

NANTUCKET AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST

~~ MEETING MINUTES ~~

Tuesday, October 15, 2024.

Remote Meeting *via* Zoom– 1pm

Trust Members: Brian Sullivan (Chair), Penny Dey (Vice-Chair), Abby De Molina, Forest Bell, Meg Browers, Shantaw Bloise-Murphy, Tom Dixon

ATTENDING MEMBERS: Brian Sullivan, Forest Bell, Tom Dixon, Shantaw Bloise-Murphy

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: Kristie Ferrantella (Municipal Housing Director), Rachel Field (Town Property Manager) , Lee Smith (Town Council)

PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE:

I. Call to Order

Brian Sullivan called the meeting to order at 12:32pm.

II. Approval of Agenda – ACTION

Kristie Ferrantella suggested that they hold the executive session meeting minutes to the next meeting except from the minutes from October 1st.

Tom Dixon made a MOTION to approve the agenda as amended by Kristie Ferrantella. Forest Bell seconded this motion.

Roll call of those participating

1. Forest Bell Aye
2. Shantaw Bloise-Murphy Aye
3. Tom Dixon Aye
4. Brian Sullivan Aye

III. Public comments *for items not listed on the agenda.*

Kristie Ferrantella congratulated Abby De Molina for the birth of her new baby girl Juliet.

IV. Approval of Minutes - REVIEW/ACTION

- **October 1, 2024**

Shantaw Bloise-Murphy made a MOTION to approve the October 1, 2024, meeting minutes. Forest Bell seconded the motion.

Roll call of those participating

1. Forest Bell Aye
2. Shantaw Bloise-Murphy Aye
3. Tom Dixon Aye
4. Brian Sullivan Aye

V. Closing Cost Assistance Program Application – REVIEW/ACTION

- **Karleen Thompson – 11 Equator Drive**

Brian Sullivan said he reviewed the application, and he found some inconsistencies of it. He said that in the application the Purchase and Sale Agreement is for land at \$360,000 but the original front page of the application says \$400,000. He said he contacted the closing attorney, and she is more than happy to help the applicant fix the application to clean up the inconsistencies. He said that she explained to him that the loan represents the land acquisition and the construction loan since the applicant will be moving a house to the property.

Brian Sullivan asked Lee Smith if they can approve the application subject to the amendments suggested by him.

Lee Smith said yes, they can approve the application subjected to Town council review and approval.

Tom Dixon made a MOTION to approve the Closing Cost Assistance application subject to Town Council and the Chairs approval with the edits suggested by the Chair.

Forest Bell seconded this motion.

Roll call of those participating

1. Forest Bell Aye
2. Shantaw Bloise-Murphy Aye
3. Tom Dixon Aye
4. Brian Sullivan Aye

VI. Review and discuss Open Meeting Law complaint filed by Megan Perry – REVIEW

Kristie Ferrantella reminded the Trust that they are reviewing and discussing the Open Meeting Law complaint but are not discussing a response yet, because the agenda had to be posted early due to the long weekend and the response from Town Counsel was not yet available.

Brian Riley said that last week, when Kristie Ferrantella needed to post the agenda, he wasn't sure if he could provide a draft response in time. He noted that the written response needs to be submitted by October 30, 2024, so as long as the Trust has a meeting scheduled before October 29, 2024, they can address it at that meeting. He also mentioned that it is possible to request an extension from the Attorney General's office, which is often granted freely, depending on the Trust's schedule.

Brian Riley stated that the board can discuss the complaint, and members are free to share their thoughts on what the response should be, but a formal approval of the response won't happen until the Trust's next meeting. He explained that the information he received from Kristie Ferrantella and the Town Manager's office indicated that those two offices put together the statement that is the subject of this complaint. Therefore, neither this board nor the Select Board had a role in drafting or approving it, so, in his opinion, neither board has violated the Open Meeting Law. He also confirmed that there were no phone calls, emails, or gatherings of a quorum to discuss this matter, meaning no illegal meeting or deliberations took place.

Some discussion followed about the date and time for the next meeting since the trust did not have one scheduled.

VII. Request for Approval by the Trust to consummate [or “to close on”] the purchase of 71 Surfside Road, and to authorize the Chair, or his designee, to execute any and all documents related thereto, subject to approval by Town Counsel. – ACTION

Kristie Ferrantella said Brian Sullivan has to recuse from this item, so she suggested that they move this item to the end when Meg Browers join the meeting so they can have a quorum to vote on this, but if she does not join, they are going to have to hold this item for the next meeting.

VIII. Consider Renewal Funding for Strategy and Communications Agreement with Jeremy Crockford Around the Transfer Fee - REVIEW/ACTION

Kristie Ferrantella reminded the Trust that the Affordable Homes Act included a provision for the Transfer Fee and the Trust has strongly advocated for that and used Seven Letters and Jeremy Crockford to help advance these efforts. She said that Tucker Holland has been leading the drive on this, so he brought this proposal to the Trust for review.

