



Burlington Housing Partnership Committee

Meeting Minutes

May 19, 2022, via Webex

Committee Members Present: Michael Runyan (MR), Chair
Kerry Donahue (KD), Vice-Chair
Eileen Sickler (ES), Secretary
Rita Shah (RS)
Henry Wu (W)

Committee Members Not Present: John Sullivan (JS), Barbara L'Heureux (BL),
Other Attendees: Shari Ellis (SE), Liz Rust (LR)

- MR called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm.
- **Citizens Time** – n/a
- **Review of Grandview Agreement (GV)**– Liz Rust, our external Affordable Housing Consultant talked to us about the primary deficiencies in the GV documents which are residency and Income limits. Grandview is a local program and is exempt from needing State approvals. ***The goal is to create a new waiting list, that is fair to the current, if qualified people on that list, that is considered best practice, easy to administer, transparent, fair, and equitable.***

Applicants will be selected as units become available. The State requirements are that Local Preferences are only allowed for new development. Since this is a local program, we can choose to employ a local preference, using a rotating basis, that is, every 2nd or 3rd resale we could use a local preference. So, while not as easily administered, it may be defensible if done this way. Alternatively, HPC could decide to give a preference to Burlington residents, regardless of years of residency, though this is not in line with best practices

Action item – HPC to decide if we want to maintain the waiting list using local preference every 2nd or 3rd unit. Or alternatively, (1) we don't use any local preference, (2) preference is given to any household with a member living in Burlington, (3) a Burlington municipal employee, though options 2 and 3 are not best practices

A letter was sent to those currently on the waiting list. It is unclear whether those on the current list are still eligible applicants. And if they are still qualified, do they maintain their position on the list?

The consensus was to give the wait list people preference instead of starting from the beginning, as though they didn't exist. Liz believed that if we kept the people on the current waiting list, assuming they qualify, and create a new process for everyone after that group is exhausted, it is a defensible position. The consensus in the group was to keep those people on the wait list, assuming they are qualified, in the interests of fairness. This may be different from what was understood by Town Counsel.

Action item - *What are the qualifications for an applicant? What is the residency, income, and asset requirements?*

Asset limit – We would be non-standard if we didn't have an asset limit. There was a concern for people who don't have homes to sell, are more likely to need affordable housing than someone who sells a house and has those proceeds. The State LIP Program asset requirement is no more than \$275,000. Other towns with local programs have limits such as Sudbury, Mendon and Andover who have asset limits ranging from \$75,000 to \$275,000.

Action item - Housing Partnership Committee needs to determine if we have asset limits and if so, what are they? Once we determine preference, if any, and income and asset requirements, we need to send to town's legal counsel for review.

Household size requirement – we should always use a household size requirement.

Advertising – there are two types – Paid and posted. Advertising is required when a new pool is created, which will happen after those on the current waiting list are exhausted. One required site is the MassAccess Housing Registry. Also, we should place the ad in as many minority publications as possible. The posted ads are to the towns' website, Churches, COA centers near Burlington.

LR confirmed the resale units can only count on the subsidized housing inventory upon resale and all DCHD regulations must be followed.

- **119 S Bedford** – LR, per John Danizio, informed us the owners have not been notified. Also, the Select Board needs to vote to buy the property. The process is as follows: an offer letter is sent to the owners (John Danizio has asked LR to prepare this letter) and both parties sign the offer letter which includes the maximum resale price amount. Due diligence period of approximately two weeks is determined by both parties. This gives the town the opportunity to assess the condition. The owner provides the Purchase and Sales agreement, and town's legal counsel will provide a deed rider. MR said has not heard from Housing Authority regarding their interest in buying the property.
- **Heritage at Stone Ridge** – this rental property of over 200 units includes 36 to 38 age restricted units and was part of the land swap in early 2000s. LR said they received money from HUD which could have expired over the 20 plus years. MR said Heritage has the same criteria as Grandview.
 - **Action item** – Find out if the HUD document with its regulations etc. has timed out
- **Point of Contact** – MR confirmed that John Danizio, Assistant Town Administrator is the contact

for 119 S Bedford between the owner and the town as well as with Grandview parties.

- **MAPC** – our next full committee meeting is June 1, 11:00 to 12:30 to discuss the communication materials including video selection. KD asked that all members attend this important meeting
- **135 Cambridge St** – consensus for the committee was a disappointment in town meeting not recognizing the need for affordable housing and its inclusion in diverse neighborhoods. We agreed the conversation or debate was not balanced
- **Standing Committee** – MR asked about the status of a charter for the committee. KD said much of her time spent on the committee has been on the MAPC project. She is hoping to address this over the summer.
- **Officer Nomination** – MR said we will have this as our first order of business at our next meeting.
- **Affordable Housing Coordinator** – we have extended an offer letter to the finalist since town meeting approved funding. However, any consulting in June for this position will be charged to the Housing Partnership fund. The starting date in the warrant article, approved by town meeting for which funds will be charged to the revolving fund of incremental demo fees, is July 1st.
- **Minutes** – a motion was made by KD and seconded by RS to approve the minutes for April 19 and April 22. The motion was approved unanimously.
- **Old/New Business** – none noted
- **Next Meeting** – June 7th 5 pm
- **Adjourned** – the meeting was adjourned at 6:35
- Respectfully Submitted,
Eileen Sickler, Secretary