

**Bedford Housing Partnership
Fair Housing – Affordable Housing
September 5, 2012**

Present: Stephen Boyd, Irma Carter, Ellis Kriesberg, Lisa Mustapich, Alice Sun,

Absent: Jane Puffer, Christina Wilgren

Others present: Assistant Town Manager - Jessica Porter;
Selectmen Liaison - Mike Rosenberg; Community Preservation Committee - Gene Clerkin
Beth Rust, Housing Consultants, RHSO; Jean Hammond, interested citizen

Sun was delayed. Kriesberg called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Housekeeping: Porter reported that Zoe Pierce's appointment ended – she opted not to be reappointed.

Minutes of July 18

Mustapich moved to accept the minutes as corrected. Vote: 4 in favor, 0 opposed, Boyd abstained.

CPA Funding Supportive Services

Gene Clerkin presented a proposal for an amendment in the wording of the CPA language. Originally a "bricks and mortar" act passed in 2000, the state was originally aimed at housing production. Since that time, the language of the act has been amended. Most recently on July 8, 2012, Gov Patrick signed language to allow for supportive services directly to individuals and families who are eligible for community housing or to an entity that owns, operates or manages this affordable housing. Clerkin proposed changing the language in Section 5(b)(2) to add "and its residents." The change would read -- ".....for the acquisition, creation, preservation and support of community housing **and its residents.** " This change would allow an appropriation from available CPA funds for supportive services which would be offered to community housing residents. These services could include case management, transportation, medical, mental health and substance abuse, legal services, employment assistance, child care – depending on the needs of the residents. Clerkin proposes that these monies (with dollar limit set) be administered by Youth and Family Services through House of Hope in Lowell. The proposal needs the support of the BHP, Selectmen and CPC Committee before it goes to Town Meeting as a Home Rule petition.

After a lengthy discussion, Mustapich moved that the BHP support use of CPA funds to qualified community housing residents. Boyd seconded. VOTE: 4 in favor. 1 opposed (Sun) .

Potential Programs for 2013

Members continued the discussion of possible programs for 2013. Rust distributed ideas for further action: Small grants, rental subsidies, buy down market units, down payment assistance .

Small grants could be based on the Sudbury model for health and safety repairs where income eligible owners can apply for grants – e.g. \$3K per grant period - \$20K cap per year.

Rental subsidies could have multiple grants available per year – qualified needs to be well defined – in response to a change in circumstance on a short term basis. e.g. for use with long term disability – like "unemployment benefits" for housing –would be based on family size. In Bedford, for example, it could be used in deed restricted properties like Avalon Bay and operate like a local section 8* program.. (Rust reported that Concord was not going ahead with Rental assistance a at this time.)

Buy Down program would convert existing market rate housing to affordable housing by reducing the purchase price. It was noted that this would be difficult to find eligible Bedford units

Down payment assistance would be used for first time home owners. Grants could be \$2500 to \$5000 secured with mortgage by Town forgivable over a period of time-e.g. 5 years. Payable at closing.

Members agreed to investigate rental subsidies and small grants further.

HOME updates: Bedford's money is "secure". RHSO is going ahead with planning for capital improvements at the Bedford Housing Authority's property at 20 Railroad Avenue. It is expected that funds can be committed by the end of 2012.

Expiring Use: Rust prepared summary of expiring use at Bedford Village. Those regulatory documents expire in March 2018. Current regulations require written notice two years before the affordability restriction ends. Owners would have to payoff the existing mortgage (currently \$855K) at that time. Agreed: We will continue to follow.

Bedford Day

Members discussed arrangements for Bedford Day. Finalized coverage of booth, set up, takedown.

Update on developments

Pulte will have information night September 10.

Meeting adjourned 9:15.

Next meeting:

October 9