



## Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board of Trustees

Date: April 14, 2022  
Time: 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM  
Location: Conducted via remote participation

Attendees: Karen Kelleher, Phil Tedesco, Neal Mongold, Jaclyn Pacejo, Calpurnya Roberts, Eric Helmuth, Ben Bradlow

Staff: Jennifer Raitt, Kelly Lynema

### Minutes

#### 1. Review and Approve Minutes of March 10, 2022

Jaclyn moved approval of the March minutes, seconded by Neal. The minutes of March 10, 2022 were approved unanimously.

#### 2. Housing Plan update

Eric provided an update on the Housing Plan presentation to the Select Board and what the AHTF can do to help. He discussed how and why the Select Board had tabled the plan, which was regarding Article 38 and two Select Board members' reservations about the strategy to allow two-family buildings in what are now single-family districts.

Karen expressed her concern that the Select Board not focus on one strategy and delay a plan when the Town has a need for a range of strategies. She indicated she would submit comments to this effect.

Eric acknowledged that the Select Board decision to table the plan could be misunderstood as hesitation about the plan as a whole, but noted that there wasn't any hesitancy from the Select Board regarding the importance of having an HPP.

Neal clarified that the delay was primarily due to Article 38, and suggested that with the ARB's vote, he hopes the Select Board will take up the approval of the plan quickly given new information.

The Trust discussed the role of an HPP in the Town's safe harbor status. Jenny explained that right now we have a certified HPP, and if there was a comprehensive permit application the ZBA could deny the application if it felt it did not meet local

needs. The certification lasts until September 17. She noted that we don't currently have an HPP, since our prior plan expired. Holding up the HPP adoption is unfortunate because it can slow down the Trust, as well as other planning and community development efforts.

Eric suggested the Select Board tabling the plan reflected a desire to have the same discussion the ARB had. While staff met with Select Board members individually to discuss the plan, they had not had a public dialogue about it. Eric said that he would ask his Select Board colleagues to resume the discussion and adoption of the HPP.

### **3. Review draft Action Plan outline and related materials (60 minutes)**

Karen thanked working group (Calpurnyia, Jaclyn, Neal, Kelly) for meeting weekly to prepare this Action Plan outline. She asked for comments from the Trust by April 21, when the Working Group would next meet, and invited Trustees to attend the Working Group meeting.

#### **Action Plan**

Karen then presented an overview of the Action Plan outline. The Working Group recommends developing a five-year Action Plan, as three years is not sufficient to move the dial on affordable housing. The Action Plan will define what affordable housing is to the Trust, the need for affordable housing in Arlington based on data points Jaclyn pulled from the HPP and Fair Housing Action Plan, and information demonstrating that Arlington does not currently have enough affordable housing. Jaclyn and Kelly are working to update the infographic from the 2016 HPP to illustrate the need.

Karen facilitated a discussion among the Trust regarding draft priorities and principles, including what the proportion of funding to be dedicated to affordable housing for individuals making 50% to 60% AMI to align with Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) versus the amount for households making an extremely low-income (30% AMI), and low to moderate income. Some of this will depend on what the consultant for the Action Plan advises. In general, the Trust wanted to focus on groups with the greatest unmet housing need, align target AMIs with federal subsidies, and retain some flexibility for income levels should an opportunity arise to acquire and preserve property currently occupied by households who rent.

Ben discussed developing homeownership units as opposed to rental units, noting that if the Trust wants to address affordability for households making 60% AMI or less, the most feasible route is through rental housing. Phil added that the Trust should focus on subsidy for creating the most housing for the greatest number of people and suggested that the Trust may want to have some goals regarding regulatory changes such as an affordable housing overlay. Calpurnyia added that the Trust should include rental and homeownership in their commitment as we're seeing too many people get left behind.

## **Community Engagement Plan**

Calpurnyia presented an overview of the community engagement plan, since the Trust's draft goals and strategies will be taken to the public and the Trust will be getting feedback from them and stakeholders. The community engagement plan has been designed to motivate residents to participate in the process going forward, gain alignment around affordable housing needs, and integrate the public's perspective into the plan. This includes prioritizing the voices of those who are typically underrepresented in Town and specifically in public engagement processes. Leadership is also included in the plan, as getting their buy-in is critical to the Trust's work moving forward.

The plan identifies target populations, who is included in that population, strategies for engagement, and main places to advertise. Calpurnyia has proposed a number of ways to engage; for underrepresented residents, the Trust will host listening sessions with 10 people max where people currently are and compensate them for their time. For the general public, the Trust can administer an online survey and street intercept survey, which is more time consuming and intensive. We will need volunteers for three days, two hours a day, to stand at key intersections.

The engagement plan includes group discussions with leadership in town to build common ground and leverage this project to think about the future and get them on board with the plan. Karen noted that the Trust will probably need to do at least one or two public meetings for the general public.

Phil appreciated the emphasis on getting more people involved in this and paying them for their time, as the Trust needs to hear from those most acutely affected by housing unaffordability. Ben added that the plan makes sense, particularly the inclusion of groups that aren't often engaged. The Trust needs to be clear about the incentive for participating and what participants can expect to get from their time—what would make it worth their while to participate? Calpurnyia asked whether other groups could assist with creating conversations around housing. Karen and Calpurnyia are speaking with Katherine Levine-Einstein about the design of larger public meetings.

## **Proposed strategies**

Karen discussed proposed strategies with the caveat that this is where the Trust will be seeking the most input from the consultant. Strategies include attracting experienced affordable housing developers, acquiring and rehabbing existing housing to convert to affordable housing, incentivizing new construction, creating homeownership opportunities for LMI households, preserving and modernizing existing affordable housing, and increasing and/or deepening the affordability of existing and future housing developments. The Trust discussed adding the additional principle of protecting residents from displacement to the strategies.

### **Goals and resources required**

Karen noted that the actual Action Plan will not be released as a document until after the Trust goes through the public engagement process, since that will inform the final plan. She discussed the new scope of work for a consultant:

- Review, advise, support initial goals and priority strategies.
- Support public engagement process and collaboration with Town bodies and housing organizations [being substantive expert, not facilitating and planning the meetings]
- Preparation of action plan [work actively with the working group to get to a draft action plan to put out to the public, public comment period]
- Support adoption and approval of action plan [will need approval by select board]

The Trust discussed the schedule, which originally was February through July. The decision was to extend the timeline through the summer.

*Meeting adjourned at 10:03am*