

**MINUTES OF THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST
FUND BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING ON
TUESDAY, DEC 5, 2023, AT 6:30 PM THROUGH A
WEB AND PHONE MEETING**

Present for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board of Trustees: Ralph Blessing (Chair), Laura Burwick, Sharona Cowan, Frances Lane, and Rob Roqueta.

Present for staff: Emily Gordon, Principal Housing Planner.

Chairman Blessing called the meeting to order at 6:34pm.

Mr. Roqueta made a motion to change the agenda to consider Approval of up to \$85,000 of Linkage Fees for Temporary Funding of Housing Coordinator Position first at the request of the Mayor's Office, seconded by Ms. Burwick, which carried on a vote of 4-0-0 (Blessing, Burwick, Cowan & Roqueta).

1. Approval of up to \$85,000 of Linkage Fees for Temporary Funding of Housing Coordinator Position (up to 6 months)

A memo was submitted by the Mayor's Office to the Board updating the request to \$150,000 and up to 18 months and outlining the need for the request. The memo was then read into the record.

This position was in the 2023-2024 Operating Budget request but was cut by the Board of Finance.

David Stein joined the meeting at 6:49pm.

The Personnel Commission previously approved the Housing Coordinator position. The job description was read into the record.

The following was discussed:

- About 67% of housing Fix-It complaints were directed to the Health Department and 33% was not under the authority of any specific City agency.
- An ordinance was recently passed through the Board of Representatives that now allows the City to fine any building for not informing residents of a downed elevator or having it fixed in a timely manner.
- The role would have no special or specific authority.
- Long-term funding for the position would be requested as part of the 2025-2026 Operating Budget.
- The Law Department has determined that the Affordable Housing Trust Fund may use Linkage Fees for staffing.
- \$1,425,640.82 of funding is available to allocate and \$14,904,329 is payable to the fund from three separate projects.

Mr. Stein made a motion to approve \$150,000 of Linkage Fees for Temporary Funding of Housing Coordinator Position (up to 18 months) at the request of the Mayor's Office, seconded

by Mr. Blessing, which failed on a vote of 2-4-0 (Blessing and Stein in favor, and Burwick, Cowan and Roqueta against).

Mr. Stein made a motion to resume the regular agenda, seconded by Mr. Roqueta, which carried on a vote of 6-0-0 (Blessing, Burwick, Cowan, Lane, Roqueta & Stein).

2. Approval of September 12, 2023 Minutes

Ms. Burwick moved that the Board approve drafted minutes from the September 12, 2023 meeting. Ms. Lane seconded this motion which carried 6-0-0 (Blessing, Burwick, Cowan, Lane, Roqueta & Stein).

3. Approval of the 2024 Meeting Schedule

Pacific House submitted an application too late for the December 5, 2023 meeting so it would be helpful if the Board met in January to address that application.

Ms. Lane moved that the Board approve the 2024 Meeting Schedule. Ms. Burwick seconded this motion which carried 6-0-0 (Blessing, Burwick, Cowan, Lane, Roqueta & Stein).

4. Balance of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund

\$3,140,640.82 is currently in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Account (\$2,131,265.95 in Linkage and \$1,009,374.87 in Zoning/Fee-in-Lieu).

The Board previously allocated \$375,000 to Pacific House and \$1,350,000 to the Housing Development Fund (totaling \$1,725,000), leaving \$1,415,640.82 unallocated in the account.

The Housing Development Fund provided an update that there were unanticipated difficulties with the existing long-term leases on the 95 Elmcroft site so it is unlikely they will move forward with that site in the short-term. They are in the process of finding another site and would be seeking a transfer of the award to do a similar project on that new site which would include 45 units. HDF should submit a letter explaining that the project will not move forward. They can then submit a new application for a separate project.

The Zoning Board approved three projects – 68 Seaview Ave, Landmark 3 and 210 Long Ridge – which include a total of \$14,904,329 in fee-in-lieu payments that will be due when the projects apply for a building permit.

If a project does not get built fee-in-lieu is not paid.

