

Brookline Housing Authority
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 20, 2019
50 Pleasant Street
4:30 PM

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Jacobs at 4:35 PM. Those present included Ms. Dugan, Ms. Katz, Ms. Sullivan, and Ms. Cohen.

Board Reports

As a member of the Brookline Housing Advisory Board (HAB), Mr. Jacobs reported the following:

- Mr. Dober and BHA Director of Redevelopment, Maria Maffei, recently presented HAB with an update on the BHA's redevelopment plans.
- The HAB is reviewing the BHA's request for Morse Apartments predevelopment funding.
- The Town bid unsuccessfully for the Newbury College property. A private developer purchased it and plans to build an assisted living community. The new owner is undertaking inclusionary zoning discussions with the Town, and the Town has hired a consultant to advise on the negotiations. One option being considered is a direct cash contribution to the BHA for modernization/redevelopment efforts.

Ms. Dugan said that it is important to direct inclusionary zoning benefits to the Town's lowest-income population.

Mr. Dober said that it is fortunate that the BHA is now seen as a good steward for Affordable Housing Trust Fund resources. The BHA has projects in the pipeline that can utilize such funding.

As a member of the Steps To Success Board, Ms. Katz reported the following:

- The Boston Globe published an article entitled "The Great Divide" focusing on obstacles to graduating college in six years faced by low-income/minority students. The Steps To Success College Success Initiative works to bridge this divide, with 86% of Steps To Success participants graduating college within six years.

Mr. Dober thanked Ms. Katz for her significant contributions to Steps To Success, as she has recently stepped down after serving six years as Chair of their Board. Ms. Katz will continue to serve as a member of the Steps To Success Board.

Executive Director Report

Mr. Dober reported the following:

- The BHA is expanding its partnership with the Brookline Food Pantry with plans to open a pantry at High Street Veterans Apartments. This will be the third pantry location, along with the pantries at St. Paul's Church and Egmont Street Veterans Apartments.
- Auditors have completed their financial/administrative review of the BHA and it appears that there will be no findings.

- Personnel update: Matthew Lincoln has been hired as the BHA Assistant Director of Leased Housing; Sheila O’Flaherty has been promoted from BHA Property Manager to the newly created position of BHA Director of Asset Management; and BHA Property Manager, Kelley Chambliss will assume property management responsibilities at Morse Apartments and will become a lead person with respect to the RAD redevelopment work.
- Mr. Dober plans to attend Town Meeting later this evening, as the BHA is closely following and supporting the Real Estate Transfer Tax warrant article.
- The Brookline Public Works Department helped to leverage the upcoming repaving of Dummer Street by Boston University at no cost to the BHA. The BHA and BU each own one half of Dummer Street, from Pleasant Street to St. Paul Street. The total value of this repaving project is estimated at over \$100,000.
- The Sussman House fire alarm upgrade project is ongoing.

Consent Agenda

On a motion from Ms. Cohen and a second from Ms. Katz, the consent agenda was unanimously approved and authorized the following: the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on October 22, 2019; the DHCD Capital Improvement Plan for state public housing for the five-year period FY 2020 – 2024; Change Order #1 for the 1057 Beacon Street stairs repair in the amount of \$4,007.14; a contract to install bathroom fans at Egmont Street Veterans Apartments to Thomas E. Snowden, Inc. in the amount of \$304,000; and a contract to Diane Cohen to provide staff training and support for HUD management information systems (MIS) at a rate of \$150 per hour and a projected annual cost of \$9,000.

90 Longwood Avenue Renovation

Ms. Maffei introduced Baker Wohl Architects (BWA) Principal Architect for the 90 Longwood Avenue renovation, Ahmed Idris, and Lead Architect, Adam LeBlanc.

Mr. Idris reported the following:

- 75% design development has been achieved.
- They are completing some investigatory demolition and excavation.
- The goal is to bid the renovation work in the spring and to begin construction in the summer.
- BWA surveyed residents’ preferences and incorporated many of their wishes into the plans.

