

Fair Housing Committee Minutes
July 28, 2017

Mimi Hollister, Scribe

Present: Ann Cohen, Ben Day, Andrew Hare, Mimi Hollister (Mark Podgur came at the very end) Don Gardner, guest

April minutes were approved as read.

The following is related to the morning meeting with Becky, John McGinn, Judy Jacobi, Moses Grader, and Kurt James and Mimi Hollister from Fair Housing:

The draft application to MAPC for a housing study was approved as written by Becky Curran Cutting. Copies of the draft were handed out and also earlier attached to emails. The letter to MAPC from the Fair Housing Committee to accompany the application was approved as revised by Becky.

Ben Day was advised that because he is not a Marblehead resident, he can not be a member of this committee. It was agreed that we will create an Advisory Committee for those who are interested but for whatever reasons are not on the committee. Ben will also check among his staff if there is anyone who lives in Marblehead and who would like to apply to be appointed as the Counseling Center representative.

Recommendations by Becky and others to communicate with residents of current affordable housing units through letters to them were discussed. This could be a resource to residents to educate about issues they face, to invite to our meetings, and just to connect more. Periodic education on the website about down-payment assistance, any affordable housing issues and resources, pictures, etc. would be helpful. We also need to educate the Zoning Board of Appeals about affordable unit requirements, such as energy efficiency, in the event that another 40B project comes up.

We were encouraged to set more specific short-term goals and tasks. Kurt pointed out that our goals from the beginning have been to identify land and/or buildings for affordable housing and to secure public money so that we have the support for securing private monies to acquire such housing.

The Selectmen present agreed to communicate with the other committees that they want represented on Fair Housing to recruit some new members. They advised that we need to elect a Chair, a Vice-Chair and a Secretary.

Other matters:

Kurt James had a suggestion to bring to this meeting. Since we seem to have trouble finding buyers for affordable units at the Highlands, might we consider asking Ted Moore if those units

could be turned into rental housing, for which there is a much greater demand? Harbor Light could manage the rentals so that Moore would not need to worry about collecting rents or the upkeep. The Committee agreed that this seemed like a good idea to pursue, so Kurt will bring it to the Selectmen and explore with Ted Moore this possibility.

It was decided that the election of officers and the assignment of tasks suggested in the morning meeting be postponed until September. Summer is just too difficult to get full attendance. By then we may also have some new possible members through the recruiting being done. Both Ann Cohen and Kurt James have agreed to be on an Advisory Committee if we need to make room for others to be among the nine. With Ben being switched over, we now have 2 vacancies. We could ask Advisory members to do specific tasks where needed and they would not be obliged to come to meetings every month.

It was suggested that someone from Harborlight Community Partners should be invited to meet with us and do a presentation in the near future.

Meeting adjourned.