

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SOMERVILLE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

Mary Cassesso, Managing Trustee

Trustees

Ben Ewen-Campen
Michael Feloney
Kathryn Gallant
Donna Haynes
Daniel LeBlanc
Andrea Shapiro
Jessica Turner

Minutes

May 9, 2019 Meeting – 6:15pm

Somerville City Hall 3rd Floor Conference Room
93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143

Trustees present: Ben Ewen-Campen, Mike Feloney, Kathryn Gallant, Donna Haynes, Danny LeBlanc, Andrea Shapiro, Jessica Turner

Trustees not present: Mary Cassesso

Staff attending: Heidi Burbidge, OSPCD Housing Division

Meeting started at 6:20pm with Andrea Shapiro serving as chair.

1. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

Trustees reviewed draft minutes of the March 11, 2019 Trust meeting that Heidi Burbidge had drafted. Danny LeBlanc introduced a **motion** to approve the March 14, 2019 meeting minutes which was seconded by Andrea Shapiro and PASSED, 7-0.

2. Communications

Update on status of Trustee reappointments and vacancies

- Heidi reported that Jessica Turner was scheduled to be sworn in as a Trustee and would be attending the meeting. Heidi noted that she had met with Jessica to provide an orientation on the Trust's history and operations.

Heidi provided an update that the City's Appointment Advisory Committee had interviewed two applicants for the open Trustee position to be filled by a representative from a Somerville non-profit organization. The committee subsequently recommended the appointment of Brielle Short, who works as a Supportive Housing Manager at the Somerville Homeless Coalition. That recommendation is to be on the agenda for a to-be-scheduled City Council Confirmation of Appointments and Personnel Matters Committee meeting that Brielle will attend.

Heidi noted that she would keep Donna Haynes and Mary informed when she hears notice from the Confirmation and Personnel Matters Committee of the schedule for the reappointment process for them.

Clarendon Hill – project status update

- Danny provided an update that the development team for the Clarendon Hill project was reviewing a term sheet from Prudential for investment in the project, and was further analyzing construction cost figures. He said that a trip to the Netherlands was being

planned to allow the project team to view modular construction by the Jan Snel Company that is comparable to what is being considered for Clarendon Hill.

Jessica Turner joined the meeting at 6:30pm.

Danny noted that the project team was working toward having either the City or the Housing Authority may apply for a MassWorks Infrastructure Grant for the improvement of the intersection at Powderhouse Boulevard and Alewife Brook Parkway. (Applicant needs to be a public agency.) Danny explained that design changes that are expected would make traffic pattern work a “critical path item” to allow building work to proceed.

Transfer Fee(s) enabling legislation status

- Mike reported that several distinct efforts are underway that involve transfer fees. Concord recently passed an HRP to establish one. Other proposed petitions would cover the whole state. Stakeholders from multiple municipalities have convened to strategize and plan advocacy for a petition that would allow all cities and towns to pass their own transfer fees. OHS Director Ellen Shachter is coordinating the City’s work in this area.

Danny noted on a related topic that the House Ways and Means Committee had proposed an increase to recording fees at the Registry of Deeds that would go to Community Preservation Act funding. Such an increase would boost the state match for CPA communities. Danny noted it could also present a challenge to transfer fee legislative efforts that could be seen as a competing initiative.

3. Ongoing/Unfinished Business

Status of Trust contracts

- Heidi reported that there were four Trust contracts now in the Law Department awaiting execution.

Status of need for Trust ordinance revisions

- Mike Feloney reported the Law Department had assigned David Shapiro to work on draft Home Rule Petition (HRP) language for an ordinance allowing Somerville’s Affordable Housing Trust to operate independently of the Commonwealth’s enabling legislation. Staff will provide updates as work progresses.

Possible foreclosure at 59 Temple Street status update

- Mike reported that the homeowner had caught up on payments and was current on her first mortgage. However, she is still past due on her 2nd mortgage. Boston Private Bank has not moved forward on a foreclosure but is holding options open to do so. Housing staff determined that the homeowner initiated follow-up on financial counseling with MAHA. Mike noted that staff would continue to keep Trustees up to date in case action by the Trust is to be requested.

At 6:55pm Ben Ewen-Campen left the meeting.

Deliberation on FY19 CPA RFP proposals

- Heidi called attention to the matrix showing FY19 CPA funding proposals with previous grant amounts and existing contract terms. Trustees noted that they were comfortable approving future contract terms longer than one year.

Heidi referenced the monthly financial reports noting that as of March 1, 2019, total available non-CPA Trust funds were \$3,167,536.80. Total available CPA Trust funds were \$2,234,334.77 as of March 1, 2019.

