



**PRINCETON MUNICIPAL  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 8, 2021 – VIRTUAL MEETING**

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The regular meeting of the Princeton Affordable Housing Board was called to order by Chair Kate Warren at 5:30 pm. She recited the announcement in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act: *“In compliance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975, adequate notice of this meeting has been provided as required by the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice was provided of the date, time and location of this regular meeting by posting a copy with the Clerk’s Office and by emailing copies to the Princeton Packet and the Town Topics.”*

Adequate notice as well as electronic notice of this meeting was provided in accordance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act and State regulations governing remote public meetings. The notice included the time, date and location of the meeting and clear and concise instructions for accessing the meeting via computer, smart device, or telephone. The agenda and all related documents and other materials were posted electronically on Princeton's meeting portal and made available for download at least forty-eight hours prior to the Meeting.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Dosier Hammond, Maria Juega, Lance Liverman, Mary Agnes Procaccino, Kate Warren, Dwaine Williamson, Carol Golden (1), Lex Kochmann (2), Matt Mleczko (3)

Excused: Colin Vonvorvys

Quorum: 9

Also present: Maureen Fullaway (PAH), Ed Schmierer, Esq., Claribel Santiago (PCH)

**Public Comments** – None

**Approval of Minutes** – July 14, 2021

A motion to approve the minutes dated July 14, 2021 as presented was made first by Mr. Hammond, seconded by Ms. Procaccino, all in favor by voice vote.

**Status Reports from CGP, PCH and PAH**

*Community Grants & Planning (CGP)*

Ms. Fullaway reported that AvalonBay has zero vacancies. It has a total of 7,439 applications on the wait list, 1,687 are from Region 4.

*Princeton Affordable Housing* – Maureen Fullaway

Ms. Fullaway reported that Affordable Housing sales are doing well.

- 213 Brickhouse Road – closed
- 225 Brickhouse Road – closed
- 38 Billie Ellis renovations completed; waiting for Princeton Building Department’s final inspection before it is marketed
- 274 Griggs Drive – owner is living in Haiti and has agreed to sell. We need a corrected power of attorney so his brother has authority to sell on his behalf
- 37 Billie Ellis is privately owned; owner passed away; family is handling sale. Since it is privately owned, the unit does not have to be shown to anyone on the wait list. They have an interested purchaser who was income qualified. The applicant has already moved in because she had to be out her rental. The family can have a Use and Occupancy Agreement, allowing her to move in before closing



- 35 *Billie Ellis*, owner just passed away and has just come on the market. Family in process in naming an Executor of the Estate. Ms. Fullaway will go in to inspect the unit to see its condition.

*Financial Literacy Pilot Program – Maria Juega*

Ms. Fullaway and Ms. Juega met with Elena Hung–Shum from Isles. Her report shows no details on activities; they requested a detailed progress report. Per Ms. Hung–Shum, there are 34 families registered and the goal is to complete counseling program with 20 families. Ms. Hung–Shum reported that she will meet with two additional families when she returns from vacation and will survey families to determine their needs. Chair Warren expressed concerns that there has not been more one-on-one interaction. Ms. Warren did not have a chance to fully review the MOU, however she recalls that the MOU states there will be one-on-one counseling. Per Ms. Fullaway, Ms. Hung–Shum has a video to show of one of her successful candidates, but opines it is not enough. It did not look like they did much over the summer. Ms. Juega expressed her concerns, and if improvements are not seen by October, we need to look into other alternatives. Ms. Kochmann suggested we send them notification of concerns; Isles is a HUD approved counseling center and they have to follow strict guidelines. There were discussions on what their process is and what is in the MOU. Ms. Kochmann has guidelines the counseling groups need to follow. Ms. Hung–Shum will provide a monthly report.

*PCH Development Corporation, Claribel Santiago*

Ms. Santiago provided her report on the rental properties.

Ms. Golden expressed concern for those applicants that are not moving forward in the application process because they cannot afford to pay for the application fee; she asked whether there are funds available to pay the fee. Some applicants are having a difficult time going through the application process; per Ms. Fullaway the staff in Human Services can assist with the application. Per Ms. Santiago, her applicant did not want to spend money if she was not guaranteed a unit. However, if Princeton supplements or waives fees for one applicant, we have to do it for everyone. This could drastically increase application pool with people looking for their fee waived.

