
Kathryn Gallant
Donna Haynes
Daniel LeBlanc
Andrea Shapiro
Brielle Short
Jessica Turner

Minutes

July 11, 2019 Meeting – 6:15pm

Somerville City Hall 3rd Floor Conference Room
93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143

Trustees present: Ben Ewen-Campen, Kathryn Gallant, Donna Haynes, Danny LeBlanc, Andrea Shapiro, Brielle Short, Jessica Turner

Trustees not present: Mary Cassesso, Mike Feloney

Staff attending: Heidi Burbidge, OSPCD Housing Division

Others attending: Amber Nicholas, OSPCD Housing Division

Meeting started at 6:15pm with Andrea Shapiro serving as chair.

1. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Trustees reviewed draft minutes of the June 13, 2019 Trust meeting that Heidi Burbidge had drafted. A **motion** was introduced to approve the June 13, 2019 meeting minutes which was seconded and PASSED, 7-0.

2. Communications

- Trustee reappointments and vacancy status
Ben Ewen-Campen noted that the City Council would recognize Danny LeBlanc’s service on the Trust at the Council meeting that night and encouraged Trustees to attend.
Heidi shared information on the posting for the position that Danny was vacating. The ordinance specifies that the position must be filled by a representative of a Somerville non-profit organization. Andrea Shapiro noted that the Trust needs someone with real estate and development experience.
- Clarendon Hill – update on project status
Danny reported that the project team held a community meeting on July 10th that was attended by 30-40 people. He expected that there would be one or two more meetings this summer and that a plan for zoning would be established by the end of September. This would require some approvals by the City Council. The overall number of units in the project will increase and there will be a corresponding increase in affordable units. There would be additional open space, and some parking would be moved from the site to the adjacent public street. Questions were raised about how this might encroach on a bike lane. Ben suggested that the project team work to address the concerns of bike lane advocates and others who are

concerned about parking. He reported that there is strong support from the City Council for the project. Danny noted that the project would also involve a signaled intersection at the traffic circle.

Danny reported that the development team hopes that construction will start during the summer of 2020.

- Transfer fee legislation update

Heidi reported that a hearing before the Legislature's Revenue committee on Somerville's Home Rule Petition and on other Real Estate Transfer fee legislation was held on June 18th. Two pieces of enabling legislation were also heard—one sponsored by Rep. Malia and Sen. Comerford and one sponsored by Rep. Fernandes. A report out of committee has not yet been issued. A hearing for Rep. Connolly's bill is scheduled for July 30th.

Danny noted that the Baker administration wants to raise deed excise fee to generate funds to address climate change (50% of funds raised) and housing (50% of funds raised).

3. Ongoing/Unfinished Business

- 24-28 Mt. Pleasant Street

Heidi reported that Somerville Community Corporation (SCC) had informed Housing staff that they had not been asked by DHCD to move on through the RFP process for Community Scale funding for the project. Absent those funds the project was not feasible. SCC therefore relinquished site control and no longer has the property under agreement. This frees up \$1,820,000 of CPA funds that the Trust committed to the project in April and May.

- Trust ordinance revisions Home Rule Petition (HRP) status

Heidi noted that Housing staff had supplied the requisite information to the Mayor's office. Given the support of the City Council that had already been expressed, she expected that there would be more to report at upcoming meetings.

- Trust contracts status

Heidi noted the status of Trust contracts. One contract was routing through the City's process for signature. The week of the meeting, another agency had submitted the remaining contract documents required for three contracts and Heidi would route those contracts soon.

Ben Ewen-Campen left the meeting at roughly 6:50pm.

4. New Business

- Revised monthly CPA financial report for April 2019

Heidi distributed monthly financial reports included on the agenda. She noted that when she presented the draft CPA financial report for April at the June meeting, she had left off the Everett Avenue commitment. She also noted that she had included the additional \$200,000 for Mt. Pleasant one month earlier than that additional amount was approved. The report for April that was distributed had been corrected.

- Monthly non-CPA financial report for May 2019

Heidi noted that she expected this report to be available at the next Trust meeting.

- Monthly CPA financial report for May 2019

Heidi reviewed the financial report for May 2019. There was no activity except for interest earned. She noted where the \$1,820,000 for the Mt. Pleasant Street project was still showing as a commitment and would be removed following a vote to rescind those funds.

- Announcements

Danny was asked by Katie Gallant whether SCC was still accepting applications for 100 Homes units. He reported that they were still renting up units and will continue to do so. They bought two properties in the past two months. Some of the units were already occupied. He noted that they had held a sizable lottery in December 2018 and that they would most like have others this year, and open up the application process as they “let go” of applicants who are no longer interested.

Katie noted that SHA had just received new housing vouchers from HUD so they called in 200 people for interviews for the vouchers. Only 40 people responded. SHA does not know if they are in a position to apply for new vouchers. All of their staff were very busy trying to screen people.

Trustees noted great appreciation for Danny and his service on the SAHTF.

A **motion** was made to adjourn which was seconded and PASSED, 6-0.

Next meeting date – The next meeting date was subsequently postponed to be Thursday, September 12, 2019 at 6:15pm in the Somerville City Hall 3rd floor conference room.

Documents distributed:

- Draft June Trust meeting minutes
- Revised monthly CPA financial report for April
- Monthly CPA Trust financial report for May