

Housing Coalition
(Housing Commission, Affordable Housing Trust
and Lincoln Foundation)
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 6, 2019, 7:30 PM
Donaldson Room, Town Offices

Affordable Housing Trust Members: James Craig, Co-Chair and Bijoy Misra,

Housing Commission Members: Keith Gilbert, Chair, Diana Chirita, Allen Vander Meulen and Bijoy Misra

Lincoln Foundation Member: Terri Morgan

(Members not available: AHT: George Georges, Tom Sander, Vicki Braithwaite and B-J Scheff; HC: Evan Gorman, Co-Chair)

Others Present: Jennifer Burney, Director of Planning and Land Use and Elaine Carroll, Adm. Assistant

The meeting started at 7:30 p.m. with a determination that there was no quorum for the Affordable Housing Trust but there was a quorum for Housing Commission. Since the Lincoln Foundation is a private organization, no quorum is necessary.

The minutes from May 8, 2018 could not be approved because of a lack of a quorum for the AHT.

Brainstorming Session: Lincoln Housing for the next Decade:

We are set with affordable housing with Oriole Landing but what can we do for middle to lower end housing? What is next for affordable housing? What can we do to make it more affordable?

SLPIC is talking about zoning changes in the Lincoln Station area, but it is not ready for this year's Town Meeting but may be able to do it next year. There are 4 teams under SLPIC: Wayfaring, MBTA, Parking and village zoning. The goal is to make Lincoln Station vibrant. Having density in the Lincoln Mall area makes sense because of its closeness to the train. There are septic and wetland issues. The Flying Nun apartments are interesting with just under six acres. It is maxed out now but we could build up, with adding height back from the road. The owner has not been willing to talk with anyone from the Town. The Town was awarded a \$25,000 Community Compact Grant and a \$15,000 MAPC grant. SLPIC Village Planning and Zoning Team is working with Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) on zoning revisions to create an equitable transit oriented development that will offer housing options.

Has anyone spoken to Lincoln Woods regarding the zoning change to build up behind the existing apartments? Is 100 units a cost or a benefit to the Town? This would bring in more taxes but school aged children need to be factored in. Perhaps something could be done at the commuter lot but the Town is short on needed parking areas. We would need to be more creative in finding parking if we build up the area. The residents are already complaining about not having enough parking.

If we get serious about relocating the DPW where would you move it? Can the operation be consolidated on the site and shared with another project. The DPW is an aging building and would need a minimum of 3.5 acres. If moved, it would need to be a good facility that works for the Town. We need to see where there might be opportunities. We need to start smaller working groups for the moderate to middle housing market, and see how other towns in the area deal with this.

Lincoln Foundation has trouble keeping the affordable units affordable because of the rising condo fees. For every ten units of housing added we need to add one affordable unit but there is not much land available in Lincoln. The \$1,000,000 the AHT gave to CIVICO for Oriole Landing made the project feasible. Do we remain 15% inclusionary zoning or drop down to 10% but add more housing under 120% AMI. The zoning change creates more opportunities. For 90 bedrooms or under you do not need a wastewater treatment plant,

which makes costs go up. Jen Burney applied for a grant for a consultant to see if the Wastewater Treatment Plant at Lincoln Woods can support more housing.

Lincoln has an aging population who are finding it difficult to stay in their own homes but if they sell, they cannot afford to live in Lincoln. With rezoning this may give them a place to go in Lincoln. There is also a working group working on taxes and tax relief for more vulnerable residents. Also the Affordable Accessory Apartment by-law, which is stuck in Legislature, could help seniors to rent out part of their house but seniors need help in finding builders or programs where they can get help with the AAA program. Some tax relief only benefits seniors and veterans by the work-off program, but does not apply to younger people. Diana said according to the COA board seniors are happy to have a place like Oriole Landing to go to.

The next step is to refine what we want for the future to make sure we have housing for our seniors and moderate to middle income families. There are limited opportunities and the Trust will need several years to build up funds after giving CIVICO the \$1,000,000, which was a very worthwhile investment. We also need opportunities for handicap units. There are two handicap units in Oriole Landing and several at Lincoln Woods, where there is a waiting list for both affordable and market rate units. Oriole Landing needs to have a lottery for the 15 affordable units and 10 of those units have to be local preference.

Homelessness is a problem in Lincoln as in other areas. The Housing Commission is working with the COA in asking for CPA funds to help with transitional rental as well as emergency funds to help residents in need so that they do not have to choose between medicines or paying their rent. We are losing people in Town because they cannot afford to live here. Allen said it would be helpful to know how many people are having problems.

James suggested having another AHT meeting after Town Meeting and another Housing Coalition meeting. SLPIC will work on the zoning changes and then bring into a Housing Coalition meeting. Any zoning change will need to be brought to Town Meeting for approval. Diana also felt that we need to make Lincoln more welcoming to minorities.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.,

Submitted by Elaine Carroll