



TOWN OF MEDFIELD

Office of the

AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST

TOWN HOUSE, 459 MAIN STREET
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MEETING OF:
January 7, 2021
MINUTES

Members Present: Jim Brand, Chair; Brett Heyman; Newton Thompson; Greg Sandomirsky; Michael Marcucci; Ann Thompson

Members Absent: Kerry McCormick

Staff Present: Sarah Raposa, Town Planner; Marion Bonoldi, Recording Clerk

Others Present: Kay Bennett, Barry Parker, Bill Jacques, Kurt James, Jennifer Jacques, Patti Allan; Jim Lucie; Eileen DeSorgher; Cynthia Greene; Carol Terry; Lisa Marie Donovan; Candace Avery; Erin Keysor, Gontar Vogel; Alena Guerra; Brian Nixon; Dan Sullivan; Cathy Chung; Carolyn Nash; Patrick Nash; Frank Losapio; Gus Murby; Kirsten D'Abate; Glen D'Abate; Brent Nelson; Katie Lawless; Stephanie Sinis; Christopher Allan; Abigail Lee; L. Sullivan; Chris McCue Potts

Location: Virtual Meeting via Zoom

At approximately 7:33 pm, Chairman James Brand called the meeting to order and announced the meeting is being recorded. Chair Brand read the following:

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Medfield Affordable Housing Trust is being conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. A reminder that persons who would like to listen to/view this meeting while in progress may do so by following the instructions on the agenda and meeting notice.

Meeting with Medfield Housing Authority

Mr. Kurt James, KJP Partners of Boston, presented on behalf of the Housing Authority. Mr. James said he appreciates the opportunity to present to the Affordable Housing Trust, as a potential funder of the future Pound Street project. The Housing Authority is interested in supporting a 45 unit affordable housing project on the same Pound Street location. Mr. James said the HA intends to issue another RFP for a developer to lease and develop the property; subject to design approval by the Housing Authority. Mr. James said the project will proceed under a long term ground lease. Mr. James said it will be up to the developer to obtain the permitting

and financing for the project. Mr. James said depending on the permitting and financing route; the process could take several years.

Ms. Candace Avery, Director of Medfield Housing Authority, said the current list of demand for housing has 911 applicants. Ms. Avery said 647 applicants were listed as “no preference;” 4 Veterans with minority preference; 215 of minorities only; 52 Veterans and locals and a mix of applicants for the remainder of applicants. Chair Brand asked if the 911 applicants are on the list for Medfield housing. Ms. Avery said no; the system doesn’t allow for those particular numbers. Mr. James said if there is not more private development, such as the project being discussed tonight, local preference will go by the wayside. Chair Brand said the AHT is very well aware of the need for housing in Medfield. Chair Brand said the AHT is interested in hearing about the current process and how the HA is moving forward.

Mr. James said there are two steps that the HA is pursuing in tandem. One step is to get an approval from DHCD for the HA to dispose of the land and the other step is to prepare an RFP for a developer to lease the land. Mr. James said after the RFP is prepared, there is a publication process for the RFP. Chair Brand asked Mr. James if he is handling the legal, contractual and development obligations for the HA. Mr. James said yes. Chair Brand introduced Mr. Greg Sandomirsky, who has been working as the liaison between the HA and the AHT.

Mr. Sandomirsky said he has only spoken to Mr. James once prior to this meeting. Mr. Sandomirsky said Mr. James is aware of the legal concerns that were raised in the past. Mr. Sandomirsky would like assurance from Mr. James that all concerns and needed DHCD approval will be addressed. Mr. Sandomirsky asked for assurance that Mr. James is aware of the criticisms that have been made of the process before. Mr. James said he is aware of the concerns and criticisms. Mr. James said he would like to address all legitimate concerns. Mr. James said DHCD approval is needed and he will be very clear that the approval is for a disposition by the ground lease.