Mr. LeBlanc reported the following:

- The renovations focus on kitchens and bathrooms, with aging in place a priority.
- The renovations are constrained by the small size of apartments (360 square feet).
- The refrigerator is being relocated to an existing closet enclave in order to open up kitchen space and to create more room for cabinets.
- The bathroom will feature roll in showers and new shelving.
- New appliances and hardware will be installed.
- New floors, walls, and ceilings will be constructed throughout the apartment.
- Balcony sliders will be replaced.
- There will be a new HVAC system and improved ventilation.
- The biggest goal of the first-floor office and community space renovations is better delineation of BHA offices and resident spaces.
- The front entry of the BHA will provide access to offices.
- The side entry will provide resident access to apartments and resident spaces.

- The new office area configuration will include two conference rooms, a staff/client meeting area, and better reception security.
- Exterior plans include: a patio in the front of the building; accessibility improvements; a covered bus shelter; and general landscaping upgrades.

Ms. Maffei said that part of the plan includes the BHA Maintenance Department offices relocating, possibly to the Kickham Apartments.

Ms. Dugan expressed concern that the Kickham Apartments office space is limited. Ms. Maffei said that BWA will consult on the design of the Kickham office spaces to ensure they are adequate.

BHA resident Bruce Wolff asked if adding new units is a part of BHA's redevelopment plans. Ms. Maffei said that the potential for new units will be considered on a site by site basis at future BHA locations.

Enhanced Voucher Rents

BHA Director of Subsidized Housing and Applications, Carlos Hernandez, said that on an annual basis, Winn Management requests a rent increase for BHA administered Section 8 assistance at the Village at Brookline. The Project-Based assistance is adjusted to match the BHA Payment Standards. The Enhanced Voucher increases are based on market studies.

Both the BHA and Winn commissioned separate market studies, with Winn's numbers coming in higher than the BHA's. BHA staff believes that the BHA's study reflects the market more accurately and, therefore, recommends new Enhanced Voucher rents based on the BHA study.

On a motion from Ms. Sullivan and a second from Ms. Katz, Section 8 Enhanced Voucher rents for The Village at Brookline for 2019-2020 were unanimously approved.

RAD Update

Ms. Maffei reported the following:

61 Park Street

- Staff is gearing up for tax credit delivery starting in January 2019.
- With a current surplus of vacancies, the BHA will need to lease up some yet to be renovated units.
- Staff is focusing on year-end tax statements, financials, etc.
- Staff is planning a field trip to the Somerville Housing Authority to discuss their approach to administering a RAD converted property.
- Some electrical wires located within concrete floor slabs have been severed during core drilling, periodically shorting out the fire alarm system. Colantonio, Inc. has established a drilling protocol acceptable to the Brookline Fire Department.
- The project is temporarily behind schedule because of material delivery delays.
- The project construction sign is in place on the site.

90 Longwood Avenue

- There was a great turnout for the recent resident meeting to review design plans.
- The BHA is studying office renovation logistics.
- An Official Action Status application was submitted to Mass Housing for tax exempt bond financing.
- Staff is reviewing responses to the debt and equity financing RFP.
- The BHA is bringing a request to HAB for financial support.

Ms. Maffei said that the BHA is proceeding with due diligence regarding future RAD properties.

Ms. Dugan expressed concern about the disruption for residents in future RAD projects if demolition is considered. There are concerns at Walnut Street Apartments that the two senior buildings will be demolished during redevelopment. Mr. Dober said that the BHA will very carefully consider options one development at a time and will work to make sure residents are fully informed.

Ms. Cohen said that Cambridge Housing Authority residents have been extremely pleased with RAD conversions; both for renovations of existing building and with demolition. Mr. Jacobs added that there are a variety of ways to phase and blend new construction and renovations.

Affirm Change Order

Ms. Maffei said that plumbing caps need to be installed in each apartment due to a code change. Future change orders will be required, as similar costs will need to be incorporated in each unit as the work progresses.

On a motion from Ms. Cohen and a second from Ms. Sullivan, Change Order #1 to the construction management contract for 61 Park Street with Colantonio, Inc. in the amount of \$4,251.37 was unanimously affirmed.

Section 8 Contract Award

Mr. Hernandez explained that five project based Housing Choice Vouchers are central to the plans for the Morse RAD redevelopment project. These set aside vouchers will receive rents at the one-bedroom payment standards.

