TOWN OF GREAT BARRINGTON
AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND (AHTF)
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
MINUTES
Monday, January 7, 2019, 6:45 PM
GREAT BARRINGTON TOWN HALL, 334 MAIN ST.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Cooke, Chairman; Fred Clark, Vice-Chairman; John Katz; Cara Davis; Garfield Reed
MEMBERS ABSENT: Johnathan Hankin
OTHERS PRESENT: Shep Evans, Administrative Support; Chris Rembold, Town Planner.

CALL TO ORDER:
Mr. Cooke called the meeting to order at 6:47 PM.

PRESENTATION: Construct, Inc. proposes that the Affordable Housing Trust Fund chip in $50,000 to help Construct purchase a house at #24 Manville Street and sell it as affordable housing for a qualified family.
Background: Framework, Inc., the developer of an apartment project at the bottom of Manville Street, has gifted 2 houses at the end of Manville Street to Construct. Construct intends to relocate the two houses to Egremont for affordable housing. The 24 Manville Street house is available for sale, and Construct wants to purchase it for $300,000 using their own money and $50,000 from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. After rehabbing it, Construct wants to sell the house for $200,000 as an affordable two-bedroom 1500 sq. ft. residence.

Mr. Clark was reluctant to commit all of AHTF’s unrestricted funds to this one project. The Trust Fund has only $50,000 of long-term unrestricted money to work with. He believes that additional funding the Trust Fund might raise for home purchases will probably come from the CPC with strict conditions as to how and for what the funds might be employed.

Mr. Cooke questioned whether it might be possible to arrange to use other money presently restricted for down payment assistance and subject to town meeting approval.

A random open discussion followed covering various issues and the consensus of the group was that more details were needed. Members were divided as to whether all the $50,000 should be spent on one project; whether the project was worth doing at all; whether the $50,000 should be an outright grant or should eventually come back to the Trust upon sale of the house or over the life of a loan.

Mr. Katz made a motion to use the $50,000 to help buy the house. Mr. Cooke seconded the motion. Others were not in favor of contributing the money outright, and preferred the participation to be in the form of a loan. In the end, it was apparent that no one answer was going to achieve agreement. Mr. Katz withdrew his motion and Mr. Cooke moved to table the question. Ms. Davis seconded Mr. Cooke’s motion and all agreed unanimously to seek additional detailed information from Construct and meet again soon.

Construct representatives departed, and the members present agreed to meet again on January 15th at 5:00PM. There was concern among the group that an outright grant might be misperceived as simply clearing a path for an affordable home buyer or other project participant(s) to make a profit, with no gain accruing to the Trust. There was general consensus that all could be happy with the $50,000 as a loan if at least 50% eventually came back to the Trust.
Minutes of January 7, 2019
Page 2

Chris Rembold, Town Planner, introduced the subject of the residence at 40 Grove Street. The Town has taken the property for taxes and has clear title. The former owner is still in residence. The Town is considering what to do next and Mr. Rembold summarized two alternative courses of action:

(A) The Town can vote by 2/3 to simply transfer the property to the AHTF.
(B) The Town can put the property up for auction and let the AHTF bid along with everyone else.

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**Mr. Clark made a motion:** To request the Select Board to add to the warrant for Annual Town Meeting to transfer the property at 40 Grove Street to the AHTF for the creation of affordable housing. **Mr. Cooke seconded the motion. Unanimous approval.**

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**Mr. Cooke reviewed the most recent CPC Grant Awards, subject to vote at Town meeting in May, 2019:**

(A) $100,000 for the continuing AHTF Down Payment Assistance Program – Approved.
(B) Funding ($300,000) to buy a house to be rehabbed and sold as an Affordable Residence – Denied.

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Mr. Clark expressed his desire that the AHTF Trustees talk with the CPC “out of grant application season” to explore how the AHTF and the CPC might work together to meet shared objectives. Mr. Cooke agreed to approach the CPC. Mr. Rembold will help to arrange the meeting.

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It was mutually confirmed that the next meeting would be on Tuesday, January 15, 2019 at 5:00 PM at the Town Hall. Mr. Rembold agreed to reserve the meeting room.

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**Hearing no objection, Mr. Cooke adjourned the meeting at 8:10 PM.**

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Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Shepley Evans
Administrative Support