

**Watertown Housing Partnership  
Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, November 18, 2014  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Planning Office  
Watertown Administration Building**

**Attendees**

Fred Reynolds, Chair, Cliff Cook, David Leon, and Judge Paul Menton

**Absent:** Torey Dean, Paul Fahey, Brian Costello, and Jennifer Van Campen

**I. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**a. Draft Minutes from August 19, 2014**

Fred Reynolds noted a correction to his request for a motion to adjourn. He asked for a motion to approve the draft Minutes as corrected. David Leon moved to approve the draft August 19, 2014 minutes as corrected. Judge Menton seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**b. Draft Minutes from September 16, 2014**

Fred Reynolds asked for a motion to approve the draft Minutes as presented. David Leon moved to approve the draft September 16, 2014 minutes. Judge Menton seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**c. Draft Minutes from October 21, 2014**

Fred Reynolds noted a correction to his request for a motion to adjourn. He asked for a motion to approve the draft Minutes as corrected. David Leon moved to approve the draft October 21, 2014 minutes as corrected. Judge Menton seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**II. Discussion of Pending Development Projects**

**a. CVS at Arlington and Mount Auburn Streets**

Ms. Adams described the Planning Board's review of the project to date. She noted there were many members of the public in attendance at the meeting, wanting to provide comments. She said a number of comments received to date expressed concern for the "bland" architecture, the size of the store (too large), and the traffic impacts. She said the Board had continued the case to its next meeting in December.

**b. 65 Grove Street Redevelopment**

Ms. Adams described the review of the project to date. She said the Petitioner and the Town Department of Public Works were still in discussions about the estimated transportation impacts and mitigation strategies for those impacts. She noted a significant amount of public comment concerning the traffic impacts, particularly to Crawford Street and in terms of the possible CVS at Arlington Street and Mount Auburn Street. She said this case had been continued to the Planning Board's next meeting in December.

**c. 28-30 Fayette Street**

Ms. Adams described the review of the project to date. She said the Planning Board had heard this project at its November 18, 2014 meeting and voted unanimously to send it to the Zoning Board of Appeals with a recommendation for conditional approval.

### **III. Possible CDBG Funds versus the Affordable Housing Development Fund**

Ms. Adams noted that Watertown had received Community Development Block Grants in Fiscal Years 1999, 2002 and 2004. She said that with these monies, the Town had set up a Home Improvement loan. Ms. Adams said Ingrid Marchesano, Planning Board Clerk, had figured out how much money had been paid back by loan recipients. She noted the issue was determining how much of the monies paid back by loan recipients was part of the Town Match or should be allocated to paying back the Federal grant. Ms. Adams said the initial figures indicated that \$83,925.65 of the monies paid back to date were attributable to the Town's Match, while \$185,535 of the paid back monies was attributable to the Federal grant. Ms. Adams said she was working with the CDBG coordinator at the Department of Housing and Community Development to confirm the amounts, and what could be done with the CDBG paid back monies, also called "program income." Monies paid back as part of the Town Match were not subject to the same use restrictions, monitoring and reporting as program income. Ms. Adams said she hoped to have definitive numbers and direction by the end of November.

The Partnership discussed various possible uses for the CDGB funds. Ms. Adams said her research showed these funds could be used for a variety of purposes, including a new housing rehabilitation program, weatherization activities, property environmental studies, de-leading and certain public works projects. She also noted that funds paid back as part of the Town Match monies were not as restricted as CDBG program income, and could be used to assist the Housing Authority or Metro West Collaborative Development with one of their projects.

Fred Reynolds said he was in favor of providing assistance to the Housing Authority with the McSherry Gardens property as previously discussed, and looking into a rental de-leading program with the CDBG program income.

### **IV. Affordable Housing Incentives: Increased Density**

Ms. Adams distributed a copy of a colored handout that had also been included with the Agenda and Meeting Packet. The handout was an excerpt of language from the 2010 (amended) Watertown Zoning Ordinance. It showed Section 5.07(6)(j) which provides density incentives for projects that provide rental or homeownership units that are affordable to persons with incomes at 65% of Area Median Income and 70% of Area Median Income, respectively.

Cliff Cook noted that the language in the Ordinance amounted to a 15% density bonus.

David Leon was concerned that providing a density bonus for increased affordability requirements would negatively impact the community's view of affordable housing, and cause a negative back-lash. He supported the creation of more affordable housing, but was not in favor of the Ordinance language as written.

Fred Reynolds requested that members provide Ms. Adams with additional suggested incentives to get private developers to create more affordable housing, or housing affordable to those with lower incomes.

### **V. New Members and Possible Meeting Time Change**

Ms. Adams noted that Anita Shishmanian had stepped down from the Housing Partnership effective October 31, 2014. She asked Mr. Reynolds if Ms. Shishmanian had suggested new members.

Mr. Reynolds said she had suggested one possible candidate, but that person had a busy schedule, so it was questionable whether they could make the time commitment to the Housing Partnership.

Ms. Adams noted a couple of member had expressed a preference for a different meeting time, perhaps during the day, or early afternoon. She asked the preference of the members present at the meeting.

The members present said that a time change had been tried before, with little success. They also expressed a preference that the meeting time be in the evening, so that working people could have an opportunity to attend the meetings.

## **VI. Other Business: Cancellation of December 2014 Meeting**

Mr. Reynolds suggested that unless there were residential projects that required the Watertown Housing Partnership's review for inclusion of affordable units, that the regularly-scheduled December 2014 meeting be cancelled.

The members in attendance concurred.

## **Adjourn**

Mr. Reynolds asked for any other business. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Cook moved to adjourn the meeting, and Judge Menton seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.