Mr. Sandomirsky asked if the HA has any particular requests of the AHT, at this time. Mr. James said at this point, there is not a specific ask for funding or approval. Mr. James said that since the DHCD requires local funding; there will be a need for local funding at some point. Mr. James said he plans to keep in open communication with the AHT throughout the process. Chair Brand asked for the language of local commitment requirement. Mr. James said nothing has been formulated at this point. Mr. James said the language needs to be evaluated and the stronger the local commitment and resources then the stronger the proposal will be for DHCD. Chair Brand asked about the Housing Authority’s approach to c. 40B. Chair James asked if a traditional 40B verse a LIP 40B has been discussed. Mr. James said the details will be for the developer to determine however, a LIP would be the best option for town support. Mr. Sandomirsky asked if the prior selected developer has any further rights to this project. Mr. James said there are no lingering rights; this is a complete fresh start.

Mr. Michael Marcucci asked about the scope of authority for land disposition from the DHCD approval. Mr. James said there are a lot of conditions that need to be satisfied however, the approval is a fairly straightforward process. Mr. Marcucci asked if the purpose of the land disposal is limited. Mr. James said since the project is an affordable housing project; it would most likely be approved. Mr. Marcucci said that after the issues with the last RFP, the suggestion of a land swap between the town and the housing authority has been discussed. Mr. Marcucci said the town has land near the Council on Aging Center (referred to as the Hinkley Lot). The AHT currently intends to move forward on an attempt to build “the classic” 25% affordable “for sale” housing with

25 to 30 units for senior housing. Mr. Marcucci said there has been discussion about building what the Housing Authority had proposed on Pound Street by the Senior Center (at the Hinkley Lot) and then build a smaller project on the Pound Street location. Mr. Marcucci said one of the goals for the AHT is to build housing for adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities. Mr. Marcucci feels that type of housing would fit comfortably in the Pound Street neighborhood. Mr. Marcucci said a smaller development would satisfy the concerns of the neighborhood and the town would get more affordable housing by developing both sites. Mr. Marcucci asked if the “land swap” transaction would be permissible under the DHCD authority and if the Housing Authority has given any more thought to this possible “land swap” idea. Mr. James said he would encourage the Housing Authority to consider all alternatives however this idea is not something the Housing Authority has discussed with him.

Ms. Avery said this conversation has come up repeatedly over the past 6 years. Ms. Avery said the location of the Pound Street property would be beneficial to independent elderly housing. Ms. Avery said that the Hinkley property is too far removed. Ms. Avery said there is no transportation to and from the Hinkley property. Ms. Avery said the current Tilden Village residents would not have access to the support services in the new development proposed. Ms. Avery said the Hinkley development doesn’t make sense to the Housing Authority. Ms. Avery said she doesn’t understand why people keep fighting the Pound Street site when the proposed new project is smaller than the current Tilden Village.

Mr. Marcucci said he strongly supported the Rosebay project. Mr. Marcucci said the “land swap” idea would give more housing. Mr. Marcucci said that if there were 25 units on Pound Street and 45 units on Hinkley; that is more units and would serve a bigger need. Mr. Marcucci said the Hinkley property is next to the Council on Aging. The Council on Aging has a van and there will be a sidewalk. Mr. Marcucci said that if there was a smaller development on Pound Street; the support services could still be there and shared with Tilden Village.

Ms. Avery asked how it can be known that residents will not oppose the Hinkley property like they are opposing the Pound Street one. Ms. Avery asked if there has been any surveying done at Hinkley. Ms. Avery asked if all of the “promises” for the “land swap” are secure and confirmed. Mr. Marcucci said the idea was proposed and the Housing Authority didn’t pursue discussion. Mr. Marcucci said the AHT is looking at what is in the best interest of the town overall. Mr. Marcucci understands that the HA primary concern is its own land. Mr. Marcucci said that if there is going to be a significant ask to the AHT for money as part of the Pound Street property; he suggests having the conversation about the “land swap” to address concerns rather than dismissing the idea completely.

