

**Bedford Housing Partnership
Meeting Minutes
June 20, 2023 at 7:00 PM
Prepared by Jeff King
Zoom**

Attending Members: Christina Wilgren (Chair), Elena Zorn, Alice Sun, Jacinda Barbehenn, Kim Lovy, Ellis Kriesberg, Margaret Siciliano (late) and Shawn Hanegan (non-voting member)

Others Present: Jeff King (staff)

Call to order. Ms. Wilgren called the BHP meeting to order at 7:04 via Zoom remote participation conference call; A roll call occurred for committee members to announce their presence.

Roll call:

Yes: Ms. Wilgren (chair), Ms. Zorn, Mr. Kriesberg, Ms. Sun, Ms. Barbehenn, Ms. Lovy, Ms. Siciliano (late) and Mr. Hanegan.

- 1. May 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes:** Ms. Wilgren noted a few, minor, grammatical and spelling corrections. and asked for a vote on the minutes. Mr. Kriesberg made a motion to approve the minutes with minor grammatical corrections and Ms. Sun seconded the motion. Votes: Wilgren - yes, Kriesberg – abstain, Sun - yes, Barbehenn - yes, Zorn - yes.

The motion carried 4-0-1

- 2. Appointment of BHP representative to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC), and Bedford Housing Partnership (BHP) Re-appointments**

Ms. Sun stated that she was interested in serving as the BHP liaison to the CPC. She stated that she does not support the decisions on how the CPC spends some of their funds. She added that she would like to shape how projects are funded. Ms. Wilgren said the main role of the BHP representative to CPC should be to promote housing. Ms. Barbehenn said she agreed that the position should be there to be an active advocate in crafting housing projects. Ms. Wilgren added that it's a position to stand up for affordable housing. Mr. King asked a point of clarification to confirm that Ms. Wilgren was interested in the position of CPC liaison. Ms. Wilgren replied yes. Mr. King stated the two BHPs members -Ms. Sun and Ms. Wilgren are both interested in the position. Ms. Lovy asked what is an example of the amount of some of these housing grants from the CPC. Ms. Wilgren gave an example of the \$3 million preservation grant for preservation of a 96 unit complex at Bedford Village. Ms. Wilgren added that because housing is so expensive, more money should be allocated for affordable housing to build up a reserve. For CPC liaisons. Mrs. Barbehenn offered to be a mentor to anyone who wants to serve as the liaison to BHP as she had been on the CPC in the past. She added that it is important to understand and decide what the role of this position will be as everyone should be on

the same page. Mr. King explained that CPC funds have been used for one-time large affordable housing projects as well as smaller on-going programs such as the Bedford Rental Relief Program (BRRP). Mr. Hanegan said the vote from BHP is a recommendation to the Select Board who make the final appointment decision.

A Roll Call vote was taken to vote for either Alice Sun or Christina Wilgren. Ms. Lovy -Wilgren, Ms. Barbehenn -abstain, Mr. Kriesberg-Wilgren, Ms. Zorn -Wilgren, Ms. Sun-Sun, Ms. Wilgren-Wilgren. The BHP voted to recommend Ms. Wilgren 4-1-1.

Mr. King stated that for reappointments of BHP Board members, it is up to individuals to submit their forms to the Town Mangers office to forward to the Select Board for a vote. The BHP currently has two vacancies on the Board. It was recommended that the BHP reach out to the Council on Aging as there is some overlap in missions that there is a need among seniors for affordable housing.

3. Ad-Hoc Working Group with Select Board: -40 B process improvements.

Mr. King explained that this was part of a larger process to work with the Select Board working group on improving clarifying the 40 B process. Mr. Hanegan explained that he and Margot Fleischman have been named to sit on a 40B working group with the BHP. Mr. King said that up to 4 BHP members -or short of quorum, can volunteer to serve on the working group. Ms. Lovy said that she would like to volunteer. Ms. Barbehenn said that she would like to nominate Mr. Kreisberg. He agreed to volunteer. Ms. Wilgren was also interested. Mr. Hanegan stated the 40B Working Group would be an interface with the BHP and that one of the tasks would be to determine the roles of each Board in the 40 B process and review any overlap such as the LIP application. It would also look at the policies, procedures, guidelines, abutter distance and what is asked of the developer. Mr. Hanegan that it was important to set expectations ahead of time. After several meetings of the working group, the findings would come back to the full boards

