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Burlington Housing Partnership Committee

Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2023, via Webex

Committee Members Present: Kerry Donahue (KD), Chair
Eileen Sickler (ES), Vice-Chair
Henry Wu (HW), Secretary
Rita Shah (RS)
Michael Runyan (MR)
Toni Ann Natola (TN)

Other Attendees: John Danizio (JD), Sarah Cawley (SC)

- KD called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM. At the start of the meeting, John Danizio (JD) introduced Sarah Cawley (SC) to the Committee. SC will serve as the liaison between town administration and the Committee.
- **Grandview Farms** – JD provided update on Units 104 and 110. Both have eligible purchasers and are going through the process to complete the purchase. JD brought up concept of factoring the cost of purchasing a unit into the asset limitation calculation to increase the eligible pool of potential buyers. JD also reported that the process of making Unit 108, a 2-bedroom unit, available for sale. Liz Rust has updated the draft contract to address concerns of Grandview residents. JD mentioned that he is expecting another unit to be available soon although the owner might wait until after April when the new income limits are released which would enable selling at a higher price.

The Committee took up discussion on JD's recommendation for deducting the purchase price of a unit into calculating the asset amount. KD asked how many more applicants would have become eligible if the recommendation was in place. JD responded that four others would have qualified. One (1) had asset amount of about \$850K and the 2-bedroom unit sold for over \$250K. The other three (3) had asset amounts in the \$600K range. If the purchase cost was factored into the asset limit calculation, all four would have qualified. MR and RS expressed support for deducting the purchase price from the applicant's asset amount to determine asset limitation qualification. HW suggested that only the actual cash amount utilized in the purchase be allowed in reducing the applicant's asset amount such that it takes into account applicants who are taking out a mortgage to purchase. After much discussion, RS made a motion to approve the following wording and provide to Liz Rust to finalize: **"Total buyer assets will be decreased by any amount used for purchase of or downpayment for the unit."** HW seconded the motion. ES, TN, RS, HW, MR, and KD all voted "Yea" in favor of the motion.

- **119 S. Bedford** – JD provided update on the renovation bids. Four bidders responded with the lowest bidder being a contractor that does a lot of work for Mass affordable housing. The town will purchase the material for the renovation so that the pool of qualified bidders would increase as bids above \$150K would require bidders to have sub-bids. The lowest bid was \$115K, material cost estimate of \$20K, and asbestos abatement of \$20K would bring total expenditure on the property to \$488K. Given that the estimated sales price of \$303K, the estimated loss would be \$185K. John Danizio (JD) suggested that the Committee take up discussion to determine best way forward for the property. That is, to sell at a greater loss than anticipated. JD also pointed out that the new income limits will be released in April which will allow for a higher sales price. TN asked JD whether he thought the bids were reasonable. JD responded that the facilities department helped with the bid process, and they thought it was reasonable since expected bids were expected to be in the \$145K range. KD pointed out that the Committee had originally voted to recommend not purchasing the property due to difficulty of selling 117 S. Bedford and the cost to the town to sell the property was not viewed as prudent. KD thought it was worthwhile to rent out 119 S. Bedford until market improves to recoup some of the town's Affordable Housing funds expended on the renovation. HW expressed concern that once the property is utilize as a rental, it will stay a rental forever and the town will need to commit to managing the property. JD stated that if the town decided to rent out the property, it will make sure it has the resources to administer the property. JD also stated that if the new paradigm proves out, it will provide a new model for other potentially available properties on S. Bedford to keep it in the affordable property inventory. KD made motion to **“Approve the bid from 3-A Construction to renovate 119 S. Bedford, with the total cost, including abatement and building materials, not to exceed \$165K.”** ES seconded motion. ES, MR, RS, TN, HW, and KD voted “Yea” to the motion.
- **Winn View II** – KD provided update that the lawyer for Winn View II wanted the Select Board to take another vote since there was a Select Board member absent during the last vote. MR stated that the applicant has the right to resubmit and was told that it is Winn View II's intent and is tentatively scheduled for April 24th. MR stated there were two (2) in favor, one (1) opposed, and one (1) absent so there was no clear majority in favor of providing a letter of support for the project.
- **Town Housing Support** – KD reiterated that the town has terminated the contract with Drew Merrill and will apply more resources towards Liz Rust and also have Sarah Cawley act as the administrative liaison between the town and the Committee. Sarah will take on the administrative functions for affordable housing. MR expressed his gratitude for Drew Merrill's time and effort in supporting the Committee.
- **March Meetings** – KD stated that March 31st is the last day for remote meetings and meetings will then need to have a quorum, as well as the Chair or designee, to be in person. KD had inquired with Amy Warfield about booking meeting rooms at Town Hall but didn't get any definitive guidance. TN and HW stated that they have not submitted their applications for Committee membership yet as they were not sure of being able to support meetings given that future meeting days and times are yet to be determined. KD stated that it will ultimately be up to the Committee on day and time. KD and ES stated that they will not be continuing as Committee members as of the end of the month.

- **Minutes** – RS made motion to approve the 7 March 2023 meeting minutes. MR seconded the motion. KD, ES, MR, TN, RS, and HW all voted “Yea”. The 7 March 2023 minutes were approved 6-0-0.
- **Next Meeting** – the next meeting will be on 28 March 2023 at 5:00 PM.
- **Adjourned** – the meeting was adjourned at 6:14 pm.
- **Minutes Approved** – On 28 March 2023, ES made motion to approve the 21 March 2023 meeting minutes. RS seconded the motion. KD, ES, TN, RS, and HW all voted “Yea”. The minutes for the 21 March 2023 meeting were approved 5-0-0.
- **Respectfully Submitted,**
Henry Wu, Secretary