Ms. Avery said her position is misunderstood and not dismissive. Ms. Avery said there are already 60 units of affordable housing for elders established on the Pound Street property that belongs to the Housing Authority. Ms. Avery said she doesn’t believe the Hinkley property is established for all types of housing. Ms. Avery said there is a lot that would need to be worked out and the idea of the Hinkley property is not easy to do. Mr. Marcucci said the current proposal for the Hinkley Lot is approximately 30 ownership houses, each 1,500 to 2,000 square feet. Mr. Marcucci said that if the HA was interested in the land swap idea; the AHT would propose something different than the current plan for the Hinkley property. Mr. Marcucci said that if the proposal would change for the Hinkley property; authorization would be needed from the town at the Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Avery doesn’t want her tone to be misunderstood however the HA has been in this process for 6 years and feels the support of the town shifted suddenly. Mr. Marcucci said the support didn’t shift; the neighbors voiced concerns and the HA didn’t process the RFP properly. Mr. Marcucci said the AHT realizes that developing a 25-unit senior, rental proposal on Pound Street is not economical to a developer. Mr.

Marcucci said the neighborhood is not in support of a large development on the parcel. Mr. Marcucci said he believes a smaller development would fit well and receive less opposition. Mr. Marcucci said this is conceptual proposal. Mr. Marcucci said if the HA is not interested in the “land swap” idea; the HA can move forward as planned and the AHT will evaluate the proposal submitted. Mr. Marcucci said he supported the previous Rosebay project repeatedly and publicly. Mr. Marcucci said the AHT needs to look at any proposal from the perspective of the overall town. Mr. Marcucci said his opinion is that something like 25-units on Pound Street and 45-units on the Hinkley property would be better for the town.

Ms. Avery asked for the specific financial support the AHT is willing to give if the HA considered the Hinkley property “land swap.” Mr. Marcucci said the AHT hasn’t discussed specifics about financial support. Mr. Marcucci said there is \$1,000,000 that was authorized for the AHT at Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Avery asked how much of the \$1,000,000 is left. Mr. Marcucci said \$1,000,000 is left; nothing has been spent. Chair Brand said the \$1,000,000 is for the AHT to support affordable housing for the overall town. Chair Brand said there is no commitment for the \$1,000,000 to go to the Housing Authority, noting the support previously granted for legal fees for the previous Rosebay contract work. Chair Brand said the AHT has backed the HA to put affordable housing on the Pound Street site. Chair Brand said there are more possibilities with more options. Chair Brand said Ms. Avery should take the “land swap” suggestion to the HA Board to weigh pros and cons.

Ms. Avery said she would like people to remember that the HA proposed 45-unit project is smaller than Tilden Village, the project would offer amenities to both Tilden Village and new tenants and Pound Street is located in a walkable location to downtown. Ms. Avery feels the projects need to be looked at from a personal perspective. Ms. Avery said she understands that change is scary but feel everyone needs to remember that the residents that created the Town of Medfield want to say in the Town.

Mr. James asked about the \$1,000,000 funding of the AHT. Mr. James said he was under the impression the funds have extreme restrictions on them. Mr. Marcucci said the AHT has a \$1,000,000 debt exclusion that was adopted at Town Meeting; bonds can be issued up to \$1,000,000. Mr. Sandomirsky said the Town would issue the bonds; not the AHT. Mr. Sandomirsky said regarding the discussion of the “land swap”; one site is controlled by the Town and one site is controlled by the HA. Mr. Sandomirsky said the greater difficulty would be to find ways to use Town bond proceeds for private projects with the public involvement being merely subsidy. Mr. Sandomirsky since the two sites discussed for the “land swap” are publicly held, it is easier to use bonding. Mr. Sandomirsky said the Town is currently seeking to understand the maximum flexibility the law would allow. Mr. James said to further consider any option; the HA needs to know if the funds are actually available. Mr. James said the HA would like to know the parameters of the funds. Mr. Sandomirsky said the AHT is working on getting the information. Mr. Sandomirsky said the HA current proposal is a ground lease in which the title will be retained by the HA. Mr. Sandomirsky said the terms of the ground lease are still unknown. Mr. James said the ground lease will be long term. Mr. Sandomirsky said it would be helpful to know all aspects of the proposal to determine the maximum use of the bond. Chair Brand said no commitments have been made by the AHT and a thorough investigation would be complete prior to any commitment.

