

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

Minutes of the October 10, 2018 SMAHT meeting

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

Housing Consultant: Leonardi Aray

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 PM.

The meeting began with a quorum with Quince Papanastassiou, Cynthia Perkins, and Laura Spear in attendance.

**1. Meeting Schedule**

November 14  
December 12

**2. Minutes Review & Approval**

Quince moved to accept the minutes of the September 12, 2018 meeting, Cynthia seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Quince moved to accept the minutes of the September 18, 2018 meeting, Cynthia seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

**3. Correspondence, Bills and payments**

The Trust received estimates for the demolition on Red Acre Road. This will be deferred until later in the agenda.

The Trust received two notices from the Planning Board. One was a petition for an erosion control special permit application and is not applicable to SMAHT. The other is an application for a subdivision for seven proposed building lots on Hallocks Point Road. The application triggers the Inclusionary Zoning bylaw and would require an affordable unit. Laura will provide comments to the Planning Board on behalf of SMAHT, recognizing the need for an affordable unit and requesting that the affordable unit be built on site.

Mike joined the meeting at this time.

MetroWest Collaborative Development and the Regional Housing Services group in which Stow is a participant is sponsoring an affordable housing event on October 17 at Devens. Developers and builders will discuss projects in this area and what is standing in the way of development.

CHAPA is sponsoring an event, "Who is the M in NIMBY?" on November 7 at the MassHousing office in Boston.

SMAHT has not been getting bills from the housing consultant, as we need to resolve the contract extension.

At this point, the meeting was transferred to the Chair.

SMAHT Minutes, October 10, 2018

Approved  11/14/18

#### **4. Trustee Reports**

The Town of Lancaster is facing a 200+-unit 40B development. Lancaster is appointing a Housing Partnership.

All members of the Housing Authority in Carlisle resigned.

The next regional housing coordinators meeting will be on November 8 at the Groton Town Hall, starting at 8:30 AM.

#### **5. Housing Consultant Contract Renewal**

Mike drafted a letter about the contract renewal. The Town Administrator had said we could renew it for one more year. Our housing consultant, Leonardi, said that certain governmental bodies could extend the contract for a different length of time, such as two years. However, the Town Administrator said the Town policy is to limit contracts to three years maximum.

We only need to write a letter that says we agree to extend the contract for one more year. The hourly rate will remain the same, but the original contract had a cap on the total cost in the amount of \$9900. We may want to look at a higher cap based on anticipating more hours in light of the workload for the rest of the year. Leonardi said that Massachusetts General Law 30B says we can increase the funding in a contract by up to 25%. We'll move on to the next agenda items and then review the number of hours that may be required.

#### **6. Old Bolton Road property**

The current owner is applying for an Agricultural Preservation Restriction for a 5-acre parcel that is being farmed. He is expecting an answer from the state soon. The adjacent parcel is just under an acre and has a house on it today with an in-law apartment. The proposal would be to use the smaller parcel for affordable housing and continue farming the larger parcel [through lease or some other arrangement]. Purchasing both parcels would cost \$539K, and the Trust does not have the funding to buy it. Discussion included how many units could be built on the smaller parcel and potential funding sources.

Laura asked about funding sources at the last regional housing coordinators' meeting. There really aren't any. Suggestions included tearing the existing house down and building veterans' housing, but related funds are basically depleted right now. There is also strong demand right now for acquired brain injury housing. That could be a potential use, but we'd still have to buy the parcel outright. Funding may be available for affordable housing in general, but a minimum of 30 units is required, and there is a two-year wait. The most basic funding source suggested was Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds.

The iSHOPP program could help someone buy the house as an affordable unit. Program funds would offset the difference between the affordability level and the market-rate price. However, the program and its CPA funding still need to be approved, and the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) would need to approve the program. The CPA funding for the program was not included as an article for this month's special Town Meeting despite our request.

Next steps: Mike will contact the owner to let him know that we don't have the funding to purchase the two parcels and that the iSHOPP program may be a potential solution should he want to sell the home as an affordable unit.

## **7. Kunelius Land**

- **Demolition**
- **Pre-engineering**
- **Advisory Group**

The Trust focused on three topics for the Red Acre Road parcel, formerly known as the Kunelius land.

We still need to understand how much funding we have in the Trust. Cynthia will serve as a liaison to the Town Accountant to track our Trust fund balances.

Ingeborg joined the meeting at this time.

**Demolition:** The Trust received two quotes:

1. Stow Highway Department: total quote was \$18,211.20 but does not include the outbuilding
2. Mitrano, which specializes in demolition: base bid includes the barn, 2 single story stable barns, riding ring, and shed/outbuilding that has collapsed: \$19,943.00

We can remove the shed/outbuilding from the quote as it's not on our land, reducing the cost by \$592. When the Highway Department needs extra equipment, it goes to Mitrano.

