

**Bedford Housing Partnership**  
**Final Meeting Minutes**  
**June 29, 2022 at 6:00 PM**  
**Prepared by Jeff King**  
**Zoom**

Attending Members: Christina Wilgren (chair), Alice Sun, Elena Zorn, Ellis Kriesberg, Kate Reynolds, Kim Lovy, Jacinda Barbehenn, and Shawn Hanegan (non-voting member)

Absent Members: Margaret Siciliano

Other Present: Liz Rust (RHSO), Jeff King (staff),

Call to order. Christina Wilgren called BHP meeting to order at 6:14 PM via Zoom remote participation conference call and motion seconded by Alice Sun. A roll call occurred for committee members to announce if they were present.

Roll call:

Yes: Christina Wilgren (chair), Jacinda Barbehenn, Alice Sun, Kate Reynolds (present just after roll call), Elena Zorn, Kim Lovy, Ellis Kriesberg, and Shawn Hanegan

Not in attendance: Margaret Siciliano

1. **April 27, 2022 Meeting Minutes:** Christina Wilgren asked for a vote on the minutes. Ellis Kriesberg made a motion to approve the minutes. Kim Lovy seconded the motion. Alice Sun stated that we should add the time of adjournment on the minutes. Staff -Jeff King asked whether we should add the written comments of Kate Reynolds into the minutes as she had technical difficulties with the Zoom connection at the April 27, 2022 meeting. Christina ask for a motion to amend. Jacinda Barbehenn made a motion to amend. Kate Reynolds seconded. Vote: Wilgren-yes, Kriesberg-yes, Reynolds-yes, Sun-yes. Barbehenn- Yes, Lovy-Yes. Zorn-abstain  
The motion carried 6-0-1
  
2. **RHSO Update.**  
Liz Rust provided an overview of the RHSO update. She said the two projects under Initial Rental Assistance (IRA) have been completed. This program is funded by HOME funds via the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust. The grants were approximately \$1,200 each. Ms. Rust added that she will provide a list of parcels of land owned by the Bedford Housing Authority to see if there is any development potential. The BHP will be meeting with the BHA to discuss mutual goals and see if there are opportunities to work together to support affordable housing issues and needs. Ms. Rust said that she will be working with the town on monitoring affordable housing units at Avalon in Bedford. Mass Housing Partnership has informed the Town that their monitoring requirement has expired. It now falls onto the town to determine if they want to continue monitoring the units to keep their affordability status. Ms. Wilgren asked if all units are required to remain affordable in perpetuity. Ms. Rust replied that some like the Bedford VA units may have a term to them. Ms. Wilgren asked Mr. King and Ms. Rust to review the

Bedford inventory to determine if all units are affordable in perpetuity or have a term on them. Ms. Wilgren would like the Town to see what they could do upfront to ensure that all affordable units are affordable in perpetuity.

3. **FAIR Housing.** Ms. Sun did not receive any Fair Housing requests/complaints. She did say that she knew of two families who are not in affordable units but were struggling with rent. She added that one was paying \$3,100 a month for 1175 square feet. She said the landlord reduced the rent by \$300. She added that she did a study a few months ago and found that the average rent for a two bedroom was \$2.10 a square foot. She added that certain luxury developments are well above market average and that the rise in interest rates is adding additional upward pressure on housing costs.
4. **MAHT Reappointment.** Ms. Wilgren and Ms. Sun stated that they would like to be reappointed to the Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Board as representatives of the BHP. The town requires that the BHP make a recommendation as well as a reappointment vote by the Select Board. Ms. Sun asked if there is a maximum of terms or consecutive years one can serve on the MAHT. Mr. Hanegan stated that he has not heard that regarding liaison positions but that the Board does encourage rotation of leaderships positions such as the chair. He added that we should ask if any other members on the BHP are interested in serving on the MAHT. Ms Barbehann asked what the position entails. Ms. Wilgren said that the MAHT funds projects that further affordable housing. She added that most of their funds are local Community Preservation allocations and some HOME monies. She also thought that the MAHT could accept donations and funds can also come into the Trust if local zoning/development code explicitly required development projects make such a payment. Ms. Sun added that that the MAHT administered an Emergency Rental Program during Covid, a Small Grant Homeowner Repair Program up to \$4,000 and an Initial Rental Assistance Program.

