

**Harvard Municipal Affordable Housing  
Trust Meeting Minutes - February 10, 2014**

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**Members in Attendance:** Barbara Brady, Leo Blair, David Hopper, Evelyn Neuburger, Bruce Nickerson, Greg Schmidt

**Guest:** Victor Normand of the Harvard Master Plan Steering Committee

**Call to order.** The meeting was called to order by the chair at 7:00 PM

**Approval of minutes of January 6, 2013.** Schmidt moved and Blair seconded. All in favor, no discussion.

**Treasurers report:** Hopper distributed hand out and explained that there have been two more interest payments since our last meeting, and a payment to Ross Associates. Schmidt moved and Blair seconded motion to accept report. All in favor no discussion.

Hopper then said the safe deposit box was almost set, but he needed Nickerson's signature to finalize the deal. That would be done that night.

**Discussion of Harvard Master Plan.** Normand walked the committee through the 5 priorities and asked how it they might affect us. Conversation ensued about:

- Grant Road Project, as 10% of Harvard's affordable housing units are in Devens;
- The need for more rental properties in Harvard, not necessarily affordable;
- Being careful not to cluster all affordable housing in one place;
- Implications of Grant Road Project creating 400 or 450 new voters who pay no taxes in Harvard;
- Adequacy of sewer in town center;
- Inclusionary zoning;
- The need for not just 40B affordability, but properties that are truly affordable;
- Tying lot size to house size (cluster zoning)

Motion by Nickerson that Victor send Bruce his notes on this meeting for our continued conversation. Seconded by Hopper. Passed unanimously.

**Discussion of Great Elms Project.** Blair reported that he asked CPC for \$200,000. They voted to grant us \$150,000. Choice applied to CPC for bonus money, but the application was too late.

Blair offered some insights into Choice and reminded us that we are NOT a housing authority. We don't build, nor will we manage properties. Neuberger asked about Choice Grants for

their funding. Blair explained the Choice gets grants and those giving the money expected certain groups of people to live in the units.

Blair also informed us that CPC has committed one million dollars to town hall restoration, which means money available to us may be shrinking in the coming years.

Brady suggested that we could quantify our role in making that property useful for them. Nickerson suggested that anything we could do would be financially inadequate. It is simply making a statement to the Commonwealth. He also said that Choice would like to come back to our March meeting.

Brady said that we got 50K less than we asked for from CPC. Additionally, we have already spent something in the order of \$18,000 sustaining the property and therefore we cannot afford to offer more this fiscal year. We had stated that we might reconsider if we got extra funding over the 200K, but we actually got less.

Hopper voiced some concern about our being associated with Choice or any other projects that are not our own. Blair agreed saying that we really did not want other groups going to CPC for money we need.

Nickerson moved that Schmidt be asked to write an opinion for us regarding the Great Elms issue. Blair made a friendly amendment that Schmidt draft a letter to send to Choice outlining our thoughts, that, Nickerson would sign and send to David Hettison and Maura Songas. Nickerson seconded. All in favor.

**Informational item:** Nickerson distributed a two paragraph write up he did about our work for the town annual report. It was suggested that he strike the second sentence from the second paragraph and resubmit it. He agreed.

**Consultants:** Discussion about consultants who may be able to help us. Ross has not gotten back to us yet. Blair suggested a subcommittee to look at potential consultants for developing an RFP. Hopper and Brady agreed to serve and get back to us next month.

**Executive Session contemplation:** We considered whether to move to executive session to consider offers on the Littleton Road site. The consensus was that we defer consideration of selling any lots until we have a clearer concept for an RFP. Blair moved that the chair respond to any expressions of interest in purchasing lots, advising them that we are deferring until we have an RFP and that they will get a copy of it at that time. Nickerson seconded. Passed unanimously.

**Discussion of 501(c)(3) status:** Nickerson suggested that we don't have to do this, nor do we need to pull our money out of the town account. His understanding was that we would not be eligible for 501(c)(3) status because we are a government agency. Hopper asked if we

should ask the town counsel. Nickerson said he thought the counsel would not know the answer and it didn't seem worth the cost to have him research the question. If it is disputed further by anyone in Town Hall, Nickerson will research it himself. The consensus was that unless Town brings it up again, we will leave it alone.

**Other Business:** Hopper asked if we should be engage in the Grant Rd project in any way. Blair said that Mass Development put out an RFP and has chosen a developer, so it is probably too late for our input. 10% or more of the units will be affordable. This might help our ratio and get us a one year pass. Blair moved to adjourn. Brady seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Minutes taken by Greg Schmidt