

Planning & Sustainability • City of Northampton

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Housing Partnership 5:30 PM, Monday August 2, 2021

Zoom Meeting

Members

Rev. Todd Weir, Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Edgardo Cancel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hannah Shaffer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gordon Shaw, Vice Chair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Carmen Junno	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sara Howard	<input type="checkbox"/>
Richard Abuza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ace Tayloe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Jennifer Dieringer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Julio Alves	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jim Reis	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Staff: Keith Benoit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1. Introductions & call for public comment. No public comment.
2. The Partnership moved table the July 12, 2021 minutes unanimously upon motion by Richard Abuza and seconded by Jim Reis in order for corrections to be made on point #8 and information included from last month's presentation from Wayne Feiden.
3. The Housing Partnership discussed the Valley CDC's application for CPA funding proposal. Peter Jessup presented the proposal and budget to the Housing Partnership. Ace Tayloe asked for clarification regarding loans vs. grants for the program. Peter Jessup said that generally a forgivable loan over 30 years is the preferred method for most cities. Peter Jessup clarified that the proposal does not include financial counseling as CPA funding does not allow for staff time. Valley CDC has expended all its funding for the other towns that it operates in except for one \$15,000 grant in Pelham.
4. Richard Abuza moved to acknowledge the hardships of buying housing and that the Housing Partnership support this mechanism, seconded by Carmen Junno; passed unanimously.
5. The Housing Partnership had a conversation with Councilor Rachel Maiore and Councilor



Alex Jarrett on the Real Estate Transfer Fee home-rule petition that is moving through the Beacon Hill. Several cities have already passed such petitions. Councilor Rachel Maiore said she wanted Northampton to be ready if this passes at the state, it could be a stream of revenue. A fee is placed on the sale of housing and placed into a trust fund that can be used to fund affordable housing. It can be tailored to the individual City, there needs to be more research done before a full proposal is drafted. Councilor Alex Jarrett said that it is not intended to affect the sales of low- to moderate-income housing, but that it would be for houses with large value transactions. The Councilors are thinking that CPA is one option to put the funding into, as it already has a funding and application process. Ace Tayloe asked if primary residency is a consideration for the proposal. Gordon Shaw asked what percentage and who is going to pay, buyer or seller. Carmen Junno asked what dollar amount that this will start with, Rachel Maiore said that in eastern Mass. it is typical to see one million dollars. Richard Abuza said that he is concerned that moving the money to CPA funding may zero out the housing allocation that is already in the CPA and would be a zero-sum game. Jim Reis proposed that the Housing Partnership create a sub-committee to make recommendations to the City Council. Ace Tayloe said that primary residence is the better option compared to a value amount. Alex Jarrett said that data from a look back on similar sales, would be helpful for analysis. Todd Weir asked how the Housing Partnership could be most helpful to move forward with this. Councilors were supportive of attending the sub-committee to work out details. Richard Abuza said that the sales data is quite easy to get to and calculating the look back would be quite easy. Alex Jarrett said that writing the City's home-rule petition and sending to the legislature can help pass and shape the laws that are introduced on Beacon Hill or get the City's home-rule petition passed.

6. Richard Abuza, Carmen Junno, Ace Tayloe, and Jim Reis will be subcommittee to investigate. Invite other partnership members.
7. Discussion with Small Area FMR Sub-Committee, Jim Reis said that the same things that happens in Northampton is happening in Amherst that only 35% of voucher holders can lease up. Northampton Housing Authority (NHA) agreed to get data on why people could not lease up. He said that the subcommittee would like to continue to work with Amherst and other homeless advocates on this issue, and advocate for increased HUD funding and regulatory changes to enable the housing authorities to use the Small arear FMR without

cutting the total number of vouchers they can support. Gordon Shaw said that the subcommittee also proposes education and outreach by the Housing Partnership to support the implementation of the Emergency Housing Voucher programs by the local housing authorities.

8. Todd Weir announced he is stepping down as chair and the Housing Partnership will need to elect new officers.
9. For Next Meeting:
 - Share slides from Wayne Feiden's presentation from last visit, correct #8 from the July 12, 2021 Minutes.
 - Present support letter for Valley CDC's CPA application drafted by Todd Weir and Keith Benoit.
 - Invite others to home-rule petition sub-committee
 - Staff person from PVPC on lead remediation work, report back on how much money is left and outreach efforts.
 - Elect Officers
10. Meeting ended a motion by Jim Reis and seconded by Richard Abuza at 7:03 PM.