

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING

TUESDAY October 26, 2021 @ 5:30 PM

I. Called Meeting to Order at 5:30 PM

II. Roll Call

Present: Richard Callahan- Zoom
Catherine Esteverena
Tara Cassidy-Driscoll
Cynthia Tennant

Absent:

Also Present: Irma Chez, Executive Director/Acting Secretary

III. Minutes of Previous Meeting (s)

IV. Tenant/Public Engagement

Journalist Alena Kuzub - Lynn Item
Gilbert Winn
Angela Gile- Winn Companies
Adam Stein- Winn Companies
Michael O'Brien- Winn Companies
Rochelle Harris- Swampscott Housing Authority Tenant
Karol Feliz- Administrative Assistant

V. Bills and Communication

VI. Report of the Executive Director

VII. New Business

Gilbert Winn from Winn Development introduced and mentioned how the meeting was set up by Jack Cooper who is the president of the MASS Union Tenant's Association. Mr. Cooper came up to Winn during a tenant event in South Boston and asked what was going with the Swampscott Housing Authority. Cooper said the Housing Authority was not happy with the things happening and Winn brought up the idea to meet in person to sort of clear the air and develop a working relationship to provide services for the tenants. Adam Stein followed the conversation by explaining that the Elm Place Project was never sort of a plan to do everything together. The Housing Authority were just neighbors. However, the idea came out of conversations going around saying that since the HA is the neighbor, it would be a good idea to partner up. The game plan was never to redevelop the Swampscott Housing Authority. Richard Callahan commented about no one ever reaching out to the HA regarding the project. The information being spread around has been a great disturbance to the tenants, and that there is a whole question of quality of life that the HA is concerned about, Callahan said. The SHA has sort of been sandbagged by the Town of Swampscott. Winn said

that they want nothing but to improve the quality of life for the HA residents through partnership.

Commissioner Cassidy-Driscoll said that it would be helpful if Winn provided an overview of where the project stands. Stein said they have been working on the project for over a year and there had been conversations with the town about mixed income housing and the Elm Place being a great site for that type of development. The original plan was started with 125 units and eventually dropped to 120 because there were comments about not enough parking. So, Winn went back and reduced the unit count and increased the parking ratio to a little over 1:1 parking with a few spaces left for employees and visitors. Stein mentioned that the original application has been modified several times, and on November 30, 2021, the Zoning Board Meeting will take place as formal hearing relative to changes in the application. He also said that there have been conversations about the connection between the Elm Place Project and Doherty Circle. One version was that there would be "access only", which means that these sites would share access to get residents to the train station. There would be some improvements while staying within the bounds of right-of-way in the roads. The other scenario was to do some sort of larger scale renovation, which would include taking 44 units that are scattered into 6 buildings and make them into one new building. It would also include the relocation of the residents; they would have to be displaced. There would be accessibility improvements, heat, and air, and possibly elevators. Stein mentioned that none of this is presented on the Zoning Board Application and the deal today is a stand-alone 120-unit development. They have their own access, parking, and emergency route.

Winn was under the misperception that the Town and the Housing Authority were aligned in the scope, he said the Town sort of spoke for the HA. Winn apologized for the miscommunication and added that if the HA wishes to do something on the property, to consider them an ally. Chairman Richard Callahan said that the SHA was not upset with Winn, nor the proposal but rather upset with the Town; the HA was left out of it and the Town should've communicated effectively to avoid any misunderstandings.

A discussion opened about the possibility of residents returning to their homes after relocation, and Winn stated that they have a "right of return", which guarantees the tenants to move back in. Commissioner Tara Cassidy- Driscoll asked about the way Winn would manage the project. Gilbert Winn said that they would manage it and would be the owner of the building, but the ground would be owned by the Housing Authority on a 99-year lease. The state would continue to fund the HA. Winn suggested that if this ever were to happen, they would create some sort of mechanism so that the HA would no longer have to go to the state each year and ask for funds.

