

Winchester Housing Partnership Board
Minutes for the Meeting of January 18, 2023

Present: Chair John Suhrbier, Philip Bushey, Diab Jerius, Marty Jones, Naomi DeLairre, Steve Campbell, Lisa Matrondola, Felicity Tuttle, Michelle Bergstrom, Cathy Boyle, David Miller and Allan Rodgers, who prepared these minutes.

Absent: Michael Bettencourt.

John Suhrbier began the meeting by announcing that as a result of this year's annual appointment process the Town Moderator has appointed Marty Jones and Steve Campbell as at-large members for the two open terms.

The Board next considered draft minutes of the meetings on November 16 and December 14, 2022 which John Suhrbier had circulated prior to the meeting. The Board unanimously approved the December 14 meeting minutes, with two abstentions by members who were not present at that meeting; and the November 16 minutes with two changes.

The Board discussed the departure of Town Planner Brian Szekely. A job description is being finalized and the Town hopes to issue this by the end of the week. John had the opportunity to meet with Brian just before his last day. Brian believes an important need, challenge, and opportunity for Winchester is to develop smaller multi-family housing projects rather than relying exclusively on larger developments, with the current nine unit 87-89 Cross Street Friendly 40B proposal being an excellent example of this kind of smaller project.

Brain also mentioned that Toole Design recently had completed a parking study for Winchester's downtown area. It concluded, consistent with past analyses, that there are enough parking places in the Town Center. Making the best use of these spaces, though, depends on how this already existing parking inventory is regulated and managed.

Marty Jones reported that the Municipal Housing Trust has adopted a mission statement and now will work on goals and priorities. Marty will distribute the mission statement to Board members.

Building on a recommendation of the Winchester Housing Coalition, the Board next discussed the possibility of establishing an information base on housing matters, and agreed that this would be useful and also consistent with the desire to improve town communications. This information could be placed under a single tab on the Town's website. Such an information base, though, should have a single a curator, with the Housing Partnership Board being one but not the only possibility.

Diab Jerius reported that the Master Plan Implementation Committee has three members and still is looking for additional members, including the possibility of representation from the Housing Partnership Board.

The following project updates then were discussed:

- 1) DHCD and representatives from the development team, Select Board, Planning Board, and Housing Partnership Board visited the *87-89 Cross Street* site on January 9 where Mario Covino has proposed building a nine unit mixed income rental development. Two of the units would be rented to households earning no more than 50% of the Boston Area Median Income. Things look positive for approval of the Preliminary Application by DHCD, after which the developer and the Town will request that the Zoning Board of Appeals conduct a Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit Public Hearing.
- 2) Civico has submitted a somewhat revised design plan for the *Waterfield* site. The Select Board is seeking more information on the interplay between this development and the reconstruction of the Winchester commuter rail train station and also the operational feasibility of rear access to the commercial buildings currently located on Waterfield Road.
- 3) David Miller reported that the Conservation Commission voted unanimously to reject the proposed development for 10 Converse Place as not satisfying the Massachusetts and Winchester Wetlands Protection Acts. The next step is for the developer to decide whether to accept or to appeal this decision, with an appeal being the more likely choice.
- 4) Jennifer Goldson has been selected to help design the zoning changes required to bring the Town into compliance with the State's Section 3A rules for more as-of-right multi-family housing located near the downtown transit station. An Action Plan for this work was submitted to DHCD in December. For Winchester, zoning changes in the CBD can be combined with zoning changes along the adjacent North Main St. corridor.
- 5) The mixed income rental developments on Cambridge St. and River St. are expected to be completed late in August. The Board discussed the possibility of holding a public information session at some point during the spring to help inform Winchester residents of these new housing options.

The Board selected February 15 as the date of the next meeting, starting at 7:30.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.