



Affordable Housing Trust

Town of West Boylston
140 Worcester Street
West Boylston, MA 01583
January 23, 2024

Members Present: Robert J. Barrell, Chris Berglund, Marcia Cairns, Marc Frieden and Pat Halpin

Also Present: David Femia

The zoom meeting opened at 6:02 PM. On roll call the above members answered in the affirmative.

The minutes of December 19, 2023 were read and approved on a motion by Mr. Berglund and seconded by Mr. Frieden. This motion was approved by roll call by all.

Ms. Halpin asked if there were any updates. Mr. Berglund and Mr. Frieden advised the Trust that the grant application from EOHLC to hire a consultant to update the Housing Production Plan has been declined. The conversation with EOHLC indicated that there were more applications than funds available. Approved grant applications appear to be awarded to communities preparing large projects for large impacts. It was suggested that the Trust just missed getting funded and perhaps it was interpreted that the funding for the HHP was a defensive measure.

The Governor has acknowledged that small communities are challenged by the lack of staff and encourages communities to work with regional planning agencies to seek federal grants.

Ms. Halpin requests all Trust members respond to the SWOT survey.

Mr. Berglund updated the Trust regarding the Housing Production Plan. He has a meeting scheduled with the Town Administrator. The Town Administrator is assisting with the qualifiers and required procurement criterion. Mr. Berglund will circulate a draft copy when completed.

Mr. Frieden attended the Mass Management Association meeting that discussed the use of AI as a management tool. AI would be useful to gather data for rough grant applications.

Ms. Halpin expressed concern that town boards and committees need members. Mr. Barrell suggested that at the community meeting February 8 that we advise attendees of the opportunities to serve.

At 7:09 Mr. Frieden moved to adjourn the meeting. This motion was seconded by Ms. Cairns with the roll approval of all.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert J. Barrell

