



**PRINCETON MUNICIPAL
AFFORDABLE HOUSING BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
September 13, 2022– VIRTUAL MEETING**

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, Colin Vonvorys, Kate Warren, Councilman Leighton Newlin, Carol Golden (1), Lex Kochmann (2), Matt Mleczko (3)

Excused:

Also present: Ed Schmierer, Esq., Ed Truscelli, (PCH) and Claribel Santiago (PCH), Joseph Weiss (PHA)

Guests present: Mayor Mark Freda, Joseph Weiss, Princeton Housing Authority (PHA), Residents: Michael Floyd, Earlene Baumunk

Approval of Minutes –July 12, 2022

A motion to approve the minutes dated July 12, 2022 as edited was made first by Ms.Procaccino, seconded by Mr. Mleczko, all in favor by voice vote.

Councilman Newlin and Chair Warren had edits to the minutes and will forward them to Ms. Moy.

Public Comments – None

Status Reports from CGP, PCH and PAH

Princeton Affordable Housing (PAH)

Attorney Schmierer reported that 281 Griggs Drive was sold and closed on September 7, 2022.

PCH Development Corporation - Ed Truscelli and Claribel Santiago

Mr. Truscelli shared his screen showing reports. Ms. Santiago provided the update. There is a new unit in 45 Spring St. at the Nelson Glass Building. Princeton receives COAH credits for this unit. Mr. Liverman commented that the 2 bedroom units are very small. Mr. Floyd asked if anyone checked the plans to see if the units meet minimum size requirements. Mr. Truscelli shared that he was part of the team to determine rents using the COAH calculator. The minimum total unit size is checked when being processed through the Planning Board.

Community Grant & Planning (CGP) – Avalon Bay Units

Chair Warren provided the report. There are no vacancies; there are 2,339 on wait list for Region 4; overall wait list has 10,000+ names. Mr. Floyd stated that the Avalon Bay wait list is so large because of the projects they have throughout the country. They are obligated to file a yearly report with Dept. of

Community Affairs (DCA). Should the Board wish to get a copy of the DCA report, it would provide application details broken down.

Chair/Vice–Chair Status Reports

Chair Warren reported that she spoke with Maureen Fullaway; she is doing well and has been actively doing consulting work. Chair Warren gave an update on the progress of hiring a new Affordable Housing manager. She and Mr. Liverman met with Jeff Grosser, Health Department Director, and Rhodalynn Jones, Human Services Director. They voiced their concerns regarding the professional experience that may fall outside the job description. Chair Warren and Mr. Liverman were invited to send questions and concerns for the interviewing process. Chair Warren, Mr. Liverman and Ms. Golden worked together to create questions which were submitted. Mr. Grosser provided an update of the hiring progress by email to Chair Warren, which she read. Round One of interviews has begun with hopes of ending Round One this week. Mr. Liverman thanked Chair Warren and Ms. Golden for their work. Chair Warren was concerned for the Board’s future; a threat to dismantle the Board was made by a Council member to Ms. Fullaway that was shared with Chair Warren and other members of the Board. Mayor Freda interjected stating that the threat of dismantling the Board was not the feeling of the entire Council and stated that the Board should not think the statement of an individual Council member would be the thought process of the entire Council. Chair Warren thanked Mayor Freda for his comments.

Vice Chair Hammond thanked Chair Warren and Mr. Liverman for continued communications and working towards keeping the Board functioning during the interim.

Vice Chair Hammond reported on the *2022 Inflation Reduction Act* which replaced the *Build Back Better Act* which did not include housing. It is his understanding that there will be more housing monies appropriated to the regular budget in 2023.

Vice Chair Hammond stated that rents and housing purchase costs are exceeding the rate of inflation. LLCs are buying up rental units throughout the country and driving rents up. Mr. Vonvorys commented that the government has spent enough; inflation is out of control.