Ms. Zorn asked who else is on the MAHT board. Mr. King read the bylaws stating this it is set up as a 7-member board with 2 members from the Select Board, 2 from the BHP, the Town Manager and 2 At-Large positions. Currently one of those At-Large positions is vacant. Ms. Wilgren added that she is passionate about affordable housing and the MAHT. It was recommended that nominations be opened for each candidate and then closed and a vote for the nominees. Mr Kriesberg made a motion to nominate Alice Sun. Kate Reynolds seconded. Elena Zorn made a motion to nominate Christina Wilgren. Ellis Kriesberg seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations from the floor and nominations were closed. Both names were put into nomination and a roll call vote was taken to approve the nominations. Jacinda B-yes, Ellis Kreisberg-yes, Elena Zorn-yes, Alice Sun-yes, Kate Reynolds-yes, Kim Lovy-yes and Christina Wilgren -yes. The vote was 7-0 to recommend reappointment to MAHT, Ms. Sun stated that there is one vacancy on the MAHT for an At-Large position and recommended anyone interested apply to the Town Manager.

5. **ADU Research Findings.** Ellis Kreisberg presented his findings on an ADU Loan Program offered by the Boston Housing Authority. The program has made 10 loans in 2021 but only one to date in 2022. The key is that the unit does not need to be affordable

to a lower income tenant. Rather the applicant/property owner does need to be within a certain income. The owner needs to be below 135% AMI. The program only covers half the costs for applicants with income 120%-135% of AMI. The loan does not need to be paid back unless the owner sells or the property is refinanced. The program manager said the process is not easy to complete and deters some property owners from applying. Ms. Wilgren said that this program is worth future discussion. Ms. Rust said that if you are using local CPA funds there might be added restrictions such as a lower AMI and a lien against the property. Mr. Kriesberg added that the administrative costs and staff time might not be worth it if only 1 or 2 loans were completed per year. Ms. Sun stated that it could be difficult to offer the ADU at lower rent as a lower income property owner may not be in a position to do this. Mr. Barbehann stated that the BHP should look at the broader needs of affordability to include the missing middle in addition to those state subsidized projects and that this could be a good program. She that added that BHP should think about highlighting such a program to homeowners if it were to be enacted. Ms. Rust stated that units assisted with a program like this would not qualify for the state subsidized inventory (SHI). Alice Sun said that there have only been 64 ADU units built in Bedford. This is 1.2% of the Town's total housing stock. She added that there has not been a single variance given for ADU project that have come to the Town. It is a very hard process along with a restrictive building code. Ms. Barbehenn said that if it is a question about size increases, that can be discussed by the Bedford Planning Board but some the State building codes are very onerous and drive up the cost.

6. **40B Projects.** Mr. King reported that the South Road project has yet to come in for their building permits. The Carlisle Road/DeVellis Consulting Group are still doing their due diligence and collecting information however that should be completed soon. Mr. Hanegan asked if there is a timetable to engage DeVellis with a meeting with the BHP subcommittee. Mr. King will follow up with the Town Manager regarding meeting with Town staff and the BHP subcommittee. Ms. Wilgren is concerned that the project might be fully baked before the BHP has further discussion with the developer. Mr. Kreisberg stated that it is really important to get the community involved early on. He does not want to see a project that will end up turning the community against affordable housing. Ms. Reynolds asked for examples that have been given for opposition to the project. Mr. Hanegan replied that comments heard include concerns about visual appearance, a look that is too urban for that area, general opposition to change, and impact to schools. Ms. Zorn asked what is the order of the project as it proceeds. Ms. Wilgern said that the developer starts with a conceptual plan. She added that she thinks the DeVellis is sensitive to the needs of the community and at some point, there are public hearings when the project comes before the Planning Board and Select Board approval as a 40B LIP project. Mr. King will report back on getting a meeting with the BHP subcommittee.
7. Shared Housing Presentation. This item was postponed to the next meeting due to time constraints.
8. **Future Meeting:** Mr. King explained that the next meeting will be a workshop format. The effort is to define goals, action plan and priorities of the BHP for the next year. What does the BHP want to focus their time on and prioritize to get an outcome that moves the

ball forward on affordable housing. With only so much time, bandwidth and resources, what are the most important tasks -policies, programs, projects, and tools that the BHP wants to address. This effort would also refine tasks for staff to work on to assist the BHP. Mr. King said he envisions a two- meeting process. The first to get information and to help give the BHP a more comprehensive picture of current issues and needs. This would include a meeting with Bedford Housing Authority, an update and perspective from Planning Director, Tony Fields, training from RHSO, and a review of the 2019 Housing Study. The second meeting would build the goals, action plan and priorities for the next year or two. It is important that the process allows for input from all BHP board members. Ms. Barbehenn asked if members could provide input to staff before the meeting. Mr., King replied yes, that would be helpful to the planning process to get input and ideas from members.

9. **Adjourn.** A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Kriesberg and seconded by Ms. Reynolds. Vote: Zorn - yes, Barbehenn - yes, Wilgren – yes, Sun-yes, Reynolds-yes, Lovy-yes. Kriesberg -yes. The motion carried 7-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm