

Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board Meeting
Approved Meeting Minutes
October 6, 2020

A meeting of the Salem Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board was held on Tuesday, October 6, 2020 at a Remote Zoom meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Members present: Mayor Kim Driscoll, Mickey Northcutt, Rebecca Curran, John Boris, Ben Anderson, Councilor Patricia Morsillo, Councillor McCarthy, and Councilor Ty Hapworth.

Staff present: Amanda Chiancola, Senior Planner.

Chair Mayor Kim Driscoll called the meeting to order with a roll call vote at 6:03 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Receive the 2020 Fiscal Year Report and vote on submitting it to the City Council.
Motion to submit the 2020 Fiscal Year Report to the City Council made by John Boris, seconded by Ben Anderson—passes unanimously.

- B. Review and discuss a draft inclusionary housing policy to send to the Planning Board.
Ms. Chiancola provides a summary of the draft inclusionary housing policy. She notes that this is just a starting point for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board discuss and edit. Mickey Northcutt says it is a thorough letter and thinks the Planning Board would agree in principal, the letter answers the question on what they have authority to push. Mr. Northcutt concurs with meeting with the Planning Board. Mr. Northcutt makes a motion to send the letter to the Planning Board with an invitation to a joint meeting.

Mayor Driscoll agrees a meeting to engage with the Planning Board. The Mayor notes this is a work around after not having the inclusionary housing policy, it doesn't have a density bonus to provide certainty that a project could get that, but that flexibility is partially within a planned unit development process. The Mayor and Councillor Hapworth suggest editing the letter to include adding that this policy would be in effect until there is an inclusionary housing ordinance in place since it would mirror this, and they wouldn't need a policy at that point. Councillor Hapworth agrees with the requesting a joint meeting with the Planning Board to see if this or whatever levers are available to us because there is a need and zoning changes take months and are not getting us to where we want to be.

Councillor Morsillo seconds that she says the letter is great. Councillor Morsillo says a meeting with the Planning Board would be a huge benefit especially since the City Council has pushed this off to them and she would like to be part of the discussion to hear what they think of the policy. While she does not see any issues with it, they are the experts with these types of permits and know what kind of push back they might get. Mayor Driscoll asks what the order should be, a meeting first or send the draft letter with a meeting request. Mr. Northcutt withdraws his first motion as the board members agree to send the letter in draft form to the Planning Board with a joint meeting invitation, which does not require a vote. Councillor McCarthy notes that an ordinance has more teeth than a policy, there is going to be a developer that is going to say they do not want to and there is no requirement. Councillor McCarthy explains that MAPC provide a

breakdown of options that outlined how many units could be created at various levels of affordability with various incentives- and the Council could not come to consensus on an option to make it work. So he questions 10 percent of the units at 80% area median income was done because that was the norm, what kind of teeth does the Planning Board have to change the requirements? Councillor Hapworth notes that it would be helpful to discuss other incentives with the Planning Board, incentives within their ability such as expedited permitting. He is not sure if developers would take advantage of it, but it is worth a discussion. Councillor McCarthy is in favor of the substance of the letter, it is a suggestion from us but when it comes to the Planning Board what options do they have to enforce this if a developer challenges this he thinks it is a good first step. Mayor Driscoll explains that the Planning Board was doing the 10% of the units at 80% of area median income as a policy that made sense so we would be thinking of this as the same approach but there is no doubt an ordinance would be better. It doesn't provide the flexibility density bonus so it might be hard to meet on some projects but it gives the Planning Board the ability to move the needle from 80% area median income to 60% area median income and when there is a project where that doesn't work from our policy if they move forward with it, we could weigh in on that.

- C. Staff to report to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board that the City has hired JM Goldson to prepare an updated Housing Needs Assessment.

Unfinished Business

- A. Public land updates- Mr. Northcutt did some research on leveraging affordable housing on public land. There are several communities do this some do it through procurement some do it through a form of inclusionary housing but they all have similar policy goals of prioritizing affordable housing with City land. Mr. Northcutt asks whether the Board might want to allocate funds to look at best practices from other communities and what might work well in Salem. Mayor Driscoll recommends starting with the current disposition of city land policy and think about a policy shift from there. Mr. Northcutt agrees it is something tangible and another policy we could do research on and make a recommendation to the City Council. It might get more support there seemed to be consensus on this and asks whether the Board should allocate funds towards a consultant to do some research. Councillor Hapworth agrees this is something that this is something that should come out of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board before we go back with inclusionary housing, recalling the time spent trying to fit this within inclusionary zoning when it probably did not belong there he thinks there would be broad support on the City Council for it. Mayor Driscoll notes that it is something staff could do it is just a matter of bandwidth. Councillor Hapworth asks if the next agenda could include a discussion on Cambridge's recent affordable housing overlay. Mayor Driscoll recommends circulating it out and having that dialogue. Councillor Morsillo suggests including a discussion on the next agenda about protecting our working-class neighborhoods such as the Prescott Endicott section around Steve's Market. There are 2-3 family homes, is there a way to preserve that housing stock as a way to preserve affordability in the City, there are other areas of the city that would fall under that description. Mayor Driscoll says where she sees a loss of affordability is when a three-family rental gets converted into a condo. Councillor Hapworth says while this is broad, he likes the direction Councillor Morsillo is going with this. There are very few walkable places downtown that are affordable to working class households. While it is broad and unformed, he wonders if there is an example out there such as a board or commission that developers would need to go to when converting buildings to luxury units. Mr. Northcutt mentions that the North Shore CDC will be updating their affordable housing strategy in 2021, they did that ten years ago when merging and creating the NSCDC. When they

do that he would like to take time on the agenda to present what they have done, provide data on who they are serving and get feedback from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board on their next goals, are there other areas where it might be possible to acquire properties. Although even in the Point Neighborhood, what they acquired in 2015 is not acquirable in 2020 given the increase cost. Mayor Driscoll notes that some other communities have addressed this by way of purchasing easements, acquiring right of first refusal we can add that to the list of things to discuss moving forward and identify what we want to prioritize.

Approval of the Minutes

A. September 1, 2020 draft minutes

Motion to approve the September 1, 2020 minutes by Mickey Northcutt, seconded by Councillor Hapworth—passes unanimously.

Public Comment

Mayor Driscoll opens the meeting up to public comment. No members of the public offer comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Councillor McCarthy, seconded by Mickey Northcutt—passes unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

Approved by the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board on 11/4/2020

Respectively submitted,
Amanda Chiancola, AICP
Senior Planner

Know your rights under the Open Meeting Law M.G.L. c. 30A § 18-25 and City Ordinance § 2-2028 through § 2-2033.