



MASSACHUSETTS

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Gary Christenson, Mayor

Malden Affordable Housing Trust Fund

Meeting Minutes

August 18, 2021 – 5:00 PM

Trustees

Mayor Gary Christenson

Steve Finn

Angie Liou

Catherine Price

Roxanne Reddington-Wilde

Brian Slater

Councillor-at-large Stephen Winslow

New Business:

1. Call to Order

Mayor Christenson called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM.

Mayor Christenson read the following remote meeting notice into the record:

On June 16, 2021, Governor Baker signed into law An Act Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency. This Act includes an extension, until April 1, 2022, of the remote meeting provisions of his March 12, 2020, Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law. This meeting will be conducted via remote participation. This meeting will not include in person attendance by members of the public but all effort will be made to permit public attendance, in the manner specified below, via remote access by internet, telephone, and if available via public broadcast of the meeting by Urban Media Arts on public access television channels. Public access will also be provided by posting draft minutes, and/or a transcript, recording, or record of the meeting on the City of Malden website at cityofmalden.org as soon as practicable after the meeting.

Additional information/guidelines for the public can be found here:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/updated-guidance-on-holding-meetings-pursuant-to-the-act-extending-certain-covid-19-measures>

Evan Spetrini called the roll

- Trustees Present: Mayor Christenson, Steve Finn, Angie Liou, Roxanne Reddington-Wilde, Brian Slater
- Others Present: Evan Spetrini, Senior Planner, Malden Redevelopment Authority; Dan Grover, Treasurer, City of Malden

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from July 21, 2021

On a motion by Mr. Slater and seconded by Ms. Liou, the minutes from the July 21, 2021 meeting were approved unanimously.

3. Finance Report

Mr. Grover gave an update on the Trust's finances. The current balance is \$965,883.63, inclusive of \$65.04 in interest earned in the month of July.

4. Mayor's Affordable Housing Program Updates

a. Eviction Prevention Program

Mr. Spetrini gave an update on the Eviction Prevention Program from Alex Pratt, Community Development Director at OSPCD. There are still representatives in Housing and District Courts monitoring Malden eviction cases. Just-A-Start and Housing Families are primarily using state rental assistance resources to resolve cases so there are still local funds available. Mr. Spetrini stated that there hasn't been a significant change in eviction filings since the State of Emergency was lifted. Malden's local eviction moratorium is still in place. Mayor Christenson added that the City is appealing a recent court ruling to strike down the local eviction moratorium. The Mayor meets with Alex Pratt and Debbie Burke of OSPCD every week to discuss updates to the program.

Ms. Reddington-Wilde asked if any of the funds were used for utility assistance. Mayor Christenson said that they are only covering rent at this time but utility assistance could be considered for the ARPA household support programs.

b. Inclusionary Zoning

Mr. Spetrini stated that a public hearing was held at a joint session of the planning board and ordinance committee on Wednesday, August 11 at 7 PM. At the hearing, Mr. Spetrini gave an overview of the Inclusionary Zoning feasibility study and reviewed the full text of the ordinance. Members of the Trust attended the meeting and spoke in favor of the proposal and the committee received 209 letters of support. There were no speakers or letters against the proposal. The planning board unanimously voted to recommend passage of amendment without any changes. Mr. Spetrini explained that the Council will receive the planning board's recommendations at their first meeting of the session on September 7. At that point, the communications would normally be referred to the ordinance committee but since there are no recommended changes, the Council may decide to vote on the amendment that evening. Mr. Spetrini will check with the ordinance committee chair and Councillor Winslow to see how they want to proceed. Mayor Christenson asked when the Council needs to take final action by. Mr. Spetrini said the deadline is November 9 but he expects the Council to make their final vote in September.

c. Neighborhood Hub

Mr. Spetrini gave an update on the Neighborhood Hub program. Mr. Spetrini stated that he has been having weekly check-in meetings with the City's Building Commissioner, Nelson Miller, and the part-time housing inspector hired to lead the investigation of the vacant and foreclosed properties, Ken Minasian. Mr. Minasian has completed the initial site visits for all 68 properties. Mr. Minasian has narrowed the list down to 15 attractive properties for affordable housing conversion. The list consists of mostly two- and three-family properties with a few single-families as well. The most basic criteria for the attractive list is that the property is vacant.

Mr. Minasian is continuing to make contact with the owners to verify information on each property. Mr. Spetrini explained that they are looking to hire consultants to help with the acquisition processes. Ultimately the plan is to acquire a number of the attractive properties and sell them to a CDC as one package through a competitive bidding process.

Mayor Christenson suggested that some of the ARPA funds should be set aside for the acquisition of these properties. Mr. Spetrini agreed and stated that they are looking into other funding sources as well, including the Trust. In the meantime, they are estimating the market value of the attractive properties using their assessed values until appraisals are complete to better understand how much funding is needed to carry out the project.

Mr. Slater asked how the list was narrowed from 68 to 15. Mr. Spetrini said that the investigation revealed that many of the properties are actually occupied, including some that are not in foreclosure anymore, which have been removed from the list entirely. Mayor Christenson added that they do not intend to acquire properties from homeowners in foreclosure living in the property but could use other programs to help those owners in the future.

5. Adjournment

Ms. Liou made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Ms. Reddington-Wilde. All Trustees voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 5:30 PM.