

**GREAT BARRINGTON**  
**AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND (AHTF)**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, February 15, 2022 at 6:30 PM via ZOOM video conference**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Fred Clark, Chairman; Bill Cooke, John Katz, Garfield Reed

**OTHERS:** Eileen Mooney, James Bailly, Shepley Evans.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Clark called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM and read the Governor's March 12, 2020 Order. He announced that all votes during this meeting would be by roll-call.

Mr. Clark reported that the minutes of Board meetings are all caught up until December 1, 2021, and that they would be forthcoming soon.

Mr. Clark acknowledged that the Board is looking for members. Established as a seven-member Board, the number of active members has eroded to only four. Board members and others have been seeking interested candidates, and among those that have expressed strong interest is Ananda Timpane, Director of the Railroad Street Youth Project. **Mr. Cooke made a motion to recommend to the Selectboard that they appoint Ananda Timpane to the Board of Trustees. John Katz seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously** by roll-call vote.

Mr. Clark offered program updates starting with 40 Grove Street. He reported that the closing of the conveyance to the Trust was expected by Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup> or the following Monday. Signatures were needed from the Board and he encouraged all to go to Chris Rembold's office to sign the documents. Habitat will be posting their sign at the property seeking volunteer labor for the project, and a crew is going to the property to clean out the house. The construction crew will start working in March, and work on the house is expected to be completed by in late summer. After identifying the purchasing family, chosen by Habitat from applicants with no more than 80% of area median annual income, the closing is expected sometime in September.

At the North Plain Road property, the engineers have completed their initial site work and have produced a preliminary site plan which has been reviewed by Mr. Clark, Habitat representatives and Chris Rembold. Various changes have been incorporated into the plan, and at present it looks like the PURD standards or development guidelines will be the most appropriate for this project. The preliminary plan will be presented to the Planning Board in April, and thereafter to the Conservation Commission and to the neighborhood for discussion. Sample house plans, based on houses from a Habitat project recently completed in Dalton, will be presented to neighbors and any other interested parties. The next milestone for the North Plain Road project will be the Mass Works Grant. This substantial funding will cover the costs of construction for infrastructure such as water, sewer and roads. The issue of water quality from Housatonic Water Company has been discussed and may require that a filter system be built into each house. The entire project is expected to include up to 20 residences in three phases. Seven or eight houses are expected in phases one and two.

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**The Community Preservation Committee** continues to be most interested in “shovel ready” projects, while the AHTF has been using CPC money to cover Down Payment Assistance and Rental Support programs. In the recent fiscal 2023 CPC application, the Trust asked for \$200,000 to be used for any housing purpose. The Town Meeting vote will be on the first Monday in June 2022. If approved at Town Meeting, the money becomes available in July of fiscal 2023.

**Mr. Reed** reported that he had heard that the Town has 5 or 6 houses in tax title that may be available.

No members know for certain what the facts of this story are. However, **Mr. Katz** recalls reading about the situation somewhere. Members will look into it.

**Dan Bailly** asked when Habitat will take control of the North Plain Road property. **Mr. Clark** replied that the Trust must maintain control for now in order to qualify for the Mass Works Grant.

**Mr. Clark** presented a spread sheet of money available for AHTF projects or programs. In general, he summarized that there is little money available until after the Annual Town Meeting vote. There was some talk of pursuing ARPA funding, but members familiar with ARPA acknowledged that there was heavy competition for these funds.

**Mr. Clark** said that he continues to seek a regular monthly meeting day and time, like the third Wednesday at 6:30 PM. He will circulate a Doodle Poll to see if there is a best day and time.

**Mr. Cooke** commented that, with regard to new members, the Board had received a strong letter of interest from Krysia Kurzyca, a thirty-year resident of Great Barrington and long-time member of the

Agricultural Commission and supporter of Keep Berkshires Farming. **Mr. Cooke made a motion to recommend that the Selectboard appoint Krysia Kurzyca to the AHTF Board. Mr. Clark seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously** by roll-call vote.

**Mr. Clark** reported that there have been discussions recently about the provision of “workforce housing”. Local business owners have been exploring opportunities to band together to create and provide affordable single family or multi-family housing specifically for their employees rather than for the general public. Some see the concept as evidence of further competition for the limited stock of affordable residential units. Mr. Cooke shared that there was a “Connecting Workers to Housing”

Meeting being organized for February 24<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Clark shared his “wish that we could do more”.

**Citizen speak time:** No one.

**Press speak time:** No one

**Next Meeting:** Mr. Clark will try for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday in March.

Hearing no objection, Mr. Clark adjourned the meeting at

**Without objection, Mr. Clark adjourned** the meeting at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Shepley Evans, Admin. Support