

**Lincoln Housing Commission  
Virtual Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, June 23, 2020 9:00 a.m.**

**Members Present on Zoom Teleconference: Keith Gilbert, Chair; Evan Gorman, Vice Chair; Diana Chirita, Allen Vander Meulen**

(Member unavailable: Victoria Benalfew)

**Also present: Kristen Ferris and Elaine Carroll, Adm. Assistant**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. Keith Gilbert made a motion to approve the regular minutes from June 9, 2020 as written. Allen Vander Meulen seconded the motion. The vote to approve was unanimous. The Executive Session minutes from June 9, 2020 will be reviewed and approved at a future meeting. The next meeting will be on June 30, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. and will be in part an Executive Session to discuss rent.

Role of the Housing Commission Post 40B:

The members brought Kristen Ferris, who is interested in the Housing Commission, up to date on some of the projects that have been in the works. Allen said that SLPIC attempted to propose a zoning change in the Lincoln Station area but met with opposition from the neighbors in that area and has now tabled the zoning change proposal. SLPIC has been reduced from 14 people down to 5 with a member of Housing being among the 5 and was renamed to SLPAC. They will try to revitalize Lincoln Station and we need to insure that any zoning changes are friendly to affordable housing. The new Planning Board member is in favor of having Town Meeting authority for any large housing projects in that area and not just relying on the Planning Board to make all the decisions. How do you tell a developer that they won't have a problem at the end of all the discussions? The zoning change never got to Town Meeting but there were information sessions held by the Planning Board.

The Housing Commission is in charge of 7 Town-owned rental units, and there are not many options for creating more affordable housing. Diana felt that the members should do some brainstorming including trying to revive the Affordable Accessory Apartment (AAA) bylaw which has stalled in the Legislature. This was designed to help people create an affordable apartment in their homes, especially for elderly residents who could use the extra money. The AAA bylaw was originally designed to give a grant to someone who would create an affordable apartment and also the square footage for the apartment would be taken off their property taxes. The grant/loan would be forgiven by 10% of the loan each year that it was kept affordable. There was active interest of about 6 people in Town. There was no incentive to make it affordable unless you got a tax break or grant. We need to find a way to keep us above 10%. Keith said at the end of the year when we know where we are with COVID-19, we could go back to the Legislature and to Tim Higgins and get it back on his radar. Allen will send Keith the information on the Bill and find out the next step.

Diana asked if the members saw the flyer from Metro West Collaborative, who could help with the over 40 homeownership units which do not work. The two different styles of affordable housing are ownership to buy a unit under market value and rental units, which as long as 25% is affordable than all the units count on our SHI. Whenever an ownership unit is sold someone has to come up with what the affordable unit can be sold for and what the buyer can pay. This has been a model that has not worked well. The units have to be sold to someone with 120% of AMI because it is not just the price of the unit but the condo and assessment fees that are too high for anyone in the 60% to 80% AMI. Diana said that Farrington Memorial may still be interested in selling some property to make some money. This could be used for a group home for brain-injured veterans. Our main policy was to satisfy affordable housing to stave off 40B development but we need to find housing for people with income lower than 60% of AMI. We could search the web to find an organization like Metro West to partner with for affordable housing. We have partnered with people for The Commons and several group homes in Lincoln. If we are no longer above 10% on the SHI then a 40B developer is waiting in the wings with

a 200 or more unit development. Kristen asked “why are 60 units better than 250 units of housing”. The members said that it had to do with the size of the lot, traffic on country roads, along with infrastructure problems like water and schools. It would be better to scatter smaller projects all over Town instead of putting a high rise building in one part of Town. Diana said she would like to make a policy for creating more diversity in Town and see how we can do that, and take a break over the summer and come back with ideas in September. She would also like to have the Metro West person come back to the HC to see about creating models like Lincoln Woods but not ownership models.

Diana will be finishing up the recertifications for this year next week, but she would like to put off any further recertifications. Keith Gilbert made a motion that there would be no new recertifications until the summer of 2021 since they do not need to be done every year. Evan Gorman seconded the motion. The vote to approve was unanimous.

Kristen said she would like to join the Housing Commission when there is an opening. Keith will inquire as to the possibility of making her an alternate member for now.

At 10:05 a.m., Allen Vander Meulen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Evan Gorman seconded the motion. The vote to approve was unanimous.

*Submitted by Elaine Carroll*

*Approved: July 8, 2020*