Tucker Holland said that in an effort to bring awareness and support for the Transfer Fee for housing, Martha’s Vineyard engaged O’Neil and Associates, a direct lobbying firm and those funds were raised privately and managed through the Community Foundation Trust on the Vineyard. He said that Nantucket has currently engaged with Seven Letters which is the sister firm on the marketing and strategy side of O’Neil and Associates.

Tucker Holland explained that the administration had been supportive of including the transfer fee in legislation, but despite that, it didn’t pass last session. Recently, he, along with Brian Sullivan, Kristie Ferrantella, Jeremy Crockford, and Matt Irish, had a discussion with Senator Cyr and representatives from Martha’s Vineyard to debrief on why the bill did not go through and strategies for the next session. He expressed optimism for future success, despite opposition from off-island real estate lobbyists, noting that many local Realtors actually support the fee. Brian Sullivan has been a key

voice in communicating this support to legislators. He also mentioned that Jeremy Crockford, having left Seven Letter, is now available to work for half the previous cost, allowing the Trust to support the efforts moving forward. He also emphasized that Martha's Vineyard is ready to reengage with O'Neil and associates to continue strategizing and bringing awareness to the transfer fee.

Brian Sullivan shared his experience attending discussions in Boston, including participating in a LOHA Coalition event. He noted that these events were well-organized and provided valuable opportunities to meet with legislators face-to-face to discuss the island's housing needs. He highlighted the progress made, particularly in getting the seasonal community designation, which could open the door to applying a transfer fee specifically to those areas. He acknowledged that the effort has been a long process, now in its eighth or ninth year, having started with a home rule petition and grown to gain interest from many of the 351 communities in the state.

Tom Dixon expressed support for continuing the initiative, noting that the community has been working on this issue for a while. He emphasized the importance of keeping the housing challenges of teachers, firefighters, and other essential workers in the public eye. With the price of the proposal going down and progress being made on the seasonal community's designation, he believes there's strong momentum to continue. He acknowledged the good work being done by local leaders and stressed that this proposal doesn't present a significant barrier to ongoing efforts.

Some discussion followed.

Shantaw expressed the importance of continuing the current work but shared concerns about the optics of transitioning from the established company to an employee who has branched out independently. While acknowledging that the new fees are lower, she mentioned that this shift raises questions in her mind. She highlighted the group's history of attempting similar initiatives without success, questioning whether it is worthwhile to engage in further efforts. She suggested considering the possibility of reaching out to other firms or individuals to see if alternative options might yield better results, given the limited progress made thus far. While she noted that some steps forward have been taken, she questioned the sustainability of making only small advancements.

Brian Sullivan said that the home-rule petition that they have been submitting has been in progress for about eight years. However, they have only worked with one of these groups for one year or possibly two contracts. He said that while the effort itself has been long-standing, they have only recently brought in external resources.

Tucker Holland said to clarify, the Vineyard has already re-engaged O'Neill and

Associates, so the direct lobbying aspect would remain unchanged. The key consideration here is whether Nantucket would benefit from partnering with a marketing strategy firm that could complement the lobbying work. One important factor to weigh is the working relationship between any potential new firm and the current direct lobbyist. O'Neill and Associates, alongside Jeremy from Seven Letter, played a pivotal role in successfully advocating for the short-term rental fee legislation, which has direct relevance to what we're aiming to accomplish here. This success story was one of the reasons we initially chose to work with them after reviewing multiple firms. While it's not to say there aren't other firms capable of this work, he felt it was important to bring this opportunity to the Trust for consideration. There may be value in staying with the team that they initially engaged, as they bring relevant experience and continuity that could be advantageous in achieving the overall objectives

Brian Sullivan asked if this is the Land Trust requesting a grant to fund the hiring of Jeremy Crockford or is it structured in a different way?

Kristie Ferrantella stated that this would be structured in the same way it has been in the past, as a grant to the Community Foundation for Nantucket to support efforts for the Transfer Fee, and she envisioned it would be done this year in the same manner.

Tom Dixon made a MOTION to support the funding for strategy and communication agreement with Jeremy Crockford as presented through a grant to the Community Land Trust for another cycle of the contract. Forest Bell seconded this motion.

Roll call of those participating

1. Forest Bell Aye
2. Shantaw Bloise-Murphy No
3. Tom Dixon Aye
4. Brian Sullivan Aye

Shantaw Bloise-Murphy said that while it is important to fund these efforts—which she is 100% in support of—to secure the transfer fee for the Cape and Islands, it's also essential to meet with the consultants to stay up to date on the work being done.

Meg Browsers joined the meeting at 1:10pm.

