

## **WESTON AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST MINUTES**

**Monday, April 24, 2023 on Zoom**

**(approved at May 15, 2023, Trust meeting)**

Trustees in attendance: Sarah Like Rhatigan, Susan Haber, Michael Price, Neil Levitt, Thalia Price

*Under current state law public bodies may continue holding hybrid and fully remote meetings, without a quorum of the public body physically present, as long as adequate, alternative access is provided. Information about how to join a hybrid or fully remote hearing will be included in the required Open Meeting Law posting.*

Meeting called to order at 8:10 AM

Public comments:

- Is there an update on 751 Boston Post Road?
- Would the Trust accept donations for the small grants program under discussion today?
- Individual came to offer support for small grants program

Clarification of quorum policy:

The chair apologized for misunderstanding the quorum rules during a discussion with the town manager ahead of the March meeting. The board properly announced and posted the agenda for an in-person Trust meeting on March 13 and five members attended (a quorum). However, three of the members called in by phone. The meeting was not considered hybrid because the phone number was not advertised to the public, and so violated the rules of in-person meetings when a maximum of one member can call in. While several topics were discussed on March 13th, there were no deliberations or decisions made, and the only vote was to approve the February 27th meeting minutes, so that vote will be repeated today to make it official. Other topics from the March 13<sup>th</sup> meeting included public comment from the Dickson Meadow Condo Association's president about an expected special assessment for a new roof and concerns about costs for deed-restricted unit owners. Trust members also reviewed information about prior years of the WAHT's home improvement small grants program.

Approval of Minutes for February 27, 2023:

Susan Haber moved to approve the minutes as submitted, Buzzy Price seconded. Unanimous approval by roll call vote 4-0-0 (Neil Levitt joined later at 8:30 AM).

Clarification of public comments policy:

The chair apologized for allowing the public comment period on March 13th to evolve into a conversation between the Chair and with the commentor on issues related (but not directly) to the WAHT's small grants program. Going forward, the chair commented that she will try to be more vigilant in enforcing the expectation that Trustees listen during the public comment period without engaging in any discussion of matters not clearly included on the Trust's agenda.

#### Clarification of confidentiality:

The chair reminded everyone that identifying information about affordable housing renters or owners is not to be discussed during meetings. Allowable purposes for Executive Session include “to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body.”

#### Discussion of restarting Home Repair Small Grants Program:

The Trust created a small grants program for home repairs in 2017 and 2019 that was administered by RHSO (the Regional Housing Services Office) and is considering asking the town manager and Select Board for funds to restart a similar program. Discussion centered on:

- Limiting to deed-restricted properties?
- Income limits – 150% or 120% AMI or something else?
- Maximum grant amount? The larger the grant, the more likely to want to recapture the funds at the sale of the property, but that adds complexity and legal costs
- How much money to request from town?
- Criteria for awards?
- Would condo special assessments be eligible for funding? Sarah will ask the town manager to ask town counsel.

Of note: Saint Vincent de Paul Society provides home repair grants for those who live, work, or go to school in Weston or Lincoln; Merriam Fund also assists with home repairs for Weston residents.

#### Quick updates:

- Accessory Dwelling Units: Sarah & Susan will gather more info.
- Greatland (former Liberty Mutual site) land swap was approved by Select Board, expected to close in about 90 days. Imai and Sarah will work on the RFP for a consultant to evaluate consolidated land for housing.
- Lexington Town Meeting passed MBTA multi-family zoning.
- Monyette Vickers has invited the Trust for a tour of Warren Ave in June. Christine will send a Doodle poll.
- Save the Date for May 20: Celebrate Weston and Spring Fling Day. Sarah will be looking for volunteers for the housing table. Raindate May 21.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 AM

Next meeting: Monday, May 15, at 7 pm on Zoom