

**Joint meeting
Ipswich Housing Partnership
Ipswich Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board
Wednesday, July 25, 2018, 7:30 AM
Room 129, Planning Dept. Conference Room, Town Hall**

Members of IHP present: Jim Warner, Don Greenough, Jim Kroesser, Stacey Pedrick, Binni Hackett, Judy Field, Rich Kallman

Members of AHTFB present: Jim Warner, Jim Kroesser

Staff present: Terry Anderson

MINUTES

1. Citizen queries

None.

2. Approval of minutes of May 23, 2018 (no meeting was held on June 27)

For the Partnership, Kroesser moved and Warner seconded approval, with a unanimous positive vote. There was no quorum for the Trust.

3. Discussion: 25 Market Street—conversion of commercial unit to residential

Greenough gave a recap of the proposal to convert one of the commercial units (third floor) to residential use (one-bedroom). The question is whether to waive the payment-in-lieu and the option to restrict the new unit as affordable. Greenough argued that having an additional residential unit in the town center represents a benefit for the town even if it's not restricted—and that the unit will probably be *de facto* affordable without the restriction. Converting to residential is also not objectionable because the building had a residential unit in the past.

For the Partnership, Kroesser moved and Warner seconded recommending to the Planning Board that no restriction or payment should be required for this particular conversion and that if another conversion were to be proposed in the future, a restriction or payment should be required. The vote was unanimous in favor.

4. Update: Bruni project—Essex Pastures

Greenough reported that fairly considerable opposition to the project emerged at the ZBA meeting—particularly about increased traffic and whether the appraisal in support of the acquisition cost had been done appropriately. He said Michael Schaaf had questioned whether the appraisal should have been based on what could be built by right according to current by-laws rather than on the assumption that a Special Permit would be granted for the project (which has the effect of inflating the acquisition cost and therefore the developer's profit). Because of the intense public opposition to the project, the ZBA is considering scheduling a special hearing to allow a thorough and adequate consideration of the proposed project.

5. Update: stable of contractors for rehab loan program

Anderson said he had contacted 21 general contractors and tradesmen to request their participation in the rehab program without the need to submit competitive bids. Among them were general

contractors, carpenters, HVAC, painters, oil tank installer, chimney work, insulation, mason, lead removal, and electricians.

The response was minimal: 2 general contractors, 3 HVAC contractors, and 2 carpenters. Warner suggested that he distribute the list of those who have been contacted, as well as the responders, so the members could make additional recommendations.

6. Discussion: grant in exchange for affordability restriction (accessory buildings; rehab projects—extra money for rehab or other)

This subject was discussed in terms of generating ideas on how the new money flowing into the Trust fund might be used. A wide-ranging discussion included the following points: a) what should our objective be in terms of the level of affordability we'd like to see; and b) most homeowners would probably be resistant to accepting a restriction on their accessory building units because of concerns that the restriction would reduce the market value of the property, the fact that the restriction would be permanent, and the amount of the grant would likely not be sufficient compensation for these negative aspects.

There was some interest in allowing additional money for rehab loans in order to expand the scope of rehab work to be done—but not for permitting the use of the funds for any other purpose.

7. Discussion: increase down payment assistance limit

Anderson suggested that the current limit might be raised in light of the ever-increasing prices of real estate and the fact that we have had almost no requests for assistance for many months—most likely because it's so difficult for first-timers to buy in this market environment. Kroesser questioned whether we should consider setting the amount of assistance as a percentage of the purchase price or simply as a dollar amount (as is done today).

8. Community input/new business

Hackett recommended outreach/marketing efforts directed to realtors (especially announcements that could be made at their office meetings). She also offered to pass the word along to Windhill Realty.

One apartment owner has consistently ignored Anderson's requests for verification of his tenant's income-eligibility. Kroesser suggested that we ask David Fuller, Building Inspector, to draft a template letter that could be used for any such scofflaw to threaten repeal of the owner's Certificate of Occupancy unless documentation is provided that confirms the tenant's eligibility.

9. Next meeting date

The next meeting will be held on August 22, 2018—assuming sufficient business exists.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:35.

Respectfully submitted by
Terry Anderson, Housing Coordinator
July 25, 2018

Approved _____