

Newburyport Affordable Housing Trust
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday, March 15, 2018
Meeting Location: Mayor's Conference Room, City Hall
Members in Attendance: Mayor Holaday, Susanne Cameron, Madeline Nash, Karen Wiener
Members Absent: Judy Tymon
Others Present: Kate Newhall-Smith, Andrew Port, Andrea Egmont, Jared Eigerman
Minutes Taker: Kate Newhall-Smith

Wiener called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Discussion: Brown School Redevelopment:

Andrea Egmont, Director of Youth Services, is present to discuss the redevelopment of the Brown School and how Newburyport Youth Services (NYS) fits into the overall project. Ms. Egmont describes how the project and her concerns have evolved as she explored the various RFP responses. Her desire is to have a permanent home for NYS and she does not believe that the Brown School site will be able to accommodate this in the future. Her concerns focused on the mix of housing and NYS, impacts on the neighbors, and an overall negative impact on the NYS mission as people that move into the building and do not appreciate the NYS activities or noise. An additional concern is about parking and the lack of parking for NYS staff and for attendees of their daytime programming (versus the afternoon programming that is primarily drop-offs or kids walking to the center).

Ms. Egmont states that she wants a permanent home for NYS that is walkable from the schools but is distinct from the schools and has sufficient parking for staff and programs. There are concerns regarding funding either for construction of a new space or renovation of an existing space to fit NYS needs.

Mayor discusses the City's debt load, current debt, debt that is coming off of the books, and the ability to take on more debt if necessary and appropriate.

Nash reviews costs typically associated with adaptive reuse of buildings for affordable housing.

The group discusses the positives and negatives of mixing housing with NYS as well as potential sites for NYS.

Discussion: Condominium Conversion Ordinance:

Councilor Eigerman has asked the Trust to review the City's Condo Conversion ordinance and determine ways to ensure that it is being followed. Since Councilor Eigerman had to leave to attend another meeting, the Trust decided to postpone this discussion to the April meeting.

Housing Choice Initiative Technical Assistance Grant Program:

The City is eligible to apply for technical assistance from MHP to implement our housing production goals and deliver new mixed-income housing. If the Trust would like to apply for assistance in implementing a strategy from the HPP, the Office can work to draft an application for the next meeting. Applications are due to MHP by March 29th.

Wiener reviews the grant criteria and the group discusses potential projects. The group would like to apply for technical assistance to conduct a feasibility analysis to determine if the Brown School is an appropriate site for affordable housing. This analysis will include how many units, the level of affordability, parking, density, impacts to the neighborhood, and also a community engagement and education piece.

Smith will work on a draft application and send to the Trust for assistance and feedback.

Updates:

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- Community Preservation Act Grant: The Trust is scheduled to present its application to the CPC on April 24th. Also, the YWCA has requested that the Trust review its application for CPA funding and determine if it is able to issue a letter of support. The Trust would like to issue a letter of support. Smith will draft one.

Approval of Minutes:

Mayor makes a motion to approve the minutes of 2/15/18 as amended, seconded by Cameron, passed 4-0.

Next Meeting

The Trust has rescheduled its April meeting to Thursday, April 26th.

Wiener makes a motion to adjourn, seconded by Nash, all in favor. Meeting adjourns at 7:45 p.m.