Mr. Brent Nelson, Housing Authority board member, said this discussion is important especially with everything that happened with the previous proposal. Mr. Nelson echoed Ms. Avery’s point about the HA preferences. Mr. Nelson said the HA was aware of discussion about a potential new site but feels there is a need for a better chain of communication. Mr. Nelson said the Town has rallied (the AHT, the Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen) around affordable housing and to the Town’s credit; Medfield has been in safe harbor. Mr. Nelson said the communication needs to be better and asked for serious alternatives or serious

discussion to be more formalized. Mr. Nelson said the HA would like to retain control of what the HA now controls. Mr. Nelson feels that the previous RFP can be rectified so as to proceed with a plan that serves both the needs of Medfield and the HA. Mr. Nelson said any alternative needs to be discussed in great detail and not vague. Mr. Nelson said the HA will be reluctant to release the leverage the HA has in the current proposal without specifics. Mr. Marcucci said he would be thrilled to have specifics from the HA regarding any alternative proposal. Mr. Marcucci said he would be thrilled to put together a working group to work through the specifics of this proposal. Mr. Marcucci said there is a bit of “once bitten, twice shy.” Mr. Marcucci said he strongly advocated for Rosebay and a lot of residents were upset that he was strongly advocating for it to only then find out that there was correctable error in the RFP. Mr. Marcucci said there are priorities for the HA and there are priorities for the AHT and the Town. Mr. Marcucci agrees with Mr. Nelson that there are detailed questions to be asked. Mr. Marcucci is in support of detailed discussion. Mr. Marcucci doesn’t believe the HA should stop their current process. Mr. Marcucci said the Annual Town Meeting is in May and any article would need to be worked out by March. Mr. Marcucci feels the “land swap” idea should be reviewed to see if there is a “win-win” for everyone.

Mr. Nelson feels the AHT is the first vetting agency for affordable projects. Mr. Nelson said the HA felt they had reasonably strong backing from the AHT for Rosebay and the proposal didn’t materialize for many reasons. Chair Brand said the AHT unanimously supported Rosebay. Mr. Marcucci said the AHT attended many meetings in support of Rosebay and then alleged errors on the original RFP were raised. Chair Brand said the developer of Rosebay chose to go through the traditional 40B process, which avoids the normal LIP process. Chair Brand said in a LIP process the first stop is the AHT and the proposal is reviewed at a detailed level. The proposal then goes before the Board of Selectmen and then to the ZBA. The developer chose to go directly to the ZBA and get the process approved in one swoop. Chair Brand said the process was the developer’s choice but feels the LIP process gets the best project in the end. Mr. Marcucci said he had conversations with the developer and encouraged him to go through the LIP process even though the proposal was a traditional 40B. Mr. Marcucci said he would disagree that the HA ever lost support of the Rosebay project on the Town side. Mr. Nelson said he didn’t mean to imply that the AHT didn’t support the project. Mr. Nelson feels the process decision of the developer caused support to wane. Mr. Nelson said if there could be more conversations with the AHT set up by Ms. Avery; the discussions would be helpful to the HA.

Mr. James said these are all long-term considerations. Mr. James said that while it is always beneficial to pursue options; they need to be considered while the HA continues on its present path. Mr. James doesn’t want more time to be lost by complete changing gears. Mr. James said if an option becomes more beneficial, then the HA would pursue another direction at that time.

Mr. Sandomirsky said it is fortuitous in a way that there are time pressures to get all of the legal options and tools lined up that might be necessary or useful to be more creative for the potential “land swap” idea. Mr. Sandomirsky said if there is to be a working group to brainstorm ideas; this needs to happen quickly. Mr. Sandomirsky said specific timelines are easier to work under than to have no timeline at all. Chair James said Mr. Sandomirsky is the liaison between the AHT and the HA. Chair James said it would be beneficial to have Ms. Sarah Raposa, Town Planner, involved in the discussions. Chair Brand thanked the HA for joining the meeting tonight.