Per Mr. Liverman, applicants may be applying for several apartments, and having to pay the fee each time equates to too much money. Mr. Liverman says his application fee goes to paying for the credit check, so if s/he does not get approved for a unit, they cannot get their money back. Mr. Mleczeko agreed with the comments; he volunteered to research to see what other towns are charging for application fees and what towns are doing to assist. Per Ms. Santiago, fees average \$40 per adult. Ms. Santiago suggested that if the applicant runs their own credit check, and gets a background check from the police along with a letter in good standing with current landlord, they can submit with their application at no additional cost. Ms. Juega suggested that we may be able to offer a subsidy to low income applicants only. Mr. Liverman stated that when he does background checks, he looks for landlord/tenant court reports, but police reports would not include this information. The police would only provide a criminal background check. Ms. Procaccino stated that there are organizations throughout town that can help; applicant would have to go through an interview process. Mr. Liverman commented that as a landlord, if tenant applies and has to go to Human Services or any organization to help pay the \$40 application fee, the landlord will think that the applicant cannot afford the rent. This would have to be approached in a way that the applicant will not be viewed in a negative light.



## **Chair/Vice–Chair Status Reports**

*Chair Report, Kate Warren*

*Tree Memorial for Christy Peacock*

Chair Warren reported that she was able to get information on planting a tree in memory of Christy Peacock. The tree cost is \$500 and an additional \$500 for the plaque. Mr. Liverman will complete application and accept the contributions towards the tree.

*Vice–Chair Report, Dosier Hammond*

Vice–Chair Hammond reported that he met with Princeton University students and representatives from the National Low Income Housing Coalition. He noted that a big issue in the area of legislation and Best Practice is the NJ eviction moratorium. The national moratorium was ended by the Supreme Court and New Jersey extended theirs to January 1, 2022 with income limitations. Vice–Chair Hammond reported on the rental assistance funds and the need to get funding out quicker. He reported that there are funds coming available for Affordable Housing.

Vice–Chair Hammond reported that he did not have an update on the Credit Worthiness Bill. There is a shortage of lawyers to represent renters facing eviction. Most attorneys are not interested in representing tenants for non-payment of rent; Legal Services may come available to assist.

Vice–Chair Hammond reported that was on a panel at Princeton University that included the Mayor of Austin, Texas and a Los Angeles Planner to discuss homelessness increases during COVID.

## **Legal – Opinion on proposed Witherspoon St. Affordable Housing Overlay Zone**

Chair Warren reported that the public hearing for the overlay zone will be discussed and voted on at the Monday, September 13 Council meeting. She commented that this Board was not part of the decision. She asked the Board for their opinion on the overlay zone and whether the Board is in support of the it. If any member has any concerns, she would like them in writing so it can be presented to the Council. Chair Warren expressed her concerns regarding portions of the language in the overlay; Ms. Fullaway forwarded the Fair Share Housing Act information to the Board. Per Councilman Williamson, the language was written by the attorneys, not Council; Council reviews and comments. There was continued discussion regarding the ordinance. Ms. Juega explained her understanding of the proposed ordinance. Councilman Williamson stated that this ordinance was created following the Mt. Laurel legal doctrine. Mr. Schmierer explained the overlay ordinance and the anticipated growth on Witherspoon Street. The ordinance is to provide incentives to include affordable housing; Mr. Schmierer described the incentives. He suggested that this Board should consider supporting the ordinance once they are comfortable with it. Vice–Chair Hammond opined that more community input and studying is needed before a vote. He voiced his specific concerns of the ordinance and sent a letter to the Council.

## **Rehabilitation Projects**

*Harrison Street*

Ms. Fullaway reported on a Harrison Street unit in need of rehabilitation. Three bids were received, lowest was \$20,160 for gutters, fire rated door to the garage, insulation in the attic, electrical panel box and old air conditioning unit. Funds will come from the rehabilitation funds and we will receive rehabilitation credit.

The motion to approve funding of \$20,160 to rehabilitation of the Harrison Street unit was first moved by Mr. Liverman, seconded by Ms. Procaccino

*Roll Call in Favor:* Hammond, Juega, Liverman, Procaccino, Williamson, Golden, Kochmann, Warren

Ms. Kochmann commented that she would like to present Habitat for Humanity (Habitat's) Home Improvement program and how Habitat can work with the Municipality. In Habitat's program, labor is donated free of charge and the only cost is for materials. Habitat administers their program in several NJ municipalities.