Mr. Liverman asked how application intake is currently being handled for rental and purchasing. He expressed his concerns for the application process during the interim; Ms. Jones and Mr. Truscull, in conjunction with Mr. Schmierer, are working together to ensure all applications are processed and moving forward. Ms. Procaccino asked who is handling the rehabilitation program. Mr. Schmierer responded that Ms. Jones and Sindy Sandoval from Human Services are handling all requests for rehabilitation work. Ms. Procaccino has a client in need of rehabilitation work. Ms. Kochmann stated that s/he can also be referred to Habitat for Humanity (HH); they have a *Neighborhood Revitalization Program*. Chair Warren inquired as to whether the HH proposal was forwarded to Maureen for follow up. Ms. Kochmann will resubmit HH information for review. Ms. Juega asked if the PCH office at One Monument Drive was staffed and open. Mr. Trusculli responded that the office is fully staffed. Signs are posted on the door and outside the building that appointments are necessary; however, if someone knocks on the door staff will respond.

ISLES Contract

Chair Warren recapped the pilot program which has ended. She asked the Board if they want to continue to look at different avenues. Ms. Procaccino stated that she worked with many groups and programs offering a similar program; it has always been unsuccessful no matter how they marketed or incentives offered - people do not want to participate. Chair Warren identified Ms. Juega as the driver of the pilot program and asked Ms. Juega for suggestions on how the program might be restructured so that it may lead to success. Mr. Liverman stated that he is the Treasurer for the *Mercer Council on Alcoholism and*

Drug Addiction. They received a grant from the *NJ Strengthening Families* program. They offer to pay people to participate in their program and are still having a difficult time to find people to participate. Mr. Liverman reported that Massachusetts has a program to strengthen families and explained how the program works. Participants are mandated to attend a financial counseling program for a period of time. They are looking to try to have the program mandated in NJ to get participants. Mr. Liverman agrees that people would benefit from programs for financial literacy; however we cannot make anyone participate. He worked with similar programs where they had incentives, transportation, food, etc. and still no one wanted to participate. He opined that it is a great program but you cannot get the people to attend. Ms. Kochmann stated that their homeowners have to participate in a financial literacy program otherwise they will not qualify to purchase a Habitat for Humanity Home. HH has struggled despite creating ways to make it convenient for people to attend. Ms. Juega volunteered to coordinate a subcommittee with other members of the Board interested in putting together a proposal for another attempt that they will present to the Board. Ms. Juega stated financial counseling is a UHAC mandate. Chair Warren believes UHAC mandates municipalities and/or AAs to provide resources, not to run a program. The subcommittee will consist of Ms. Juega, Mr. Mleczko, Ms. Golden and Mr. Hammond. The Board is not authorized to mandate participation. Ms. Procaccino stated that they tried to have a program mandated to get people to participate in counseling programs but was told we cannot mandate unless the State does it. Her group also worked with a local bank on Nassau Street who was willing to meet with individuals at the bank, but still had no participants. In addition, Ms. Procaccino's group even offered a \$200 cash incentive and was not successful.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Document

Mr. Mleczko will send Chair Warren his ADU document to be posted on the website. He did not have an update on the project.

Fundraiser

Mr. Truscelli reported his fundraiser was a success; he thanked everyone for their support. He provided an update on their new building. They anticipate accepting new residents in Spring 2023.

Legislative

Mr. Mleczko shared the opportunity to testify before the Assembly Housing Committee, which will meet Sept. 15, 2022 at 2 pm to discuss implementation of the fourth round of the Mt. Laurel fair share allocation process.

Councilman Newlin thanked Mayor Freda for coming to the meeting acknowledging that the Board is loaded with talent, individually and collectively.

Chair Warren stated that the November meeting is scheduled on Election Day. She suggested we move the meeting to November 15. Chair Warren, Mr. Liverman, Mr. Mleczko, Ms. Juega and Ms. Procaccino are available on November 15. Members will email Chair Warren their availability.

ADJOURNMENT

The motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 pm was first moved by Mr. Vonvorys, seconded by Ms. Kochmann, all in favor by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted by:

Julie M. Moy
Recording Secretary