

Planning & Sustainability • City of Northampton

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Housing Partnership **5:30 PM, Monday April 4, 2022**

Due to the COVID-19 emergency, this was a virtual (zoom) meeting

MEMBERS

Carmen Junno, Chair X	Edgardo Cancel	Hannah Shaffer
Gordon Shaw, Vice Chair X	Sara Howard X	
Richard Abuza X	Jennifer Dieringer X	
Julio Alves X	Ace Tayloe X	Staff: Keith Benoit X

1. Notice that the meeting is being recorded. Carmen Junno mentioned that there were a few members of the public and the Housing Partnership gave introductions. Members of the public, some of whom showed interest in joining the Housing Partnership also give introduced themselves.
2. There was no public comment.
3. The Housing Partnership approved the March 7, 2022 Minutes with motion Gordon Shaw and seconded by Jennifer Dieringer after a correction by Ace Tayloe on the spelling of Councilor Rachel Maiore's name.
4. Ace Tayloe gave a brief summary of the Real Estate Transaction Fees that was proposed by Councilors Rachel Maiore and Alex Jarrett. Status: Ace Tayloe has been working with the councilor and some of the other municipalities that are interested. There will be a meeting later in the month. Ace Tayloe invited the other members to join in the subcommittee. Gordon Shaw wondered what the price point would be and who would pay, the seller or the buyer.
5. Carmen Junno introduced the housing study that was released recently from the Donahue Institute and the need for 20,000 housing units. She opened the floor to discussion. Ace Tayloe said that building housing takes time and that although urgent, the house building should have started five years ago. Gordon Shaw said that the Housing Partnership is always looking to support housing construction. Richard Abuza believe that education and outreach into the community is a goal that the Housing Partnership should strive for, by



laying the groundwork for support of housing. Julio Alves said that the Housing Partnership is not a housing trust, so the role is to only support projects that other entities bring forward for development. It would be better to see where the money is and how it can be utilized better. Ace Tayloe discussed the market rate infill development that is happening in Ward 3 and would like to find ways incentivize more affordable housing as infill development. Julio Alves discussed the corporate entities that are buying up single family homes, especially in communities of color, and then renting them out.

6. Gwen Nabad asked through the chat function if there could be a Housing Trust. Carmen Junno said that we are looking into it. Gordon Shaw said that the Housing Trust exists but is not funded currently.
7. Shana Fishel appreciated the bringing up the study on regional housing and asked if there is any partnership with other towns in the area. Keith Benoit gave an overview of the information gathering with Amherst regarding housing trusts and the work with the Housing Authority regarding vouchers. Julio Alves said that the work to sustain the Housing Trust take a lot of work, with more work even to create one. It would be a heavy lift to start the trust back up, but is possible. Gwen Nabad mentioned that Wellfleet has a big fundraiser each year and that calling Northampton's housing as sustainable housing instead of affordable could draw more support. Gordon Shaw said that funding a housing trust with CPA would be good. Beverly Bates said that she worked on the Cambridge housing trust and that it was a good experience and there is a lot of synergy if the Northampton Housing Partnership were to reach out to them.
8. Carmen Junno gave an update on Rental Brokers' Fees Legislation, Monday, April 25th, at 5:30 pm, as part of the City Council's Community Resources meeting over Zoom. The City Council and the Mayor have introduced legislation to prohibit landlords and brokers from requiring brokers' commissions to be paid by a tenant or prospective tenant. This is a home rule petition which must be approved by the state legislature in order to take effect. Read the full order here:
<https://northamptonma.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Item/18622?fileID=163539>
9. Ace Tayloe said that anyone can attend the meeting and that renters should be encouraged to attend.
10. Keith Benoit gave an update on 22.071 An Order to Approve \$50,000 from Short Term Rental Impact Fees to give to Valley CDC for the purchase of the former nursing home on Bridge Street: that the City Council referred it to the Finance Committee for further discussion and public input. The order will actually be taken up at a Finance Committee meeting embedded within the regular City Council meeting on April 14, 2022.

11. Richard Abuza said that infill is a community concern and that we should be discussing it. The City needs more housing and across all income levels, both big A Affordable and little a affordable. The Housing Partnership has done a lot to advocate for different aspects of creating housing. He said some people are bringing up that the character of neighborhoods and how does the balance of neighborhoods and infill happen. Sara Howard said that she echoed Richard Abuza's point that there are voices that need to be heard and this topic is a lot to discuss and glad that Richard brought it up. Gwen Nabad said that she went to the community meeting for the Bridge Street nursing home affordable housing.

12. For next meeting:

- A. Housing Trust discussion, possible Shelling Goering in attendance
- B. Brokers Fees
- C. Transfer Fees
- D. Report back from Edgardo Cancel regarding the Housing Authority

13. The Partnership adjourned at 6:42 PM (motion by Ace Tayloe, seconded by Gordon Shaw)