- Danny gave a verbal summary of each housing program for which funds were requested. He noted that CAAS's Homelessness Prevention Program is similar to the Trust's Tenancy Stabilization Program. RESPOND's proposal would also provide the same kind of assistance, but targeted to serve the population they work with (households fleeing or in shelter after experiencing domestic violence). He also noted that the requests from Heading Home and Somerville Homeless Coalition both would fill a gap between HUD payments and market rents for Permanent Supportive Housing units.

Jessica Turner noted that she is on the CAAS board, recused herself and left the meeting at 7:05pm.

Danny LeBlanc made a two part **motion**: 1) to extend the term of the current Trust and CAAS contract for the Homelessness Prevention Program until June 30, 2020; and 2) to hold in reserve \$50,000 of CPA funds requested by CAAS until Trustees can review program progress reporting later in the current contract term. The motion was seconded by Andrea Shapiro and PASSED 6-0.

Jessica Turner returned to the meeting at 7:15pm.

Danny made a two part motion: 1) to extend the term of the current contract between the Trust and Heading Home for the Permanent Supportive Housing Leasing Differential Program until June 30, 2020; and 2) to hold in reserve \$50,000 of CPA funds requested by Heading Home until Trustees can review program progress reporting during the current contract term. The motion was seconded by Andrea Shapiro and PASSED 7-0.

Danny LeBlanc made a motion to approve the request from RESPOND Inc. for \$11,412 of CPA funds, to support its Housing Program for Victims of Domestic Violence. The motion was seconded by Donna Haynes and PASSED 7-0.

Danny made a motion to approve the request from the Somerville Homeless Coalition for \$73,884 of CPA funds to support the Leasing Differential Program. The motion was seconded by Andrea Shapiro and PASSED 7-0.

Danny LeBlanc suggested that Trustees postpone a vote on the request from the Somerville Homeless Coalition for \$199,952 of CPA funds in support of the CPA PASS Expansion Program, and that the Trust hold in reserve that amount of CPA funds until later deliberation by Trustees after CPA funds previously awarded to the program have been spent down.

Deliberation on the remaining FY19 CPA RFP proposal from Somerville Community Corporation regarding 24-28 Mt. Pleasant Street was postponed until Trustees voted on the Tenancy Stabilization RFP proposals for timing purposes relative to a recusal.

Deliberation on Tenancy Stabilization Program RFP proposals

- Heidi noted that the two proposals to administer the Trust's Tenancy Stabilization Program were similar, and that one proposal did not stand out as superior to the other. The two proposing agencies had both successfully run the program with good results in the past. Andrea Shapiro made a motion that, pending confirmation that the Request for Proposals allows for it, the Trust award three-year contracts for \$60,000 per year to both Just-a-Start Inc. and to the Somerville Homeless Coalition to operate the Trust's Tenancy Stabilization Program with contract terms starting July 1, 2019. The motion was seconded by Donna Haynes and PASSED 7-0.

Deliberation on FY19 CPA RFP proposals (resumed)

Danny summarized SCC's affordable housing development proposal to purchase 24-28 Mt. Pleasant Street and develop six units of rental housing to be permanently affordable to households earning at or below 80% AMI. The 6 units will consist of four 3BR and two 2BR units. Danny noted that SCC's request to the Trust for \$1,620,000 in CPA funds could leverage \$1,200,000 of Community Scale Housing Initiative funds from the state.

Danny LeBlanc recused himself and left the meeting.

Andrea Shapiro made a motion to award up to \$1,620,000 of CPA funds in the form of a loan to Somerville Community Corporation to support the acquisition of 24-28 Mt. Pleasant Street and the development of six units of rental housing to be permanently affordable to households earning at or below 80% AMI. The motion was seconded by Kathryn Gallant and PASSED 6-0.

4. New Business

Monthly non-CPA financial reports for January and February

- Heidi reviewed non-CPA financial reports for January and February. Significant activity had taken place in January when the Trust received \$340,050 in FRIT linkage payments.

Monthly CPA financial reports for January and February

- Heidi reviewed CPA financial reports for January and February. There was no activity except interest earned.

Draft Trust report to Community Preservation Committee

- Heidi distributed a draft semi-annual Trust Report to the Community Preservation Committee for spring 2019 and requested any comments be submitted by April 11th.

At 8:05pm a motion was made to adjourn which was seconded and passed, 6-0.

Next meeting date – The next meeting date will be Thursday, May 9, 2019 at 6:15pm in the Somerville City Hall 3rd floor conference room.

Documents distributed:

- Draft March Trust meeting minutes
- Matrix showing FY19 CPA funding proposals with previous grant amounts and contract terms
- Monthly financial reports for January and February
- Draft April 2019 semi-annual Trust report to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC).