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## Burlington Housing Partnership Committee Meeting Minutes

February 11, 2021 via Cisco Webex

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**Committee Members Present:** Mike Runyan, Chair  
Ernie Covino, Vice Chair  
Kerry Donahue, Secretary  
Bob Young  
Henry Wu

**Committee Members Not Present:** Charles Viveiros

**Other Attendees:** Eileen Sickler, Shari Ellis, Joe Comperchio, Kristin Kassner

- Mike Runyan called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm
- Mike Runyan notes that Burlington budget director Whitney Haskell recommends the Committee form a Municipal Affordable Housing Trust to administer affordable housing programs and funds. Mike Runyan asks Committee members to review the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust documents that Whitney Haskell provided before our next meeting; if we decide to pursue this, MassHousing can help us prepare an outline.
- Paul Sagarino will put a placeholder on town meeting warrant in May; presentation was hastily put together last time
- Bob Young believes the group is an advisory committee, uncomfortable with committee moving forward with things like this, doesn't understand why the group is suddenly so active.
- Mike Runyan explained that, after years of inactivity, the group is trying to get some work done in town about affordable housing. Bob Young feels that is the Select Board's responsibility, not the Committee's.
- Ernie Covino and Kerry Donahue noted that the group advises the Select Board but needs to do the work and make recommendations; Kerry reminded the Committee of its Mission Statement, which the Committee unanimously approved last fall. Excerpt: "The Committee shall seek to expand the inventory of decent, safe, affordable housing in Burlington through public and private partnerships, and will make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen on steps the Town can take to support the creation of new housing options to address those needs."
- Ernie Covino noted that Mike Runyan is our liaison to the Select Board; Henry Wu asked if the Select Board approved the Mission Statement; Mike Runyan confirmed they did, they are aware of what the Committee is working on, and it would make sense to meet when we have something to share, not right now.
- Bob Young made a motion that the Committee meet with the Select Board soon, at a time convenient for both groups; there was no second, motion failed.

- Mike Runyan will invite Whitney Haskell and town administrator to our next meeting.

### **Inventory**

- Committee has multiple possibly-outdated inventory lists, Planning Dept. also has a list which includes both affordable units, and market-rate multifamily units. Kristin Kassner says the full, accurate list should be in the Selectmen's office and with the Town Clerk to keep track of what we have, what the terms are, etc.
- Kerry Donahue volunteered to compile one complete list of Burlington's affordable housing inventory, working with Planning Dept. and Select Board's office. Kerry Donahue will use the final list to create a simpler list to post on the town website.

### **Master Plan Housing Component**

- Ernie Covino shared update from the Master Plan housing discussion at last week's Planning Board meeting; one proposal was to maintain the residential part of town as a single-family residential town, no conclusions were made.
- At ZBRC meeting there was discussion of Accessory apartments vs. in-law apartments. Ernie Covino recommends watching the planning board meetings.
- Kristin Kassner talked about the need for diverse housing types, seniors talk about Burlington Heights; how do we diversify? Can we have accessory units that blend into single-family neighborhoods?
- Mike Runyan asked Kristin Kassner when was the last time we had a comprehensive housing study? Kristin says it's been a while. Master Plan looked at some aspects, but was not comprehensive.
- Kerry Donahue asked what next steps are in finalizing the housing component of the Master Plan. Kristin Kassner says they are trying to wrap it up, hope Commission and other bodies in town can use the document soon to do some of the work.

### **Open Seat on Committee**

- Kerry Donahue asked where the posting description on BCAT originated. Mike Runyan indicated he gave the description.
- Kerry Donahue asked that the Committee review description of open seats and agree upon them before any public postings in the future.

### **Minutes**

- No objections to the September 2020 – January 2021 Minutes that were circulated by Kerry Donahue
- Ernie Covino made motion to approve the Minutes collectively; seconded by Bob, approved unanimously.

## **Old Business/New Business**

- Mike Runyan noted that other meeting attendees can get a copy of the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust document and Whitney Haskell's notes by reaching out to him.
- Mike Runyan reports that Betty McDonough is working on a letter of appreciation for Phyllis Etsell.
- Ernie Covino notes that Northwest Park development is moving along, seeking balance of not violating fair housing laws and keeping original goal of providing affordable housing for seniors. Needs to be an agreement between Nordblom and the town before it can go forward. Next meeting is February 16 with Maloney Properties.
- Mike Runyan reports that the lottery for the affordable unit at Seven Springs was held, there were 25 applicants, unclear how they selected applicant given opportunity to purchase (preference given to applicants who need multiple bedrooms).
- Mike Runyan indicates 116 S. Bedford house should be ready to be sold as affordable housing in April, we will use DHCD guidance on pricing, hopes to be around \$290-300,000.
- Next meeting set for March 11 at 6pm.
- Mike Runyan adjourned meeting at 7pm.