Fee-in-lieu funding for The Smyth building of \$4.4 million is held in escrow for St. John's Tower. If the Zoning Board does not extend the agreement in March it would go into the Trust Fund account.

Ms. Burwick made a motion to change the agenda to consider Application SAHTF - \$750,000 Charter Oak Communities Application for Oak Park Phase I, seconded by Ms. Lane, which carried on a vote of 6-0-0 (Blessing, Burwick, Cowan, Lane, Roqueta & Stein).

5. Application SAHTF - \$750,000 Charter Oak Communities Application for Oak Park Phase I

Oak Park Phase I is the first of three phases to demolish and rebuild a 1940's State sponsored affordable housing development. This first phase calls for the demolition of 60 units and construction of 61 units. Units will be larger and more affordable than existing units (60% AMI compared to 80% AMI). The project has received 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credits, state bond funds, fee-in-lieu, and capital funds. Increases in interest and insurance costs have created a deficit for Phase I of development, and total development cost is estimated to be \$40,452,972. 9% Tax Credits make up nearly 40% of the project funding and will expire if the project is not able to move forward quickly.

The following was discussed:

- Every existing resident has been temporarily relocated on-site or off-site and will have the option to return. The 19 project-based vouchers will be used for the lowest income residents who wish to return.
- The development would leave the State Moderate Program as each phase is developed, similar to the Lawnhill Terrace phased project. This will be a 100% Tax Credit project and 19 of those units will have the project-based vouchers.
- Units will be one-third larger, have additional bathrooms per unit where appropriate and 40 additional parking spaces.
- \$3,452,000 of fee-in-lieu funding was previously allocated by the Zoning Board to this project.
- 50% of the \$3,561,009 Developer Fee would be deferred, but developer fees are required.
- 35 units will be townhouses and 26 units will be located in a multifamily building with community space and other amenities.
- All townhouse units will have washers and dryers and all units will have appliances, while at the existing development all residents are required to provide their own appliances.

Ms. Lane made a motion to approve the \$750,000 Charter Oak Communities Application for Oak Park Phase I, seconded by Mr. Stein, which carried on a vote of 6-0-0 (Blessing, Burwick, Cowan, Lane, Roqueta & Stein).

Mr. Stein made a motion to resume the regular agenda, seconded by Mr. Roqueta, which carried on a vote of 6-0-0 (Blessing, Burwick, Cowan, Lane, Roqueta & Stein).

6. Application SAHTF - \$12,500 Neighborhood Housing Services Application for 11-15 Woodland Ave

The property at 11-15 Woodland Avenue provides housing for formerly homeless individuals. The requested funding is for the replacement of electrical panels and breakers which were previously recalled, which has the potential to be a health and safety issue. Insurance now requires these be replaced to re-new the policy.

Mr. Stein made a motion to approve the \$12,500 Neighborhood Housing Services Application for 11-15 Woodland Ave, seconded by Mr. Roqueta, which carried on a vote of 6-0-0 (Blessing, Burwick, Cowan, Lane, Roqueta & Stein).

7. Approval of up to \$25,000 of Linkage Fees for Temporary Funding of BMR Ownership Program Compliance Administration (6 months to 12 months)

The City currently partners with HDF on a case-by-case basis to resell units, however the administrative fee is charged to new low-income buyers. There is an opportunity for an administrator to act as the City's Affordable Housing Manager in a formal capacity in the case of foreclosures, as well as take a proactive approach on compliance issues by developing a communication strategy with current program homeowners.

Ms. Lane made a motion to table the Approval of up to \$25,000 of Linkage Fees for Temporary Funding of BMR Ownership Program Compliance Administration (6 months to 12 months), seconded by Ms. Cowan, which carried on a vote of 6-0-0 (Blessing, Burwick, Cowan, Lane, Roqueta & Stein).

8. Old Business

None.

9. New Business

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Lane called for adjournment of the meeting at 10:08pm, seconded by Ms. Cowan and carried on a vote of 6-0-0 (Blessing, Burwick, Cowan, Lane, Roqueta & Stein).

NOTE: These proceedings were recorded on video and are available for viewing through the City of Stamford's web page – www.stamfordct.gov.