

HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

January 19, 2022

VIRTUAL MEETING

HAB Members: Roger Blood, Heather Hamilton, Mike Jacobs, Steve Heikin, Jonathan Klein, Rita McNally, Pam Goodman, Jennifer Raitt, Ginny Vaz, and Shawn O'Neil.

Staff: Virginia Bullock, Joe Viola, David Guzman, Kara Brewton, and Emily DeHoog

Guest: Michael Alperin, Executive Director of Brookline Housing Authority, and the public

Meeting was called to order at 5:32 pm by Roger Blood.

- HAB Member role call: Roger Blood, Heather Hamilton, Mike Jacobs (non-verbal "present"), Steve Heikin, Rita McNally, Jonathan Klein, Pam Goodman, and Jennifer Raitt.
- Staff role call: Virginia Bullock, Joe Viola, David Guzman, Kara Brewton, and Emily DeHoog

1. Approval of minutes from HAB meeting December 15, 2021

At 5:34 p.m. Steve Heiken made motion for minute approval. Roger, Mike, Jonathan, Rita, and Jenny approved the minutes. Pam abstained because she wasn't at the meeting and Ginny abstained because she was not at the prior meeting and has not yet been sworn in. Shawn O'Neil had not yet joined the Zoom meeting.

2. Updates on American Rescue Plan Act and Community Preservation Act Funding

Michael Alperin, Executive Director of Brookline Housing Authority, presented on their proposal for ARPA funding

- Capital needs request for state public housing BHA properties: Trustman Apartment St Buildings (86 units) and Egmont Street Veterans Buildings (120 units)
- BHA is asking for \$4-16 million of ARPA funding from Town
- Egmont (\$36.9 million needed to bring property into state of good repair- \$26.9 million needed for "priority 1 repairs") & Trustman Properties (\$16.7 million needed to bring property into state of good repair- \$9.02 million needed for "priority 1 repairs")
- Jonathan Klein would like to endorse their application and support BHA projects to the Select Board
- Possible matching opportunity to local commitments of ARPA funds with the MA Department of Housing and Community Development (2.5 to 1 match)

- HAB members asked questions and expressed support
- Roger said that HAB will send final ask with multiple projects to the Select Board for ARPA funding

At 5:56 p.m. Pam moved to enthusiastically support BHA's proposal for ARPA funds, Jonathan seconded. Roger, Heather, Mike, Steve, Ginny, Rita, Pam, and Shawn voted "yes".

- Joe Viola gave an overview of the Department of Planning and Community Development application for ARPA funding
- Over \$7 million was requested for ARPA funding from Brookline's Department of Planning and Community Development
 - 108 Center Street (\$3.375 in ARPA),
 - Kent Street (\$3.6 million in ARPA)
 - If 108 Center St gets ARPA funding, \$4.8 million of Housing Trust funds will be available for Kent St.
- ARPA funding would preserve Housing Trust funds to be used for other projects
- Mike asked about the status of Kent Street project. Joe explained they are trying to get a Letter of Intent. It is currently still in the Negotiating Committee which meets in executive session.

At 6:06 p.m. Roger opened up the meeting for public questions.

- Deborah Brown asked to talk about a proposal for ARPA funding from the Brookline Improvement Coalition (BIC)
 - Deborah talked about her support for BHA
 - BIC is putting in a request for ARPA funds. Deborah asked to get on the agenda for HAB to talk about the request.

3. Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority Communities (MBTA)– Review MA Department of Housing and Community Development Community (DHCD) Guidelines and Discussion

Kara Brewton, Director of Brookline's Department of Planning and Community Development gave a presentation

- Kara gave an overview of existing conditions in Brookline versus what MBTA communities require
- Kara also gave next steps for compliance to be an MBTA community

- Jonathan asked if the HPP consultants would give recommendations toward the MBTA communities. Kara said that the department wants the consultants to stay focused on the HPP and see how information from the HPP can be applied.
- Virginia added that Community Preservation Act is starting to gear up and committee will soon start to meet. Kara answered questions about the process.
- Money from CPA can be Project specific or allocation percentage of CPA funding going into a fund

4. Housing Production Plan – First Community Meeting on January 26th

- Joe talked about the agenda for the first community forum on January 26th and what the consultants have done in the process so far.
- Jonathan had a question about if recommendations and benchmarks would be already completed for the consultants to present in the last community forum. Emily responded that this meeting would be a discussion of what the recommendations and benchmarks should be with the public. She noted that the language for the topic will be updated to prevent confusion.

5. Proposed Changes to Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw – Assisted Living

- Roger presented the draft Amendment to the zoning Bylaw Section 4.08, Inclusionary Zoning for Assisted Living Projects. The amendment keeps the 15% of units being affordable (85% market rate). For the affordable units, people at 80% AMI would be targeted and allow up to 65% of income for the full cost of assisted living package (housing plus services).
- Roger noted that, in addition to adding a definition for Assisted Living Projects, changes also include taking out that Assisted Living had to be part of “Life Care Facility”. A HAB vote on this amendment will be needed at the February HAB meeting in order for the article to be filed before the Town Meeting Warrant closes.
- Ginny commented on the percentage of income to services and language choices in the bylaw. She recommended removing the word “costly” for assisted living services. Roger and Pam agreed. She also noted that the percent of income for housing and services is too high at 65%.
- Mike talked about the logistics of financing assisted living
- David Guzman talked about how the Proposed Changes to Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw will provide greater clarity for how the Town sets rent for assisted living for future projects
- Attendee Deborah Bennett commented that assisted living facilities vary quite a bit and there needs to be research into what each facility provides. There may be additional costs to their services that are necessary that will be have to paid out of pocket. She said that this needs to be

considered if 65% of people's income is going toward housing and services.

- Naomi Sweitzer commented on the percentage of income going toward services and asked if there could be a reduction of that percentage.
- Roger said that we are trying to get away from having to negotiate every deal with developers
- Michael said that Wellesley might be an example of how to do this. Virginia said we have that data.
- Virginia explained that our Inclusionary Zoning is not income based. It's based on a percentage of the income target. The amount for housing and services is based on 65% of the income of 80% of AMI, not as a percentage of the individual's actual income. She added that she has spoken with DHCD about the Heath St project and DHCD does not have a good formula for this.
- Mike said that it looks like we may need to do more research on this
- Rita commented on assisted living saying we need to carefully consider this topic, especially additional costs. She said we may want to not call it low income but call it middle income assisted living.
- Roger said there will be no difference in services between market rate residents and affordable residents. He also said public subsidies would need to be available in order to serve lower income levels.

6. New Business

- Roger announced his intent to reappoint Rita to the CDBG Committee for 2022.
- Rita talked about how it's shocking that we haven't been able to give more money to projects like the state BHA properties (including state and national levels)

7. Staff Updates

- 108 Center Street and 32 Marion St and submitted for one stop applications from the state last week. She also said there are units that are having lotteries.

Roger adjourned the meeting at 7:27 p.m.