One issue to sort out is where does the formal 40B process begin. Is it with the Planning Board? Is it with the BHP with the Letter of Support request or an introductory meeting with BHP? Times, date, deliberations, decisions and submittal requirements all impact the BHP operating procedures. Clarity up front would help set expectations for both BHP members and developers. It is also important that the process be transparent. Mr. Kreisberg asked why the Planning Board was not included in the 40B working group. Mr. King stated that he has separate meetings with departments heads involved permitting issues generally including 40B. The Planning Board is included. This group is also providing feedback that can be shared with the working group. Mr. Hanegan that some of the process may involve the Planning Board and it will at least be run by Planning Board staff. Ms. Barbehenn stated the first pass should involve the BHP and Select Board to iron out their roles and responsibilities first. Afterward there then should be a broader conversation that includes planning.

4. Discussion of Proposed Bedford Housing Partnership-Operation Procedures and Consideration for Ratification.

Mt. King wanted to make sure that that the draft of BHP operation procedures reflects comments from BHP members. Mr. Kriesberg wanted to make sure that any funding requests that come to MAHT also come before the BHP full vote and the result either in a letter of support, recommendation or other finding then be transmitted to the MAHT. Mr. King said that he would make sure this change is put in the procedures. Mr. Hanegan added that a BHP liaison on their own cannot speak for the entire organization. Ms. Barbehenn also asked that there be communication with ZBA so they are aware of decisions that may impact their review. Mr. Hanegan added that discussions with the MAHT and CPC should be up front as this affects how the box on the LIP application for local funding is addressed. Ms. Zorn said there should also be an update or report given to the BHP on activities of the MAHT. Ms. Sun explained that in the past, program ideas were generated and proposed by the BHP but then executed by the Trust as they have the funds. The other part of the Trust this is discussed at their meetings is about funding sources. Ms. Sun added that there should be a report to the BHP once a month or when there are Trust meetings that month. Ms. Barbehenn added that the Planning Board has liaison reports at the end of meetings. It would be good to have liaison reports from the Planning Board and Select Board when related to housing issues. Mr. Hanegan stated that he could prepare a list of bullet items in advance of the meeting. Ms. Sun said that should also be a fair housing report on each agenda. The BHP came out of two committees -the Affordable Housing Committee and the Fair Housing Committee. For years, Ms. Sun that she has been the Fair Housing Officer. There needs to be a fair housing liaison for fair housing issues. Mr. King said he will make sure that the role of fair housing be put into the operating procedures and remain a part of the BHP. Ms. Wilgren brought up a separate issue stating that for consistency, the submittal deadlines should all be 4:00 pm as that is when Town Hall closes most days. Mr. King said that he will update the procures to reflect comments from BHP members and will then bring back the updated procedures to the BHP for final review and affirmation.

Mr. King stated that the next meeting of the BHP will also look at prioritizing goals of the BHP. Ms. Wilgren also brought up the need to be award of any projects at risk for expiring affordable use. It is important to preserve and prevent the loss of any existing affordable housing units. Mr. King also mentioned that there will be a meeting with Habitat for Humanity to discuss and clarify their RFP response to the MAHT affordable housing renovation project at 23 Winterberry Way. The meeting is next Monday at noon. BHP and MAHT members can attend as long as there is not a quorum of either group. Mr. King will send out an invite email to all BHP and MAHT members and make sure that there are no quorums. Mr. King asked Ms. Siciliano if she was interested in volunteering for the 40B working group. Ms. Siciliano said she is interested and will make a decision soon.

5. Adjourn:

Ms. Wilgren declared the need to end the meeting. A roll call vote was taken. Ms. Sicilian moved to close the meeting, and Ms. Zorn seconded the motion. Votes:

Barbehenn - yes, Siciliano -yes, Kreisberg - yes, Lovy-yes Zorn – yes., Wilgren -yes Ms.
Sun -yes
The motion carried 7-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 PM.