

Fair Housing Committee Minutes

January 21, 2021

Present: Debby Larkin, Chair; Mimi Hollister, Scribe; Katie Farrell, Teri McDonough, Dirk Isbrandtsen
Guests: Lou Meyi, Ed Nilsson

Minutes of November meeting approved.

Communications: Debby and Dirk reported on a meeting with Jason Silva and Becky Cutting and Kurt James

Highlights: The new Housing Production Plan Implementation Committee, appointed by the Selectmen, is mostly formed. Members include Moses Grader from Selectmen, Kurt James from Fair Housing, Terri McDonough from Housing Authority, Barton Heidt from Planning Board, Lou Meyi as Member at Large, someone from the Finance Committee, Town Administrator Jason Silva and Town Planner Becky Cutting.

There is an open seat for the HPP Committee and Dirk will ask to be on it. Also, Ed Nilsson expressed interest in being on it and will check to be sure Barton is indeed interested.

Their early work will be determining a location for a project – possibly and perhaps best the Coffin School among other possibilities – and then doing public education with forums, following the very successful format of the Gerry School dispensation. Jason and Becky both cautioned, and all agreed, that any project needs to be slowly and carefully cultivated with advance public education about the need for affordable housing and public input as the process goes forward. There is another grant proposal to MAPC (Metropolitan Area Planning Council) for a Technical Assistance Grant to help get all this off the ground. It is expected that the town will get the grant. There is a recommendation from Kurt James that Harborlight should be brought into any project discussions as a partner and also developers should be part of educational forums as well as the Fair Housing Committee.

Discussion of the Affordable Housing Trust and Home Funds: there is about \$120,000 in the Trust currently. There are two at large positions open for Trustees of the Trust. Dirk will ask to fill one of those spots. Teri received a request from someone about donating to the Trust. Dirk will find out if that is possible.

Teri asked if Home Funds could be used for fuel assistance, since there is a great need this winter. She said other towns use it that way. Dirk will check with Becky and offer Teri's help with the red tape involved. These funds go away if not used!

Open seat on the Fair Housing Committee when Karl Renney's term expires in May: agreed that we need another banker. Carl Edwards and Jim Nye at National Grand and Marcia Lewis at Marblehead Bank were suggested contacts.

Co-Chair of the Fair Housing Committee: Dirk Isbrandtsen was elected unanimously to co-chair with Debby.

Review of assigned tasks:

Debby will tell Jason that Dirk is now the co-chair of Fair housing and also wishes to be on the HPP Committee and to be a Trustee for the Affordable Housing Trust.

Dirk will email Becky about use of Home Funds for fuel assistance and get back to Teri.

He will also email Jason and Becky about public contributions to the Affordable Housing Trust and get back to Teri on that.

And he will ask how Fair Housing can help with Public Forums, recruiting developers, for example?

He will also follow up with Karl Renney about possible bankers on Fair Housing and email Jim Nye for his possible recommendations – maybe Carl Edwards at National Grand – and Marcia Lewis at Marblehead Bank.

Other matters:

Katie recommended the book, *The Blue Print for the Greening of Affordable Housing*.

It was noted that David DePew is moving out of town so the Selectmen are down to three members until the next election.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Mimi Hollister, Scribe