

Planning & Sustainability • City of Northampton

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Housing Partnership 5:30 PM, Monday March 7, 2022

Due to the Covid-19 emergency, this was a virtual (zoom) meeting

MEMBERS

Carmen Junno, Chair	Edgardo Cancel	Hannah Shaffer
Gordon Shaw, Vice Chair	Sara Howard -absent	
Richard Abuza	Jennifer Dieringer	
Julio Alves	Ace Tayloe	Staff: Wayne Feiden

1. Notice that the meeting is being recorded
2. Public Comments- there was no public comment
3. Unanimously approve minutes of December 6, 2021, January 10, 2022, and January 24, 2022, upon motion by Richard Abuza and second by Ace Tayloe and roll call vote
4. Consultation on FY23 CDBG Action Plan- Wayne Feiden presented the draft MA-FY23 (FFY22) CDBG Action Plan. Public service recommendations were accepted by the Mayor (Carmen Junno represented the Housing Partnership on this review group), Housing Rehabilitation is being moved from PVPC to Community Action Pioneer Valley both because PVPC did not enter a new proposal and because the city wanted a group with better contacts among those in need, and purchase the former Bridge Road nursing home for the Valley Community Development planned Prospect Place affordable housing. The Partnership agreed with the City's approach to look at its two big self-funded affordable housing support (CPA, CDBG), two large grants the city often obtains (Housing Choice grants, MassWorks), and two small city affordable housing programs (Tax Increment Financing and Short Term Rental Fees) and rationalize what makes the most sense for each project. Housing Partnership members agreed with this approach and supported some of the support for Prospect Place coming from CDBG instead of CPA, while also indicating that they would continue to lobby for more CPA funds to go to affordable housing.
5. Special Legislation to Prohibit Landlords and Brokers from Requiring Brokers' Commissions to be paid by a Tenant or Prospective Tenant-Councilors Jarrett and Maiore updated the



Partnership on the legislation and urged members to attend the March 21, 2022 public forum as it moves through the City Council process. Richard Abuza urged that the City Councilors reach out to the largest brokers and management companies (including Rent NoHo and Hampshire Property Management) to engage them in the conversation. Upon motion by Carmen Junno and second by Ace Tayloe, the Partnership voted unanimously, on a roll call vote, to support the home rule petition.

6. Discussion of possible affordable housing story map project—Wayne Feiden presented the City’s idea of creating a new story map, similar to the current Picture Main Street web page and the Sustainable Northampton page under development, to help educate the public on the need for affordable and attainable housing, the methods the city is using to promote and create such housing, the other steps the Housing Partnership is doing, and generally provide resources, but that it would not be a site that could be updated as easily as the city’s content management driven website so it would have to be focused on static data. Housing Partnership members supported the effort and agreed to help identify what should be on the site, while stressing the need to continue to use other ways to inform the public.
7. Other Housing Partnership projects: real estate fee, HUD fair market rents- Ace Tayloe reported that there was no current action on real estate transfer fees. On the HUD Fair Market rents, Congressman McGovern’s office indicated that they would set up a meeting with HUD on the issue. Jennifer Dieringer reported that funding to address Covid and other rises in evictions is running out, with at least some expiring in May, creating some new significant risks, but at least there is some funding available in the City of Northampton CDBG rental assistance program (only for Covid arrears) run by CAPV.
8. Partnership engagement-pending affordable housing (Prospect Ave, Burts Pit-NSH, Oak St, City Hall lot, Evergreen, Woodland Dr., Burts Pit/Burts Bog, Chapel St., Laurel St.)- There was a brief discussion that the Partnership members are happy to help in community conversations when that is useful.
9. The Partnership briefly discussed the applications the Mayor’s office has received for community boards, including the Partnership. Carmen Junno said that she would reach out to hope to advance those appointments.
10. The Partnership tentatively agreed to stay with their April 4th date for their next meeting if Keith Benoit is back by then. Wayne Feiden will be out of town that day, so if April 4th doesn’t work for Keith we would need to set a new April date when Wayne can staff the meeting. They decided to put off a speaker on Boston’s experience with a Housing Trust for a future meeting.
11. The Partnership adjourned at 6:45 PM (motion by Richard Abuza, second by Ace Tayloe)