

Weston Affordable Housing Trust Minutes
October 15, 2020

Housing Trust Members Present (“HT”): Chair Sarah Rhatigan, Tom Timko, Buzzy Price, Michael Price, Harvey Boshart, Kenneth Newberg, Susan Haber.

Also Present: Liz Valenta (RHSO), Joe Tavares, Resident, Alice Benson, Resident

Sarah Rhatigan read Governor Baker’s March 11, 2020 Executive Order to suspend certain aspects of the OML, in order to allow this meeting to proceed using Zoom.

Item 1: Public Comment:

Joe Tavares, resident of Warren Avenue, asked about a potential rent increase this year during the pandemic, whether a policy for a rental increase might be more individualized for Warren Avenue tenants and asked about the Emergency Rental Assistance Program. He has sent a letter to Monyette Vickers regarding installation of a generator for the buildings since children are working remotely and need reliable electricity.

Item 2: Minutes:

The September 30, 2020 minutes as amended was approved by Roll Call Vote: Sarah, Susan, Harvey, Ken, Buzzy, Michael and Tom voting Aye.

Item 3: 0 Wellesley Street-Potential Vote on Notice of Award to Habitat:

Kathleen O’Donnell, on behalf of the Trust, asked Leon to confirm whether we could use Home Ownership Funds to support 0 Wellesley Street. The query was submitted to Town Counsel. The Trust will still award the RFP to Habitat For Humanity and provide \$450,000 as subsidy for 6 units at approximately \$75,000/unit. It was noted that this is less than the typical loss on projects that the Town has bought and sold. Fundraising is part of HFH model. This project differs from HFH more urban projects and septic issues and site constraints will add to their costs.

Votes: To award RFP to Habitat for Humanity and to authorize Liz and Sarah to proceed with a Draft Notice of Award. Rhatigan, Timko, Newberg, Timko, Buzzy and Michel Price, Haber all voted Aye. To send a letter to HFH informing them of this action-Rhatigan, Timko, Buzzy and Michel Price, Newberg, Haber -Aye.

The Trust needs to formally meet with the SB to discuss status of the project and award and discuss whether TC has opined if we can use the \$450,000 out of the \$900,000 Home Ownership funds previously voted by TM for the Trust’s use. The Trust will engage in outreach with neighbors and then the CPC and other Town Boards. SB needs to sign a letter which goes to DHCD approving the project and the Agency issues a Project Eligibility Letter.

Item 4: Warren Avenue Rent Policy:

After some discussion, Trust will provide Tenants with information regarding the Emergency Rental Assistance Program and **Voted** to halt future rental increases for one year due to problems stemming from Covid-19. Rhatigan-aye, Timko-aye, Newberg-aye, Boshart-aye, Haber-aye, Michael Price-nay.

Note: Buzzy and Michael Price left meeting @ 10:00 AM for a prior commitment.

Item 5: Emergency Rental Assistance Program:

Trust Members continue to object to some of the language in the CPC Grant Agreement, specifically “Liability of Trustees” and “intentional misconduct”. Kathleen O’Donnell will send a letter to the Town Manager requesting removal from the Document. Trust Members **Voted** to approved the draft Agreement without the offensive language and authorized Sarah to Sign (Rhatigan-aye, Newberg-aye, Haber-aye, Timko-aye, Boshart-aye).

Item 6:

An update on other housing developments and the Housing Production Plan was discussed.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 29, 2020 at 8:30 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Haber, Clerk Pro Tem