

**Newburyport Affordable Housing Trust
Meeting Minutes**

Meeting Date: Thursday, September 30, 2021
Meeting Location: Online
Members in Attendance: Co-Chair Susanne Cameron, Member Karen Wiener, Member Brian Raiche and Mayor Holaday
Staff Present: Katelyn Sullivan, Andy Port
Members of the public: Tiffany Nigro, Pettengill House, Lou Minicucci, MINCO and Robert Currier

Welcome and Introductions

Affordable Housing Trust (AHT or Trust) Chair Susanne Cameron called the meeting to order at 6pm and welcomed Trust members, staff and guests. Chair Cameron welcomed newest member Brian Raiche. Member Raiche introduced himself as a long time Newburyport resident and currently sells real estate at William Raveis. Member Raiche is also involved in consulting and fundraising for local non-profits and is on the Board for Dinah's House in Haverhill, MA and is a rector for a church in Reading and is involved in affordable housing in Reading.

Emergency Rental Assistance Update from Pettengill House

Chair Cameron introduced Tiffany Nigro, Executive Director of the Pettengill House. Nigro gave an update regarding the Newburyport Emergency Rental Assistance Program. In total, 32 Newburyport households including 72 individuals (8 elders, 37 adults and 27 children) received COVID rental relief to assist in housing stabilization as part of the first grant totaling \$100,000 to fund this program. The Trust just added \$25,000 (including admin) from the City's CARES Act-Coronavirus Relief Fund to replenish the program. With the new grant funds, Pettengill has assisted one (1) household to date in the amount of \$1,180. There are also three applications pending, and Nigro said she is waiting for additional paperwork from the client and/or the landlord. The total assistance pending is \$3,945. Nigro said that she is still seeing people struggling and thanks the Trust for providing this assistance to those in need. Chair Cameron said she is so pleased that the Trust has found a partner in the Pettengill Housing to administer this program. The Pettengill House and Planning Office continue to work to get the word out about this program including reaching out to local providers, Newburyport Youth Services, Newburyport Public Schools and the Greater Newburyport Chamber of Commerce to let them know additional funding is available. The goal is to be in a preventative stage so as not to get to a point there is a pending eviction.

166- 168 Route 1 Project Introduction from MINCO Corporation

Lou Minicucci from MINCO Development introduced himself and gave an overview of the two permitted housing projects at Boston Way and wanted to give the Trust an overview of a new project MINCO is proposing at 166-168 Route 1. This project is in the 40R Smart Growth District and will go through the same review process as the projects at One Boston Way and Three Boston Way. The new building is proposed to be both LEED and Fitwell certified. There will be approximately 24 affordable rental units and 93 units overall. There will be a mix of unit sizes. Right now, design is being finalized and Minicucci will be submitting an application for review to the Planning Board shortly. Chair Cameron asked about the amenities that will be available. Minicucci detailed the amenities such as a fire pit, grill area, yoga studio, outside seating area, dog wash station, etc. to build community between the buildings and will be available to all residents of all three MINCO buildings. Chair Cameron asked a question that was submitted by Co-Chair Madeline Nash who could not make the meeting regarding outdoor play spaces

available in any of the new developments. Minicucci responded that it has been his experience that these types of buildings do not attract many families with children. While there will not be a dedicated playground area, there will be outdoor spaces and space for outdoor eating. Minicucci said that he has found that those in his buildings with families will plan to use the Clipper City Rail Trail for recreation, bike riding, skate board riding and space for strollers. Minicucci said that he has a long waiting list for each type of unit and has created a waiting list for the second building at Three Boston Way which has not been built yet because there is so much interest and demand. Three Boston Way will be coming on line 18 months from now. Minicucci said the answer to affordable housing is supply and demand and we need more supply coming online and hopefully we can help with that with these new developments. Chair Cameron thanked Minicucci for attending the meeting and providing an overview of his new project.

Other Trust Business

The Trust voted that Chair Susanne Cameron would be the Trust signatory. Member Wiener made a motion that Chair Susanne Cameron would be the Trust signatory and sign documents on behalf of the Trust. Mayor Donna Holaday seconded the motion. All were in favor.

The Trust reviewed the Local Initiative Program (LIP) Application for the project called the Stables at Bashaw Farm on Colby Farm Road. The Chair will need to sign this application along with the Mayor. There will be 6 detached units and one duplex structure consisting of 2 attached units. In accordance with the Newburyport Zoning Ordinance, this project provides one affordable housing unit. This unit will be one of the duplex units (Unit #2 on the site plan) and will have 3-bedrooms and approximately 1,632 s.f. of living area. Utilities include forced hot air heat and town water and sewer. Appliances include a stove, refrigerator, microwave and laundry hookup. The sales price will be **\$336,700**. The Trust members reviewed the housing cost calculations in the LIP application. The Trust asked Katelyn Sullivan from the Planning Office to reach out to the lottery agent to find out more about how the housing cost was calculated in the application.

Chair Cameron asked if Andy Port, Planning Director, had any further updates for the Trust and Port gave a brief update regarding the Brown School said he is expecting some results on a hazmat/Phase II study (asbestos, lead, etc.) and recapped a meeting with the Newburyport Housing Authority and are on the same page in that to make a viable housing reuse project, you need the entirety of the building rather than just two upper floors but are constrained by the current zoning amendment that assumes the first floor being dedicated to Newburyport Youth Services (NYS) being on the bottom floor. Port is hoping for more progress to be made on the future of NYS in the coming months.

Chair Cameron provided the Trust with updates regarding the increase in membership from 5 to 7 members that was approved by the Council. Chair Cameron is pleased with the approval of the increase in membership which will allow the Trust to have more depth in knowledge and perspective.

Also, the Community Preservation Act grant application for a new rental assistance program was approved by the City Council and Chair Cameron wants to have a working session to define the parameters of the new program. In addition, the Trust wants to look into the Housing Rehabilitation Program again especially how the program can help with energy efficiency. Member Wiener said that it will be helpful to have different perspectives at the workshop so it would be best to have community members or officials from other towns that have set up a rental assistance program before to offer expertise and perspective.

Finally, Chair Cameron introduced longtime resident Robert Currier who is interested in joining the Trust to come up with collaborative efforts to increase affordable housing. Currier gave an overview of his interest and experience in creating affordable housing.

Chair Cameron tabled approval of the minutes as there were not enough Trust members present to vote.

The members discussed the next meeting date and decided on 11/4/21.

The meeting adjourned at 6:52pm.