

**TOWN OF STOW  
STOW MUNICIPAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST (SMAHT)**

Minutes of the September 11, 2019 SMAHT meeting

SMAHT members: Mike Kopczynski, Quince Papanastassiou, Cynthia Perkins, Laura Spear

Guest: Cathy Leonard

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM.

**1. Meeting Schedule**

October 16

November 13

**2. Minutes Review & Approval**

Quince moved to accept the minutes of the July 19, 2019 meeting, Cynthia seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

**3. Correspondence, Bills and payments**

Cynthia moved to pay \$549.00 to Huggins & Witten, LLC for SMAHT's portion of invoice #STOW193, Quince seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

A homeowner is trying to sell an affordable unit on Elm Ridge Rd. using proper procedures, and the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) notified SMAHT. If the owner does not sell to an eligible buyer, then SMAHT has the option to buy it. DHCD seems to think that SMAHT could commit to buying the unit now. However, the deed seems to indicate otherwise.

After the last set of draft minutes was distributed, the Conservation Coordinator sent a message expressing surprise that the Conservation Commission would be invoiced for demolishing the sauna on the conservation parcel. By statute, SMAHT is not allowed to spend money on expenses that do not relate to affordable housing.

Metro West Collaborative Development (MWCD) sent its annual monitoring summary for the Town. Stow is at 7.4% certified affordable housing on DHCD's Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI).

After the last set of draft minutes was distributed, Fire Chief Landry sent a message clarifying comments made at the Golf Course Planning Forum. The message, attached at the end of these minutes, was read to the Trustees.

**4. Trustee Reports**

After a few months of hiatus, the regional housing coordinators met in September. The group is trying to restart its regular informational exchange meetings.

The Housing Consultant contract is still being resolved.



## 5. Red Acre Development Project Initiation

- Concepts
- Community input
- Funding
- Outreach to Developers
- Discussion of other elements

SMAHT now has enough information to start thinking about what type of development the Town and abutters want and the process for going forward. The original themes from neighbors were:

- It shouldn't look like a large development
- Six housing units
- Shouldn't be visible from the neighbors
- Screening is desired

Discussion among Trustees included the following brainstorming:

- The Town has approved the acquisition of the parcel for affordable housing. We need to make sure that we have the opportunity to get input from the neighbors on the design.
- The deed says no more than six units would be developed. Cottage-style units were mentioned as well as duplexes. Should these be attached or single units? Does the difference affect cost?
- Will the units all be affordable, or should some be market rate? Previous analysis showed that there wasn't much different in cost to build six affordable units versus a mix of affordable and market rate units.
- If three attached units were built, fire suppression would be required, which would be more expensive. Duplexes do not require fire suppression.
- Cathy showed a photo of River Walk in West Concord, which is a cottage-style development on small lots. This could be a potential design model.
- Our goal is to have a final project that everyone in Town would be positive about.
- Energy efficiency is desired, but we need to consider additional cost.
- The number of bedrooms per units may depend upon septic support, but we don't want more than three per unit. We may want a mix of bedrooms, as the State has been promoting family housing. However, it would be good to have a couple of smaller number of bedrooms for other types of households and one unit for a disabled resident.
- Cathy said we should allow clotheslines in an effort to be "green."
- Would home owners be allowed to add on to affordable units? The monitoring agent would have to approve.
- We would be selling houses on shared land, which would require a Home Owners Association or a condo association. The association would control architectural issues, insurance, policies for common land, and so on.
- We should have one of our Trustees be a liaison with the Conservation Commission, as the housing parcel abuts the conservation parcel.

Although the Trust has several ideas, we need a process for getting input on the vision for development, which would then be used as input for a Request for Proposal for developers. When sharing concepts, example photos of other small-scale development may have more impact than drawings. We have to be careful that we're not so specific that we could not attract

builders. However, we should include elements that may be cost effective, and having developer input earlier in the process for what is doable and desirable would be helpful.

Developers may require additional funding, such as Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds. We should look into how much unrestricted CPA Affordable Housing funds are available.

Mike brought up that SMAHT may be able to ask for some funding from the developer to cover a part of the cost of the land; however, the margins may be too tight. The Trust discussed what the cost of the land should be for a developer, in terms as a subsidy per unit.


To summarize the discussion, the Trust wants to set up an informal public meeting to present potential concepts, ideally before Thanksgiving, and we would like to have a Housing Consultant drive this effort. The meeting could ask for input on many of the items that the Trust discussed. We plan to invite the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Cathy asked about the other parcel on Red Acre Road, whose owner contacted SMAHT earlier about affordable housing. She said that there recently was a sign that said the parcel was for sale by owner. The Chair had followed up per the last meeting: He notified the owners that we have a full plate, it's hard to see where funding would come from based on existing projects, and that we couldn't respond if the owners want to move forward in the near future. However, we do have a grant and loan program for nonprofits for longer-term future consideration.

#### **6. Adjourn**

Cynthia moved to adjourn, Quince seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laura Spear, SMAHT member

  
10/16/19

Laura Spear

---

**From:** Joseph Landry <FireChief@stow-ma.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 19, 2019 9:02 AM  
**To:** laura@spear.net  
**Subject:** SMAHT Meeting Minutes  
**Attachments:** SMAHT Minutes 7.17.19.docx

Laura,

It was brought to my attention that there was a discrepancy on the minutes from the SMAHT meeting. I stated at the Golf Course Planning Forum that any development with the exception of "Open Space" would have an impact on the Fire Department response. I continued by noting numbers relative to types of residential development and responses. In addition there was discussion on the amount of detection that is required for residential units in today's fire code and how each unit has a chance for activation as well as response. Please make sure that the members of SMAHT understand that with any residential or commercial development, the Fire Department will be evaluating the impact and distributing the information to the Towns Administration for future budget impacts.

Please call me any time if you have any further questions.

Thanks

Joe

Joseph P. Landry  
Fire Chief  
Stow Fire Department  
511 Great Road  
Stow, MA 01775  
(978)897-4537

All information transmitted is intended only for the use of the intended recipient or the entity, employee, or agent to which it is addressed, and may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If the recipient of this message is not the intended recipient, or the employee or agent responsible for delivering this message to the intended recipient(s), you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify the sender immediately, destroy all copies, and return the message at the above email address.