VII. Request for Approval by the Trust to consummate [or “to close on”] the purchase of 71 Surfside Road, and to authorize the Chair, or his designee, to execute any and all documents related thereto, subject to approval by Town

Counsel. – ACTION

Brian Sullivan recused from this item. Lee Smith reviewed the request for the Trust to approve the purchase and sale of 71 Surfside Road. Tom Dixon stepped in as Chair.

Shantaw Bloise-Murphy made a MOTION to approve the trust to consummate the purchase of 71 Surfside and to authorize the Chair or his designee to execute any and all documents related thereto , subject to approval by Town Council. Meg Browsers seconded this motion.

Roll call of those participating

1. Meg Browsers Aye
2. Shantaw Bloise-Murphy Aye
3. Forest Bell Aye
4. Tom Dixon Aye

IX. Review ZBA Request for Written Comments on Surfside Crossing 40B Development – REVIEW

Brian Sullivan rejoined the meeting. Brian Sullivan said that this is the second item that will be discussed in a future meeting, so he encouraged members to share their questions and concerns with Kristie Ferrantella to include in the letter to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Meg Browsers noted that, although she hasn't reviewed the new response, she believes the letter Brian Sullivan sent in 2018 was very strong. She proposed including those questions and statements in the new response to the Zoning Board of Appeals, as she thinks they still hold true.

Brian Sullivan clarified that the last correspondence mentioned was a written letter, not an email.

Kristie Ferrantella mentioned that the last letter addressed reducing density, shared concerns from fire and police departments, limiting short-term rentals in affordable and market-rate units, and emphasized ensuring that the majority of the units are year-round.

Brian Sullivan added that since the last letter, they have established a definition for "year-round," which he believes is worth identifying as the Trust's baseline or consistent definition.

Kristie Ferrantella also noted that they now have a new Housing Production Plan.

Shantaw Bloise-Murphy asked if the developer has made any revisions to their proposal and whether those revisions reflect the Trust's requests.

Kristie Ferrantella replied that one concern was the need for one-bedroom units, as the previous single-family proposal included many units with four or more bedrooms. The new condominium-based proposal consists of studios, one-, two-, and three-bedroom units, which aligns with the Trust's previous letter.

Tucker Holland remarked that one thing that has changed since 2018 is the developer's own statement, indicating they see the best version of this project being 75% year-round.

Meg Browsers said that if the developer is now stating that they envision the project as 75% year-round—and if that aligns with the Trust's goals—she would like to see it formalized as more than just a promise.

X. Executive Session

- 1. Approval of Executive Session Minutes from ~~January 16, 2024, February 20, 2024, March 26, 2024, May 21, 2024, June 25, 2024, July 7, 2024, and~~ October 1, 2024.**
- 2. Purpose 6: To Consider the Purchase, Exchange, Lease, or Value of Real Property Regarding 8C Thirty Acres, where an Open Meeting May have a Detrimental Effect on the Negotiating Position of the Affordable Housing Trust Members and the Chair so Declares**
- 3. Purpose 6: To Consider the Purchase, Exchange, Lease, or Value of Real Property Regarding 10 Parker Lane and 55 Fairgrounds, where an Open Meeting May have a Detrimental Effect on the Negotiating Position of the Affordable Housing Trust Members and the Chair so Declares**
- 4. Purpose 6: To Consider the Purchase, Exchange, Lease, or Value of Real Property Regarding 31 Dartmouth Street, where an Open Meeting May have a Detrimental Effect on the Negotiating Position of the Affordable Housing Trust Members and the Chair so Declares**
- 5. Purpose 6: To Consider the Purchase, Exchange, Lease, or Value of Real Property Regarding 26 Somerset Lane, where an Open Meeting May have a Detrimental Effect on the Negotiating Position of the Affordable Housing Trust Members and the Chair so Declares**

6. Purpose 6: To Consider the Purchase, Exchange, Lease, or Value of Real Property Regarding 18, 18A, 20, 22, 24 and 26 Sparks Avenue where an Open Meeting May have a Detrimental Effect on the Negotiating Position of the Affordable Housing Trust Members and the Chair so Declares

Shantaw Bloise- Murphy made a MOTION to adjourn open session, to move to Executive Session, not to return to open session with the purpose to consider the Purchase, Exchange, Lease, or Value of Real Property where an Open Meeting May have a Detrimental Effect on the Negotiating Position of the Affordable Housing Trust Members and the Chair so Declares. Tom Dixon seconded this motion.

Roll call of those participating

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| 1. Shantaw Bloise-Murphy | Aye |
| 2. Meg Browers | Aye |
| 3. Forest Bell | Aye |
| 4. Tom Dixon | Aye |
| 5. Brian Sullivan | Aye |

This meeting was adjourned at 1:50pm.