



Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board of Trustees

Date: October 28, 2021
Time: 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM
Location: Conducted via remote participation

DRAFT Minutes

Kelly began the meeting with a round of introductions. As this was the first meeting of the Trust, members were sent into breakout groups to spend ten minutes introducing themselves and sharing what about affordable housing is exciting to them. MaryAnn shared about Haywood House in Newton, and Neal shared his discussion with Jaclyn about homeownership as a mechanism for racial and wealth building equality and introducing sustainability as part of affordable housing. Karen shared her excitement about the conversation and interest in affordable housing that she's been seeing in Arlington over the past year.

Jenny led the Trust through the process of developing a group agreement. She explained that group agreements help set the tone for how the group can be successful together, how they want people to conduct themselves at a meeting, how members can support one another, and what standards they will hold themselves and the group accountable to. The draft is included at the end of this document.

Jenny noted the Trust webpage (<https://www.arlingtonma.gov/town-governance/boards-and-committees/affordable-housing-trust-fund-board>) where there are links to the bylaw, Massachusetts Housing Partnership Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Guidebook, and other related documents.

Regarding the Declaration of Trust, Jenny shared that Town Council is assisting in drafting a Declaration of Trust, which sets the trust authority, rules and regulations, which are already codified in the bylaw, and establishes the powers of the trust and ability to convey title. The Select Board will weigh in on the final draft of the Declaration of Trust before it becomes final.

Neil asked about insurance or protection for Trust members. Trust members are special municipal employees, and thereby covered by the Town's insurance policy. By state law, there is a limit to liability for municipalities, so the Town's insurance policy covers any agent of the Town up to that amount. If legal questions come up at future points, it is recommended to consult with Town Counsel.

Regarding the Trust's account, Jenny noted that the comptroller and the finance director confirmed that we will establish a trust account and move funding into that account. At present, the Town has two funds to move into this account: one from the Symmes development (now Arlington360), which has \$100,000, the other is a smaller amount which may have come from payouts from the inclusionary zoning bylaw. The Trust also has some funding from short-term rentals, of which a marginal percent of short-term rental fees is dedicated to affordable housing. The Select Board just voted to sign onto the Transfer Fee Coalitions Bill, however that bill is in limbo for now. Jenny also shared that she applied for funding through the Community Preservation Act to seed the account for future action. When we have a treasurer, we will establish the account, and make sure we understand communication between the Trust Treasurer and the Town Treasurer.

Karen asked about ARPA funding and whether funds would be transferred from that funding into the Trust. Jenny noted that the Select Board approved funding for affordable housing, some of which may go into the Trust. The Select Board has designated funding toward affordable housing unit production and deepening affordability of housing units in the pipeline, which most directly relates to the work of the Trust. Eric explained that under each category of ARPA funding there may be some flexibility for moving money between subcategories.

Jenny shared that at future meetings, the Trust will need to develop an action plan. An action plan is a one to five year plan that outlines goals for the year and actions the Trust will take in order to achieve them. The actions could be either policy oriented, a process for others to access funds, a process for raising more funds, etc. The action plan will communicate to the CPA Committee and other organizations what the Trust intends to do with any funding or grant received.

Kelly shared an overview of information provided at the September 14 Housing Plan Community Forum. The Housing Plan is an update to the 2016 Housing Production Plan, and will serve as a five year plan for the development and preservation of affordable housing. Kelly shared what a housing production plan is, its components, and a brief overview of the needs assessment and related challenges. The Trust was invited to attend the November 9 presentation of the draft Housing Plan to learn more about the draft goals and actions.

At the next meeting, the Trust will review the Declaration of Trust, and will designate officers: chair, vice chair, treasurer, and clerk. Jaquelyn had expressed interest in serving as treasurer. Jenny asked Trust members to consider if there is a position they would like to serve in for discussion at the next meeting. The Trust will also start talking about the action plan. Kelly will share the draft Declaration of Trust as soon as possible to provide the Trust time to review in advance of the next meeting so that it can go before the Select Board at their 11/22 meeting.

For future meetings, the Trust agreed to setting a regular meeting schedule, which will be the third Thursday of the month at 8:30am while the group meets remotely. Kelly will serve as DPCD liaison and coordinator for the Trust. Jenny will also remained involved regarding issues with funding, ARPA, and helping secure funding to get the Trust started.

Upcoming Meetings: November 18, December 16

Affordable Housing Trust Fund Group Agreement - DRAFT

- **Be fully present**
Limit distractions, show up as fully as possible to the extent that you are able.
Take care of yourself as needed.
- **Use “I” statements (speak based on your own experience)**
Speak from your own experience, where you’re coming from, rather than projecting your experience onto others. Frame your comments about how you are thinking and feeling, and avoid making assumptions about others and how they are feeling.
- **Take space, make space**
If you’ve been speaking a lot, consider listening to others. If you often talk a lot, make sure to share information geared toward the goal of the meeting. If you have not spoken up much, consider speaking up/contributing. Every member’s input is valuable.
- **Share the lesson, not the story (although if there’s time, it’s helpful to hear the story)**
Focus on sharing outcomes and lessons learned. If there is time, sharing the story can be helpful for context and visualize the issue/concern.
- **One microphone**
Talking over others can be very disruptive to the flow of the conversation. If someone is talking, it is important to recognize that they have the proverbial mic and wait for them to finish before you respond or join in.
- **Joint inquiry over advocacy**
Approach our work together as a process of inquiry together and sharing our perspectives. There is a time and a place for advocacy, but we should prioritize exploration of opportunities instead of a competing over ideas.
- **Use simple, accessible language, avoid jargon or acronyms**

Please use simple, accessible language and avoid jargons and undefined acronyms. If you use an acronym, make sure to define it for the group.

- Listen for understanding
Focus on listening and appreciating what others are trying to say, not only what you are hearing.
- Offer what you can, don't be afraid to ask for what you need
You are responsible for your actions and for ideas you share. You are also responsible for taking care of yourself in the meeting.
- Lean into the edges
Some of our conversations might put us at the end of our comfort zone and trying on new ideas. Some of these conversations might be uncomfortable, and each of us might experience that during a meeting. If you're experiencing discomfort, that's okay. It is often a sign of growth.
- Seek to build consensus, but accept and expect lack of closure
We are not always going to solve problems or come to final conclusions in a single meeting. There may be ideas, concepts, conversations that we may want to go deeper with. We hope to be able to do that in future meetings, but it's important to acknowledge that it may not always happen in the span of a single meeting.
- Think outside the box
Sometimes we are used to thinking of certain structures or frameworks for our work. Dare to think outside the structures we are used to and unlock your creative energy.
- Dare to dream
Be bold with your ideas and dare to dream big.
- Everyone contributes energy to this space
We each have our own experience and mood that we contribute to our meeting space. We welcome different energy and strongly feel it will get us closer to our desired outcome.
- Mutual respect, always
We respect each other as individuals, and for the perspective that we each bring to our discussions.

Adapted from MAPC Group Agreements Guide through discussion with the members of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board of Trustees.

Draft: 10/28/2021