

**Boxborough Housing Board**  
Thursday, February 11, 2016, 7:30 PM  
Sargent Memorial Library Meeting Room, 427 Massachusetts Avenue

**Housing Board Members Present:** Al Murphy, Chair, Michael Fetterman, Diane Friedman,  
Ron Vogel

**Others Present:** Adam Duchesneau, Town Planner, Cielito Sadornas

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM.

**I. Information Items**

A. Conference

Mr. Murphy informed the Housing Board about a workshop the Massachusetts Housing Partnership is hosting on March 4, 2016 regarding how Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds can be used to create affordable housing. Mr. Vogel indicated he would consider attending. Mr. Murphy noted it might be beneficial to have a Housing Board member attend.

**II. Minutes**

A. Minutes from January 14, 2016

The meeting minutes from January 14, 2016 were approved on a MOTION by Mr. Fetterman and SECONDED by Mr. Vogel, with all members voting in favor.

**III. Old Business**

A. CPA Rental Voucher Program

Mr. Murphy indicated that Channing Wagg, Lauren Abraham, Mr. Duchesneau, and he had been working on the minimum eligibility requirements for the program. Mr. Murphy noted it would be good to have this criteria finalized so if the Rental Voucher Program is approved at the May 2016 Annual Town Meeting, the program could get started right away. Mr. Murphy also spoke about the preference point system which would be applied to those applicants which meet the minimum eligibility requirements to determine which households would receive rental vouchers.

Mr. Fetterman asked why a point system was going to be used rather than a lottery system. Mr. Murphy stated this had been discussed, but it seemed a point system was simpler and would allow the program to target those households which are truly the most in need of assistance. Mr. Fetterman felt a point system would make applicants or potential applicants feel as though the odds are stacked against them. He felt a lottery system would allow for random chance and dismiss potential concerns of biasness. Further discussion ensued on this topic. Mr. Murphy noted he should perhaps split the last preference category into two separate categories: one for those who are displaced and/or homeless and one for those who are older and/or disabled.

At this time Ms. Sadornas arrived at the meeting and expressed an interest in potentially joining the Housing Board.

Mr. Fetterman noted it would be a good idea to have the CPA funds for the Rental Voucher Program transferred to an entity which could remove the funds from the timing pressures of the municipal fiscal year. Mr. Vogel pointed out he thought the program was supposed to be geared toward those households with extremely low incomes and to those who were the most in need. Ms. Sadornas stated perhaps there should be some criteria worked into the

program which factored in the actual number of wage earners in the household compared to the number of dependents in the household.

There was then further discussion about using a point system versus a lottery system to determine who received rental vouchers. Mr. Fetterman suggested implementing some type of tiered lottery system. Mr. Murphy wondered if perhaps more points should be allocated to the interview with the household. Ms. Friedman suggested if a tie resulted from the point system, a lottery could be used to break the tie. Mr. Vogel recommended separating the municipal employee preference and households with children in the public school system preference into two separate preference categories.

#### B. Stow Road Development

Mr. Murphy noted special counsel is now working on the Stow Road Request for Proposals (RFP). Mr. Murphy also pointed out the comments the Planning Board had made on the RFP, one of which suggested seeking possible zoning changes to accommodate for the type of project which was being sought for construction. Mr. Murphy stated additional time was needed to get the RFP into shape for release and asked the Housing Board members to contact him with any further comments about the proposal.

#### C. Possible Habitat for Humanity Dwelling

Mr. Duchesneau provided a status update on the possibility of constructing an affordable dwelling unit on the property at 405 Middle Road through a non-profit entity such as Habitat for Humanity. Mr. Duchesneau stated Mr. Murphy and he had met with the Board of Selectmen the previous night and the Selectmen had agreed to seek a reserve fund transfer of \$3,000 to perform soil and percolation testing at the property. Mr. Duchesneau indicated it needed to be determined if the lot had the appropriate soil types, if the lot would percolate, and if a well and septic system could be located on the property before the next steps could be taken. Mr. Duchesneau also noted the Board of Selectmen wanted to see some type of analysis on why constructing an affordable dwelling unit at this property would be in the best interest of the Town. Mr. Fetterman felt constructing an affordable dwelling unit at the property in partnership with Habitat for Humanity would be a community service project like no other and would bring a tremendous benefit to the Town outside of what money might be brought in through the sale of the property and the tax revenue.

### **IV. New Business**

#### A. Windfall Payment at 232 Swanson Road

Mr. Murphy stated Jaime Esteves who owns the affordable dwelling unit at 232 Swanson Road, #628 had made a payment to the Town on the order of \$78, which were the excess profits he had acquired through renting the unit over the last two years. Mr. Duchesneau stated this money had been deposited in the Town's General Fund since there was no clear indication in the property deed rider it should be placed into another account. Mr. Duchesneau also asked if the Housing Board had approved of Mr. Esteves renting out his affordable dwelling unit and Mr. Murphy stated the Housing Board had approved this request at a past meeting.

### **V. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:14 PM on a MOTION by Mr. Fetterman and SECONDED by Mr. Vogel, with all members voting in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Adam Duchesneau.