

Fair Housing Committee
Minutes of November 21, 2022
Mimi Hollister, Scribe

Present in person: Debby Larkin and Dirk Isbrandtsen, Co-Chairs; Joe Whipple, Katie Farrell, Erin Noonan, Thatcher Kezer. On Zoom: Mimi Hollister, Kurt James, Bob Neuss, Teri McDonough
Guests: Lou Meyi

Minutes of the October 17 meeting were approved.

Lengthy discussion about the Select Board vote to re-structure the Fair Housing Committee. Thatcher explained that the Select Board felt a need to strengthen the Fair Housing Committee to accomplish its important work. It should be kept at 9 members to be manageable, and Thatcher sees himself as the maestro of resources. The Housing Production Plan Implementation Committee (HPPIC) has been dormant for a time and will be resurrected in December with representation from the FHC as well as the other designated interests to accomplish its work. Erin Noonan will be the Select Board representative on the Fair Housing Committee and Thatcher Kezer will be the chair. This will be finally voted on at the next Select Board meeting but seems to be as follows: Becky Curran-Cutting, Town Planner, will be a member. Teri will represent the Housing Authority; Katie Farrell the Disability Commission; Dirk and Debby and Mimi and Joe will remain as members of FHC. Kurt and Bob volunteered to be alternates and Frank, who was not present, will be asked to be an alternate. When a regular member is missing an alternate may stand in and may vote. Otherwise, an alternate may participate fully but not vote.

Lengthy discussion about the Public Forum, conducted by the Planning Board on 11/15/22 regarding a Town Warrant Article in 2023 about allowing accessory dwelling units (ADUs) by right with certain restrictions as determined by the Planning Board. There was not sufficient publicity about the forum. Erin scrambled to get the word out to her networks. The discussion was about the importance of good publicity with such programs and how to do so creatively, which would be one of the tasks of this committee going forward. It was noted that the town in general needs to get better at publicizing important meetings.

Dirk spoke of the Marblehead Community Housing Corporation whose management details used to be a big part of the work of the FHC. Harborlight is now the sole owner of the corporation, which happened when the management of the Sewall Building was turned over to them. Dirk also raised the issue of the Affordable Housing Trust and the important part it can

play as the depository of money to further the cause. Thatcher suggested that the Trust Fund and its Board, which is mainly the Select Board, is like a bank that receives requests for money for projects. Erin suggested that the HPPIC and the FHC will need to create a subcommittee to hash out guidelines of what money can be used for and also how to generate more funds as well as proposals for particular projects.

There was acknowledgement that Cathy Hoog, Executive Director of the Housing Authority, is a very knowledgeable friend to FHC who looks forward to working with us. Thatcher spoke of his experience under the Governor Deval Patrick administration when he was a town mayor that gave him an appreciation of the need and the challenge. Dirk spoke of Andrew DeFranza, Executive Director of Harborlight, as another very knowledgeable and helpful resource person as we look to better publicity and developing projects.

Meeting adjourned.

Next meeting is December 19, 2022 (later canceled to meet again in January, 2023)