*Griggs Drive (Affordable) Unit*

Ms. Fullaway reported on a Griggs Drive unit in need of rehabilitation: windows, remove carpeting and replace with laminate flooring and HVAC system for \$18,323.

The motion to approve funding of \$18,323 to rehabilitation of the Griggs Drive unit was first moved by Ms. Procaccino, seconded by Mr. Hammond, all in favor by voice vote.

*140 Griggs Drive*

Ms. Fullaway reported that the unit at 140 Griggs Drive the Municipal leases to HIP has expired and we need to renew.

The motion to renew the HIP lease for 140 Griggs Drive was first moved by Mr. Liverman, seconded by Mr. Hammond, all in favor by voice vote.

Recused: Golden

*CBDG Funds*

Ms. Golden reported on Rental Assistance Program that HIP is administering using CBDG funds; there is about \$20,000 remaining. Ms. Golden explained how they are doing outreach to distribute the remaining funds. There are a large number of eligible residents in the Housing Authority or PCH that have not applied. Ms. Fullaway commented that Ms. Golden did a phenomenal job in distributing the \$319,000 in CDBG funds. Ms. Golden explained the process of the HIP rental assistance program. Ms. Juega expressed her concerns for the County's rental assistance program. She said that when non-English people apply to the County, their follow up packet contains a large amount of legal documents in English and that the process is overwhelming. We need someone who can assist with the completion of the documents. Chair Warren believes HIP is providing that assistance to those in need. Ms. Fullaway stated that there is another group founded by Bernie Miller that is also assisting; there are plenty of people who are willing to help applicants in the County, not just Princeton. Mr. Mleczko opined that the County needs to be aware of the difficulties the applicants are facing and that there is a need for the application to be translated to Spanish.

**Legal – Opinion on proposed Witherspoon St. Affordable Housing overlay Zone** *(Continued)*

Michael Floyd, a Princeton resident expressed concerns about the ordinance. He stated that David Cohen explained to him that the ordinance is applicable to Nassau Street and Vanderventer Avenue going east; he described the select area to be covered. Mr. Floyd explained the ordinance as he understands it. Ms. Kochmann stated that the ordinance is difficult to understand. She spoke about affordable housing in the historic district and the Witherspoon/Jackson area. Councilman Williamson explained how the overlay zone came about and how the incentives would potentially work. Ms. Juega opined that the ordinance should have been sent to this Board to review and discuss. Despite this, Ms. Juega is in favor of the ordinance and encourages this Board to support it. Mr. Mleczko is also in support of the ordinance; he



suggested a change to the language that would be more consistent with wording in the Uniform Housing Affordability Controls (UHAC). Mr. Hammond did not approve of the process by which the ordinance was introduced and felt that more discussion is needed. There were discussions on how ordinance introductions were done in the past.

*Social Security Numbers*

Chair Warren stated that she will submit to Council the recommendation to remove the Social Security Numbers from the universal application. Ms. Fullaway spoke with Ed Truscelli; he did not know if people can be wait listed without the social security number for Princeton Community Village. He reached out and is waiting to hear back from the NJ Housing Mortgage Finance Agency for input. Mr. Truscelli looked at the regulations and believes he can do it.



*Copperwood Princeton Parking Fee*

Chair Warren reported that there is a new owner of Copperwood Princeton and if Board agrees, we can ask Mr. Schmierer to send a letter to the new owners asking if they would be willing to waive the parking fees for the affordable units. Former owners were not willing to waive the fee.

The motion to make the request to Cooperwood Princeton to waive the parking fee was first moved by Mr. Liverman, seconded by Ms. Procaccino, all in favor by voice vote.

*Resolution Approving a Waiver for 27 B Palmer Square – Tabled to next meeting*

*Overlay Zone Condenses*

*In support of the overlay:* Golden, Juega, Kochmann, Liverman, Mleczko, Procaccino, Williamson

*Opposed:* Hammond, Warren

Chair Warren is opposed due to the process, agrees we need more affordable housing. Vice–Chair Hammond commented that there should have been more communications with the community held between to the two readings.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 pm was first moved by Mr. Hammond, seconded by Mr. Liverman, all in favor by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted by:

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*Julie M. Moy*  
Recording Secretary