Action Plan Update - Budget and Initiative sections

Ms. Raposa introduced the intent of the Action Plan. Ms. Raposa said the AHT will have bit more homework than originally intended. Ms. Raposa shared her screen to present to the AHT. Ms. Raposa said she would like

to work on the Action Plan over the next three meetings (1/7/21, 2/4/21, 3/4/21) to adopt a one-year supplement to the Action Plan. Ms. Raposa gave an overview of the plan. Mr. Sandomirsky said the prior Action Plan contemplated funding but it might not have been accurate. Mr. Sandomirsky is concerned about the language regarding the \$1,000,000 bond. Mr. Sandomirsky said the Town has changed its bond counsel to a different law firm recently. This change has given an opportunity to revisit the language but Mr. Sandomirsky said the bond proceeds are more constrained under state law than the language in the prior plan conveys. Mr. Sandomirsky said the uses may be more limited. Mr. Sandomirsky said the funding section of the Action Plan needs to be revisited. Ms. Raposa said there is a fundamental misconception of the funding section of the Action Plan from 2018. Ms. Raposa said the funding and budget section needs to be scrapped and revised. Ms. Raposa said the expenditure table from 2019 is not relevant because the \$1,000,000 was viewed as an operating budget rather than what it is. Mr. Sandomirsky said he will be advocating for the fullest latitude in use of the bond.

Mr. Marcucci said he understood that projects needed to be identified before bonds could be issued. Mr. Marcucci asked if identified project views are narrower than the AHT initial thought. Mr. Sandomirsky said yes; he is concerned that the bonds can only be used for the Town to acquire interest in real estate. Mr. Sandomirsky said one of the useful opportunities may be regarding a formal deed restriction in favor of affordable housing. Mr. Sandomirsky is researching if the bond money can be spent by the AHT to acquire such a restriction as an interest in real estate. Mr. Marcucci asked if it is a sequence issue. Mr. Sandomirsky feels the outright acquisition of land would be okay. Mr. Sandomirsky assumes projects will come before the town that do not entail a traditional acquisition of title to land. Mr. Sandomirsky is concerned about long-term ground leasing. Mr. Marcucci said in past discussion of a group home, the assumption has been that the AHT would acquire the land and then lease the land to the group home operator. Mr. Sandomirsky feels the group home scenario is easier from a bond perspective because of that. Mr. Sandomirsky is not suggesting that these issues cannot be worked out.

Ms. Raposa said Mr. Sandomirsky helped her frame the slides of her presentation. Ms. Raposa reviewed notes submitted by Nick Milano, Assistant Town Administrator. Ms. Raposa said the current projects (MSH, Hinkley South, Senior rental, Group Home #1 at MSH, Group Home #2 for adults with disabilities) and potential new projects that would be included in the next round of the Housing Production Plan and Action Plan. Ms. Raposa said she will share the presentation slides with the Board and asked for ideas and comments to be emailed to her by January 21, 2021. Ms. Raposa will then compile the comments and send to the AHT by January 28, 2021.

Mr. Brian Nixon, Pound Street, asked that as the AHT and HA begins their communication meetings on the Pound Street project, would the Boards be open to participating neighborhood representation as part of the communication meetings. Chair Brand said the conversation will most likely take place at the AHT meeting so public would be welcome. Ms. Raposa said the initial conversations might not be public meetings; just the subgroups. Mr. Marcucci said if there is not a quorum of either Board; there should not be an Open Meeting Law issue. Mr. Marcucci said typically as part of the LIP process, the AHT requires the developer to have a neighborhood meeting. Mr. Marcucci said he believes it would make sense to have neighbors participate in a working group. Mr. Marcucci said if there are neighbors who are open to some type of development on that parcel and want to be constructive; it would be helpful and useful to the process to include them in the subgroup.