Commissioner Esteverena asked about the possible fire gate on the SHA's property. She said that Winn mentioned being an independent project "but doesn't the plan include the fire gate that would cause fire trucks to go through Doherty Circle?" Winn stated that their preference would be to have access through Doherty Circle, but they do have a back up plan to work around without needing access from the HA. If a gate was to ever be constructed, it would only be used for emergency access such as getting a ladder truck through and not for 911 calls for ambulances. However, they do have the accessibility on their site for a fire

truck ladder to come down. Commissioner Esteverena raised a concern about the use of the gate and how it would have to be left unobstructed, which means that it would reduce the amount of parking. If this were to be approved, the architects would have to remeasure and relocate the missing parking spots.

Michael O'Brien mentioned that if the residents ever needed to use Winn's amenities, Winn and the SHA could work in partnership so that they have access to Residence Service Coordinator, Certain activities for health and wellness, and they would be able to provide services to the residents at Doherty Circle. "Besides the fire gate, what other requirements for easement over at Doherty Circle?" Catherine Esteverena asked. Winn said they are still trying to accommodate a rail trail, he also said that it would be ideal if the Housing Authority were to give up 12 feet of land so that Winn could do the same and therefore build a trail. Chairman Callahan said that in the questions previously asked, the Town denied asking Winn to propose a rail trail. Winn made it clear that they would have loved to build the rail trail, but they were not the ones who proposed it, it was the town.

Michael O'Brien stated that in past conversations, the commonwealth thought about a possibility of the Swampscott Housing Authority applying for a planning grant and look at possible redevelopments at Doherty Circle, but the timing was tight, O'Brien said. Richard Callahan added that the reason why the SHA did not go forward with the planning grant was because the board only got a two-week notice while there were major capital improvements and annual inspections taking place within the Housing Authority. He also stated that it was physically unable to be completed before the deadline since the Executive Director is only working part time with limited help and resources. He assured that if the grant comes again, the board will act upon it.

Commissioner Cassidy-Driscoll asked if Winn needed easement regarding the fire gate. Winn said that now they do not need it since they already have a backup plan, but if the SHA came to an agreement on it, then they would require easement. Angela also made it clear that there is no easement on the rail trail part.

Commissioner Cynthia Tennant made some remarks about the lack of communication between the Town, SHA, and Winn. She said the Housing Authority Board has been put in a bad position by people who are in it for financial, but the Swampscott Housing Authority is a nonprofit organization.

Winn stated that they will be providing the SHA the details regarding the Zoning Board prior to November 8, 2021. This will include an updated overview of the Elm Place Project and traffic study.

Chairman Callahan thanked Winn Team for attending the meeting, and based on the information presented, the Board will get back to Winn with some thoughts and proposals.

Director Chez presented the On-Call Maintenance Policy, which sets in place the phones needing to be rotated by each maintenance person. They would have to rotate every two weeks and would get paid two hours overtime.

Commissioner Cynthia Tennant made a motion to upgrade the Maintenance Policy, seconded by Commissioner Tara Cassidy-Driscoll. And the vote was as follows:

Ayes

Nays

Tara Cassidy-Driscoll
Richard Callahan
Catherine Esteeverena
Cynthia Tennant

Director Chez also mentioned that the Swampscott Housing Authority does not have any property signs. She contacted a company and requested quotes. She said that they would each be double sided, and the cost would be \$1,450.00 each. If the Board Members wish to proceed, the Housing Authority would have to go in front of the zoning board and request a permit. Commissioner Esteeverena raised the concern that this might affect the tenants and Commissioner Tennant said the Swampscott Senior Tenant's Association has discussed it and would love to have signs. Commissioner Tennant made a motion to go forward with the proposal, seconded by Catherine Esteeverena and the vote was as follows:

Ayes

Nays

Tara Cassidy-Driscoll
Richard Callahan
Catherine Esteeverena
Cynthia Tennant

VIII. Adjournment

Chairman Callahan motioned to adjourn. Second, Vice-Chair Esteeverena and the roll call vote was as follows:

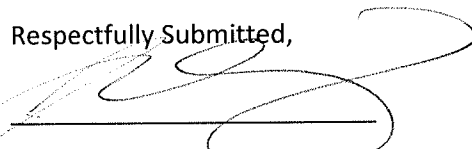
Ayes

Nays

Tara Cassidy-Driscoll
Richard Callahan
Catherine Esteeverena
Cynthia Tennant

Next Board Meeting: November 09, 2021

Respectfully Submitted,



Irma Chez, Executive Director