

Fiscal Year 2021
Burlington Housing Trust Fund (HTF) Administrative Committee (HTFAC)
Meeting Minutes

Approved

Meeting Date/Time: March 30, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.

Meeting Location: Virtually Via Zoom Meeting

Present: City Councilor Brian Pine
Mayor's Office Communications and Projects Coordinator Olivia LaVecchia
Community & Economic Development Office (CEDO) Acting Director Katie Kinstedt
CEDO Housing Program Manager Todd Rawlings
CEDO Senior Community Development Specialist Marcella Gange
CEDO Housing Program Specialist Harrison O'Brien

Absent: None

Also Present: Rob Leuchs (Champlain Housing Trust (CHT))
Jaclyn Marcotte (CHT)
Kathrynn Titus (Cathedral Square Corporation (CSC))
Tamira Martel (Committee On Temporary Shelter (COTS))

Meeting called to order: by Acting Director Kinstedt at 1:04 p.m.

Agenda: Motion made by Councilor Pine to accept the Agenda as drafted, seconded by Coordinator LaVecchia. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

- a. **Minutes:** Motion made by Councilor Pine to accept draft minutes for the meeting dated December 15, 2020, seconded by Coordinator LaVecchia. Motion passed unanimously.

Public Forum: No members of the public wished to speak. Public forum closed at 1:06 p.m.

New Business:

- a. **Review/Discuss FY21 Project Grant Proposals**

Project Grant Applications

Manager Rawlings gave an overview of the FY21 Housing Trust Fund process to date and highlighted that the remaining four project application requests total \$140,000 and up to \$106,157.62 is available to allocate to these project applicaitons.

Acting Director Kinstedt said that she would use the application scores from her predecessor CEDO Director Luke McGowan.

Coordinator LaVecchia gave an overview of the discussion at the previous meeting around allocation priorities, specifically that the HTF goals are the creation and preservation of new affordable housing, but these kinds of projects are not in the application pool every year. She said that given this the HTFAC should have more flexibility to make allocation awards. She said given that the HTF will expand in FY22 she would like to see more applications involving the creation of new affordable housing. She said that CHT's application is preservation and the other three applications enhance the quality of existing housing.

Councilor Pine said that the second challenge is to have frequent communication with staff regarding needs and priorities and the HTFAC needs to make clear that next year new units will be prioritized. He said this year's application pool is mostly about shoring up existing housing. He said that the HTFAC should not rely on solely on scoring to make their funding decisions.

Acting Director Kinstedt asked whether the HTFAC should change the Request For Proposals (RFP) for next year. She said that with the CARES Act it is not surprising that the FY21 HTFAC did not see many applications for new units.

Rob Leuchs (CHT) said that for CHT the 83 Lafountain Street application is a higher priority than the Stewardship Fund application. Councilor Pine asked what the leverage was for the Stewardship Fund. Rob Leuchs said that when CHT has a good year, it adds resources to the Stewardship Fund to preserve shared equity homes, but CHT has not been able to contribute in a couple of years. Councilor Pine asked if there will be any new infusions to the Stewardship Fund. Rob Leuchs said that very little of the COVID funding has been for homeownership.

Councilor Pine asked if any of the federal funds could be expected to help COTS or CSC. Manager Rawlings said that the recently passed stimulus package includes about \$1.3 million of HOME funds for Burlington and these resources are targeted for homelessness. Acting Director Kinstedt said that the \$19 million that the City will receive is already in high demand. Kathryn Titus (CSC) said that they are not sure what funding will be available for broadband for CSC's properties. Councilor Pine asked if the Cathedral Square Senior Living (CSSL) project was ready to proceed. Kathryn Titus said yes. Councilor Pine said he thinks that the stimulus funding for broadband will be for the "last mile". Acting Director Kinstedt said that it is still not clear. Kathryn Titus said CSC had purchased tablets for many CSSL residents, but without Wifi these residents cannot use the tablets to communicate with others.

Coordinator LaVecchia asked CHT whether the Stewardship Funds would be used only for Burlington. Rob Leuchs said they rarely have advance notice about which properties need attention, but 40% of their shared equity homes are in Burlington. Councilor Pine asked if the HTF could be restricted to Burlington. Rob Leuchs said yes.

Coordinator LaVecchia asked if COTS will get Burlington Electric Department (BED) incentives. Tamira Martel (COTS) said they met with Vermont Gas and BED, but those grant funds aren't an appropriate fit.

b. Approve/Deny/Request Additional Information for FY21 Grant Proposals

Discussion: [see above]

- Motion made by Councilor Pine to fund the **Cathedral Square Corporation/Cathedral Square Senior Living** project for \$30,000.00, **Champlain Housing Trust/Stewardship Fund** project for \$16,157.62, **Champlain Housing Trust/83 Lafountain** project for \$50,000.00, and **Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS)/The Wilson – A Home For All** project for \$10,000.00.

seconded by Coordinator LaVecchia Motion passed unanimously.

Upcoming meetings:

Discussion: Committee members discussed the process for allocating next year's HTF and agreed that this process could be improved, specifically to prioritize the creation or preservation of new affordable housing over maintenance needs. The HTFAC discussed that this improved process would include articulating, particularly in the HTF RFP, clear priorities and direction to committee members and prospective applicants. Acting Director Kinstedt said that this could involve a discussion at Community Development & Neighborhood Revitalization (CDNR) Committee followed by a meeting of the HTFAC. Councilor Pine said that CEDO staff should make a proposal to CDNR about next year's priorities, RFP language, and evaluating applications. Acting Director Kinstedt proposed that CEDO staff bring this to CDNR in late April and convene the HTFAC in May.

Adjournment: Motion made by Councilor Pine to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Coordinator LaVecchia. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 1:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:
Todd Rawlings
Housing Trust Fund Staff