The Highway Department has never taken down a multi-story building before, and the cost may increase based on the language in the quote.

Do we need to put this out to bid? Although the amount is less than \$25K, we need to write the scope and ask for three quotes. Demolition will be expensive, but it is a safety issue, and the resulting land may attract developers. Neighbors in attendance asked about access if the dumpsters are there. The utility company has cleared the trees, but brush and stumps still need to be removed. The neighbors would like a road installed first before taking down the existing buildings. This is likely not possible as new roads are typically part of the overall development application. We would need to explain the conditions in the request for proposal (RFP).

Leonardi will issue a request for quotes for the demolition following the scope from the Highway Department. It will also address access to the site. There is also an Airstream trailer on the site, which will need to be removed.

**Pre-engineering:** Leonardi recommended doing the perc test after the demolition. He will issue a request for bids from a few engineers and see if they have a recommendation as to whether to do the perc tests before or after the demolition and whether there is a better time of year to perform the perc tests.

Cynthia moved to authorize our housing consultant to get bids for pre-engineering and demolition, Quince seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Advisory Group:** At the last meeting, the Trust agreed to investigate models for an Advisory Group. To form such a group, we would need to define its purpose. Discussion included the

need for pre-development input and whether the focus should be on the people who will reside there versus the unit design. If it's on the people, then the Advisory Group should have a member who would represent the possible homeowners. This person could be from outside the community or from other affordable developments in Town, such as Stow Community Housing.

Based on research, Mike said that nothing in the statute states whether the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust can create a subcommittee. The Town Clerk has offered to investigate with the Attorney General.

The Trust discussed the model for an Advisory Group should we want to move forward. One option is to have the group function as a subcommittee to SMAHT. Because Municipal Housing Trusts have powers that other committees don't, we could hire an advisor to run the committee and gather input for SMAHT. We could also hire an Advisory Group for zero dollars and contract them to perform specific actions.

Laura shared input from the last regional housing coordinators' meeting. Most of the guidance was to make sure that SMAHT continues to have oversight and the group has well defined expectations and limits, including specific timeframes and deliverables.

Tasks could include architectural design, public outreach and input, and other input for the RFP for a developer.

Quince asked if we need to have an Advisory Group instead of a couple of neighborhood meetings. Leonardi said we could also consider sponsoring an overlay district for the parcel to define the setbacks, dimensional requirements, and so on. Discussion continued about the need for an Advisory Group. Regardless, people will still want to understand why we are doing this project for affordable housing. That would be a good role for the Advisory Group. Should the Advisory Group be an outreach group to respond to community questions instead of a group that provide input to the design? Developers don't want to be tied to a design.

Laura thought that an Advisory Group would provide a formal commitment to the neighbors that we want to have them involved and create good public relations with them.

Nothing has been documented in regards to the consensus of the neighborhood when we went to Annual Town Meeting for approval to purchase the parcel for affordable housing. Ingeborg said we need diverse input as well. Laura suggested that the input would help define a concept plan for the RFP.

Mike asked the neighbors in the audience if they had ideas for an Advisory Group. Neighbor input addressed fear of the unknown. They just want to be a part of the project so that it's not hidden, especially with the abutting conservation land and how people will be able to access it. Asking for input before Town Meeting helped alleviate concerns about what may be built. They want to feel that they are more incorporated into the Town's planning activities.

Another neighbor liked an actual Advisory Group with a diverse membership but has no idea of how it would work and how SMAHT would view it.

An Advisory Group has to have clear expectations of what it is being asked to do.

Trust members expressed support for a diverse membership and for different perspectives from the people who live around the project. Mike wants an exemplary process that is transparent. We will need to delegate to this group what the specific roles are.

The role may consist of a small group of people that brings back information to a larger group of people and provides feedback and input to SMAHT. SMAHT really needs a list of the neighbors' fears and concerns in order to address them. Perhaps we need a series of listening sessions and then SMAHT can propose how to address the concerns.

Quince suggested we do the demolition and then the perc tests first, which sets the parameters for the listening sessions. We can then sponsor the listening sessions to update people on the project and the parameters for development. Feedback would help provide input for the RFP and may even determine the need for a more formal Advisory Group. It was noted that these listening sessions would fall under the Open Meeting Law.

A question was asked about how people would find out about the listening sessions. SMAHT can use a combination of formal notifications to abutters and additional outreach activities, including website postings, the Council on Aging newsletter, the local newspapers, flyers, and so on.

#### **8. Pine Point update**

The Habitat project on Pine Point Road is in the process of appeal with the state.

#### **9. Adjourn**

Cynthia moved to adjourn, Ingeborg seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:09 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Laura Spear, SMAHT member

*Laura Spear* 11/14/2018