Town Meeting Prep

Ms. Raposa said the AHT went to the BOS meeting before the holidays to reissue the RFP for the Hinkley South lot for affordable senior housing and also to present the option that if no suitable proposals are received

then the AHT wants to move forward with alternative language that would amend the disposition authorization to include multi-family possibilities for a Rosebay style senior affordable rental housing building. Ms. Raposa said the Hinkley North lot had greater discussion and lack of support as an addition to the Annual Town Meeting warrant for disposition as a group home. Ms. Raposa said the Hinkley North lot would require more discussion with the AHT and the BOS. Ms. Raposa said the discussion about the Hinkley North lot being so close to an existing group home on Hospital Road and the potential of having one at the Medfield State Hospital. Chair Brand suggested having more discussion to have a clear understanding of what the AHT is intending.

Committee Project Updates

Aura –Ms. Raposa said the regulatory agreements have been approved by the BOS and the Building Commissioner has allowed foundation permits at the site.

Group Home – Mr. Brett Heyman said he and Ms. Raposa had a productive discussion with NeuroRestorative. Mr. Heyman said NeuroRestorative had a lot of interest and followed up with setting up a time to walk the Hinkley North property. Mr. Heyman said in the meantime the discussion with the BOS suggested more clarity of the intentions. Mr. Heyman said a further discussion with the AHT is needed before moving forward. Mr. Heyman said NeuroRestorative gave the best response that the AHT has received so far regarding a group home. Mr. Marcucci asked if NeuroRestorative would be interested in a different site. Mr. Heyman said they are very interested in Medfield and if another site was similar to Hinkley North in size they would be interested. Chair Brand asked if it is worth having NeuroRestorative to the next AHT meeting. Mr. Heyman said he believes they would like to be invited to a meeting. Mr. Marcucci said the AHT needs to understand the economics of a group home. Mr. Marcucci said Mr. Pete Peterson is recused from the Hinkley North discussion so the practicality of two Board of Selectmen agreeing rather than two of three voting can be tricky. Mr. Marcucci said Mr. Gus Murby’s concern is that one of the goals of the MSH is to have a group home and if those goals are achieved elsewhere, the incentive to support the MSH plan goes down. Mr. Marcucci feels the fewer burdens put on the MSH; the easier it will be to develop the MSH. Mr. Heyman said NeuroRestorative interest is conjecture at this point. Mr. Sandomirsky asked if NeuroRestorative was interested in an initial development, a rehab or a tear down. Ms. Raposa said their model is associated with substantial rehabs of ranch style houses. Mr. Heymans said they will not do Victorian style homes. Mr. Heyman said the renovations last about 5-6 months and the entire process of getting the group home running is about 7-9 months. Ms. Raposa said she has learned that developers tend to be shocked when towns are open to having conversations about affordable housing. Mr. Heyman said NeuroRestorative is a “for profit” organization so they could get flexible with leasing arrangements. Mr. Sandomirsky asked if NeuroRestorative is interested in operating the group home; not owning it. Ms. Raposa said the have investors.

Hinkley South – RFP

Ms. Raposa said the RFP was posted and a few inquiries were made. Ms. Raposa said the site visit and information session is next Wednesday at 10:00 am and invited anyone from the AHT to join her at the site visit.

Chapel Hill

Ms. Raposa has also confirmed that the developer fulfilled the requirements of the settlement with the Town.

Medfield Meadow- Ms. Raposa will follow up about the about the housing lottery at Medfield Meadows.

Review/Approve Minutes from 12/3/2020

Ms. Greg Sandomirsky made a motion to approve the minutes of December 3, 2021 with edits. Seconded by Mr. Heyman. Roll Call Vote: Jim Brand=yes; Michael Marcucci=yes; Newton Thompson=yes; Greg Sandomirsky=yes; Ann Thompson=yes; Brett Heyman=yes. The Vote: 6-0.

Ms. Raposa noted the upcoming Meetings: February 4, March 4, April 1, May 6, and June 3, 2021

Adjournment – At approximately 9:37 pm, Ms. Ann Thompson made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Marcucci. Roll Call Vote: Jim Brand=yes; Michael Marcucci=yes; Newton Thompson=yes; Greg Sandomirsky=yes; Ann Thompson=yes; Brett Heyman=yes. The Vote: 6-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Marion Bonoldi, Recording Clerk