

Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board Meeting
Meeting Minutes
April 5, 2022

A meeting of the Salem Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board was held on Tuesday, April 5, 2022, at a Remote Zoom meeting at 6:00 p.m.

Members present: Councilor Jeff Cohen, Councilor Caroline Watson-Felt, Filipe Zamborlini, James Willis, Chris Malstrom, Mickey Northcutt, and Councilor Patti Morsillo

Members joining late: none

Members absent: John Boris, Kim Driscoll, Rebecca Curan, Lynda Fairbanks-Atkins

Staff present: Senior Planner Cassie Moskos and DPCD Deputy Director Amanda Chiancola

Vice Chair Filipe Zamborlini called the meeting to order with a roll call at 6:09 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Board Priorities

Staff provided the Board with their priorities matrix, acknowledging that the Board had largely completed their work on the items in the top two quadrants. Staff followed up that Staff still had large workloads associated with those items to move them across the finish line, and between those projects and other non-AHTF related projects, they currently did not have the capacity to take on additional projects. With the near completion of the Housing Roadmap, Staff encouraged the Board to wait until the Roadmap is complete before establishing new priorities. Councilor Cohen wanted an update on where the enabling legislation was with the State. Ms. Chiancola said she would get an update and report back to the Board.

Councilor Watson-Felt was curious if Staff felt the items in Quadrant 4 would be moved up based on feedback from the forum. Ms. Chiancola responded that the roadmap will lay out a variety of tools and strategies. It will be up to the Board to determine if they want to take on smaller projects or larger projects first.

Councilor Morsillo wanted to add the the Council is also backed up. She was hoping to see some clarification around definitions of AMI with the inclusionary zoning ordinance and the Planning Board Policy, especially around utilities. Mr. Zamborlini wanted to know if the Board would review the inclusionary zoning ordinance before it is approved. Ms. Chiancola stated that for units on the SHI the max rent must include utilities or provide a utility allowance. Mr. Zamborlini questioned if the Planning Board had an inclusionary zoning working group. Ms. Chiancola stated that the Planning Board has a policy; the policy does not include fractional payment, and staff has not brought the ordinance back to forward. Mr. Zamborlini questioned how it gets brought back and if there is interest from the Board to do so. Councilor Morsillo stated that it does need to be addressed eventually, but for now the Planning Board Policy is working. She also questioned is 60% AMI low enough, are there tweaks to the language that could improve the next version of the ordinance? Ms. Chiancola said she would need to check in with DCHD if 60% AMI is still to high for voucher recipients.

Mr. Willis wanted to know if DCHD had provided any input on the Salem Housing Roadmap, Ms. Moskos stated that they had not, but Housing Production Plans are a core component of the work JM Goldson does and is very aware of the requirements the State will be looking for

B. Gentrification/Displacement Discussion

Ms. Moskos stated that this was an item brought up by the board at a previous meeting for discussion and some preliminary materials had been provided in their staff memo for the evening, but primarily was here to hold a discussion with them, the Board members, but reiterated that Staff does not have the capacity to take on additional research on this topic at this time.

Mr. Zamborlini wanted to know if there were any grants available to fund capacity recognizing that a city wide analysis would be a huge lift and that large developments go hand in hand with displacement.

Mr. Northcutt mentioned that he joined the Shetland Park Framework Plan working group he was surprised to see the scope was limited to the site only. What impacts might different plans have on the neighborhood. He further stated that he hears a lot of fear around potential development and he sees this as an opportunity for the Board to comment on the impact to the neighborhood. Mr. Willis agreed with Mr. Northcutt.

Councilor Cohen stated that he was discouraged by the process and had concerns with the scope of the study and frustrated by the process so far.

Councilor Morsillo stated that gentrification and displacement is often centered around homes, but it has other impacts as well. We should think of this issue for the whole city, not just one land use. It is easy to focus on the point, but we have affordable housing all over the city. Mr. Zamborlini responded that gentrification discussions focus on housing because it is the largest impact, businesses can speed up or slow down the process, and some areas of the city will be harder hit no matter where development takes place. Councilor Cohen agreed with Filipe, but wanted to enforce Councilor Morsillo's comments. Mr. Northcutt agreed that it is not just a housing issue.

Mr. Malstrom echoed Councilor Cohen and Mr. Northcutt's statements that the focus is usually on housing because businesses are a ripple effect, and focusing on The Point is an equity portion of this topic.

Ms. Chiancola stated that people need to come to the listening session and participate in the process.

Councilor Watson-Felt had concerns about the timing conversation around Shetland and when the Roadmap would be completed that there wouldn't be enough time to protect the people and development already there.

Mr. Zamborlini states he believes any change to Shetland will impact The Point, what is the City's response to that?

Councilor Cohen stated that when Prime Group first presented to the Point Neighborhood

Association and SERC that there were many positive resiliency elements added that will be beneficial to the neighborhood. Resiliency should be considered within this discussion.

Mr. Zamborlini suggested that this general conversation continue.

Mr. Northcutt wanted to bring the scope up at the next Shetland Park Working group meeting and felt the Board could put something in writing to support increasing the scope. This had support from Councilor Watson-Felt.

C.Future Items

Mr. Zamborlini wished to continue the gentrification/displacement discussion.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Update on the Salem Housing Road Map: A Housing Plan for All

Ms. Moskos gave an update on the project. The consultant team had begun drafting the goals and strategies for the working group to review. Then the team would begin drafting the document as a whole. The working group would provide comments on it near the end of May before scheduling a public meeting between the City Council and Planning Board in June.

B. Update on the Condo Conversion

Ms. Chiancola stated that staff had begun sending a mailer to all tenants in 2+ unit buildings and all landlords with information and quick survey. Staff planned to keep the survey open for about a month after the last mailing went out. She said she would put comments received on the Board's Sharepoint drive, some initial comments received including clarification about the survey itself, concerns about calling the conversion rate an emergency when it isn't, and a landlord was concerned about the notification terms.

C. Review and discuss draft disposition ordinance amendment

Ms. Chiancola informed the Board that the ordinance was still in legal review and a piece of the ordinance involved tax title property. Staff would bring the ordinance back as soon as possible.

MINUTES

Mr. Malstrom made a motion to approve the minutes from February 17, 2022 meeting, seconded by Councilor Watson-Felt-passes unanimously 9-0 by a roll call vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were received.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Councilor Watson-Felt, seconded by Mr. Malstrom—passes unanimously 9-0 by a roll call vote.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Approved by the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board on 5/3/2022.

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Respectively submitted,
Cassie Moskos, AICP
Senior Planner