



Town of Wellfleet
Wellfleet Affordable Housing Trust
Board of Trustees
Minutes of February 22, 2021

Present: Elaine McIlroy, Kathleen Nagle, Sharon Rule-Agger, Harry Sarkis Terkanian, Jim Hood, and Gary Sorkin. Mr. DeVasto joined the meeting at 5:44 PM.

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM by Mr. Terkanian.

1. Announcements and public comment. None
2. Status of transfer of affordable housing assets to the Trust. Mr. Terkanian reported that the town accountant declined to transfer the Gull Pond funds until the audit was complete. Mr. Sorkin reported on receipt of account disbursements but the statements lacked beginning balances. Ms. McIlroy estimates that approximately \$90,000 of the old housing trust balance are donations. Mr. Terkanian asked whether it made sense to request new donations be credited to this Trust. Mr. Sorkin noted that a new request will go out with the Spring tax bill mailing. Mr. Terkanian will raise the issue with the treasurer. The audit is anticipated to be completed around the end of March, resulting in a short window for operations this fiscal year. Mr. Sorkin noted that if the Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds proposed to be transferred to the Trust at the June 5th annual town meeting are approved there would be funding at that time.
3. Housing Action Plan, Coordination with the Housing Authority (HA) and Local Housing Partnership (LHP) and Trust Mission Statement. Mr. Terkanian reviewed briefly the goals and strategies in the existing housing action plan and asked whether that could be used as starting point. Mr. Terkanian noted the difference between a housing production plan and a housing action plan.
4. Mr. DeVasto joined the meeting at 5:44 PM.
5. Discussion on the Housing action plan continued. Ms. Nagle asked whether the two plans could be combined into a single document as at present. Ms. McIlroy noted that the housing production portions of the plan have state approval, but the plan is not a state certified plan, the difference relating to the production aspects of the plan. Mr. Terkanian suggested that there are three elements in an action plan: the goals; concrete steps to achieve the goals; and a revenue stream sufficient to support the concrete steps. The existing plan production goals were reviewed (60 housing units by 2027; 45 rental units and 15 ownership units, with units further broken down by unit size/occupancy.) The current plan strategies were also reviewed, some of which have been achieved and substantial progress has been made on others including a revenue stream estimated to reach about \$700,000 if town meeting acts favorable on this Spring's CPA funding proposal. Work on the plan's zoning action steps are continuing, in particular on accessory dwelling units. Mr. DeVasto noted that there have been zoning changes to allow cluster developments which include affordable

units on smaller parcels, but no projects have been forthcoming. A possible zoning amendment to allow year round use of condominiums was also discussed. Ms. Nagle noted that Truro has adopted a similar proposal and that Wellfleet has some smaller condominium complexes which are potential targets for conversion. This proposal has been previously considered by the Planning Board which has not resulted in a bylaw amendment. Ms. Nagle noted that converted cottage colony units if converted to year round would be much more affordable due to their size as compared with typical single family residences. Mr. Sorkin noted that the action plan should include the concrete steps needed to meet the plan goals. We do not have an action plan. A possible application for a Mass. Housing Partnership (MHP) grant to integrate an affordable housing trust with the Housing Authority was discussed. Only two towns will be selected by the MHP and it is a relatively small grant. The Housing Authority has inquired of their housing consultant whether they could produce a grant application before the March 5th deadline and will speak with the MHP to see if an from Wellfleet application would be viable.

6. On motion by Ms. McIlroy seconded by Mr. DeVasto after discussion it was unanimously voted by roll call vote (7 – 0) to “apply for the MHP Affordable Housing Trust Fund Intensive Technical Assistance Program grant.”
7. Discussion of short term rental tax receipts. Mr. Sorkin related information provided by the Community Development Partnership (CDP): Chatham is currently investigating this; Provincetown has discussed it; Orleans has tied housing funding to a percentage of its budget; other towns are also exploring this. Ms. McIlroy noted that Eastham is looking at funding a housing coordinator from the revenue stream, Brewster is discussing using half of the revenue stream, and that Orleans had previously committed rental tax receipts to wastewater. Ms. McIlroy noted that the current pandemic has created uncertainty in fiscal planning. Mr. DeVasto noted that this is a new revenue stream with a direct link to the housing shortfall/crisis. If the Town is going to do anything about funding housing this is the time, its rare for a new revenue stream to appear that is tied to the specific problem. Mr. DeVasto further felt that housing for families above 100% of Area Median Income (AMI) is important and lacks other sources of funding. Mr. Terkanian noted that perhaps authorization for funding for housing support above 100% of AMI might be found in a new Trust bylaw. Ms. McIlroy asked how specific we should be as to purpose. Mr. Terkanian expressed a preference for fewer program restrictions as providing more program flexibility. Ms. Rule-Agger suggested using examples of how the funding might be used such as purchasing housing or developable land. Ms. Nagle suggested that we speak in general rather than specific uses. Ms. Nagle asked whether the Town’s share of rental tax receipts could be increased. She understood that the Town’s share is currently at 4% and could go as high as 6%. Mr. DeVasto noted that Wellfleet is toward the higher end to the permissible tax rate range. Ms. Nagle noted that in her experience there was little resistance from renters to paying the tax. Mr. Sorkin reported that he and Ms. McIlroy met with Cape Cod Commission staff to prepare materials for presentations supporting this request. He asked whether we should ask for all of the revenue. Ms. Nagle felt we should ask for the entire rental tax revenue stream.

8. Future meeting agenda items. Mr. Terkanian will put discussion of possible Town, state, and federal land for housing on the next agenda. Ms. McIlroy asked for an agenda item for reports on activities of the Housing Authority and LHP and other housing related activities. Mr. Sorkin noted the 95 Lawrence Road Task Force will meet this coming Wednesday, the LHP will meet this Thursday and the Housing Authority the following Wednesday.
9. Future meeting schedule. The next meeting will be March 15, 2021 at 5:30 PM.
10. Approval of minutes of February 8, 2021. Mr. Terkanian noted changes to item H of the draft minutes changing \$3,000 to \$10,000 and correction of two spelling errors. It was moved by Ms. Nagle seconded by Mr. DeVasto and after discussion unanimously voted (7 – 0) by roll call vote to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2021 meeting as corrected.
11. Adjournment. It was moved by Mr. DeVasto, seconded by Mr. Terkanian and unanimously voted (7 – 0) by roll call vote to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 6:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Harry Sarkis Terkanian, Chair

Public documents:

1. Wellfleet Housing Needs Assessment and Action Plan 2017 (Town web site)
2. Draft minutes of February 8, 2021