On a motion from Ms. Sullivan and a second from Ms. Katz, the award of a five-unit project based Section 8 contract from the BHA to 90 Longwood LLC to support the redevelopment and operation of the property under the RAD Program was unanimously approved.

Consulting Contract Award

Ms. Maffei said that staff is pleased to have found a replacement for the services previously provided by Luke Fallon. Sharon Loewenthal has extraordinary qualifications and experience and has worked separately with Mr. Dober and Ms. Maffei in the past. Nine consultants were solicited and the BHA received three responses.

On a motion from Ms. Cohen and a second from Ms. Katz, a contract to Sharon Loewenthal for finance and development consulting on the redevelopment of 90 Longwood Avenue and the RAD program, at a rate of \$175 per hour, with a maximum contract amount of \$50,000, for an initial two-year term, renewable for one additional year, was unanimously approved.

Consulting Contract Award

Ms. Maffei said that staff conducted a procurement process for limited scope finance and development consulting related to the RAD program. They recommend entering a consulting contract for these services with Luke Fallon.

On a motion from Ms. Sullivan and a second from Ms. Katz, a contract with Luke Fallon for limited scope finance and development consulting, at a rate of \$200 per hour, with a maximum contract amount of \$20,000, for an initial two-year term, renewable for one additional year, was unanimously approved.

Proprietary Procurement

Ms. Maffei said that M.G.L. Chapter 149 requires competition for product procurement. An exception can be made if it is in the strong interest of an owner to utilize a specific product. Staff is recommending the purchase of the same heating and cooling system as is currently being utilized in the redevelopment work at 61 Park LLC. By using the same product at two BHA locations, the ability of staff to maintain and service it will be enhanced.

On a motion from Ms. Cohen and a second from Ms. Sullivan, a proprietary specification and procurement of the Daikin Industries Variable Refrigerant Flow heating and cooling system for the upcoming renovation of 90 Longwood Avenue, was unanimously approved.

Section 18 Application

Ms. Maffei said that by exchanging RAD vouchers for higher paying vouchers through Section 18 assistance, cash flow for the 90 Longwood RAD development will increase.

On a motion from Ms. Sullivan and a second from Ms. Katz, authorization to submit a Section 18 application to HUD to replace 25% of the RAD units in the 90 Longwood Avenue property with Section 18 assistance and to approve the accompanying Resolutions prepared by the BHA's law firm, Nolan Sheehan Patten LLP, was unanimously approved.

Service Contract Award

Mr. Dober said that BHA consultant, Garrett Anderson, has assisted the BHA in reprocurring the BHA's elevator service contract. Staff is very pleased with the low bidder's price.

On a motion from Ms. Cohen and a second from Ms. Sullivan, a contract to Associated Elevators Company, Inc. to provide maintenance, testing, and repair of the BHA's elevators, in the amount of \$51,000 annually, for an initial contract term of three years, with two one-year extensions as further specified in the attached memo from Patrick Dober and George Lalli, was unanimously approved.

Other Business

BHA residents, Julie Levesque and Laura Paskavitz, expressed their opinion that the pipes associated with the newly upgraded sprinkler system in Sussman House apartments are unattractive. They also felt that the fire alarm enunciators looked cumbersome.

Mr. Dober said that he was surprised that he had not heard such concerns earlier. He said that BHA Director of Capital Improvements, Sharon Cowan, met with residents to share information regarding the project design before work commenced. He believes that the annunciators are required as part of the new fire code. The BHA always tries to balance safety and aesthetics.

Ms. Paskavitz asked that residents be consulted on the choice of paint color when the first-floor hallway is painted. Mr. Dober said that residents would be consulted regarding the color choice.

BHA resident, Scott Galloway, shared his opinion that Brookline Housing Town-Wide Tenant Association President, Jaymy Colon, is unresponsive. Mr. Dober said that BHA Assistant Executive Director, Matthew Baronas, regularly invites Ms. Colon to BHA Board meetings and solicits her input on issues. As resident associations are independent organizations, they are not under the BHA's control.

The Board confirmed that the next meeting will be held at Morse Apartments at a date and time to be determined.

On a motion from Ms. Sullivan and a second from Ms. Katz, it was unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 PM.

**A TRUE COPY
ATTEST**



**Patrick Dober
Executive Director**