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# *Lexington Housing Partnership*

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## **Meeting minutes for January 23, 2014**

**Attendees:** Bob Pressman, Melinda Walker, Betsey Weiss, Harriet Cohen, Joe Pato, Wendy Manz, Mary Haskell, Jeri Foutter

**Guest:** Erica Endyke, Saatvik Ahluwalia, Rich McDonough

The meeting was chaired by Betsey Weiss and the minutes were taken by Harriet Cohen. The meeting was called to order at 7:35.

### **1. Recommend Erica Endyke to the Board of Selectman as a new LHP member**

Ms. Walker moved that the Lexington Housing Partnership (LHP) recommend to the Board of Selectmen the appoint Ms. Endyke to the LHP. Mr Pressman seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **2. Approval of the minutes of past LHP meetings**

May 23, 2013

Mr. Pressman moved to approve the minutes as written. Ms. Walker seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

October 24, 2013

The LHP requested one minor edit to correct the name of one of the members. Mr. Pressman moved to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. Walker seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

December 9, 2013

The LHP requested two minor changes: (1) change "Alzheimer's living facility" to "assisted living facility"; (2) change "market rate units" to "housing units." Ms. Walker moved to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Pressman seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **3. Update on Community Preservation Commission (CPC) Projects (Bob Pressman)**

The CPC received two requests related to affordable housing. One request was for \$300,000 in CPC funds to be used with a matching grant of \$600,000 by the state for improvements at Vine Brook. This request was approved unanimously.

The second request was from LexHAB for \$750K to be used with additional other funds to build two houses, with 3 apartments each, on the Busa land. Each house will have 2-2 bedrooms units and 1 bedroom units. This proposal was also unanimously approved.

### **4. Update on Housing Parcel calls (Betsey Weiss)**

The Concord Ave property is under agreement. The plan is to build an assisted living facility on the property. The LHP has been tracking another property on Woburn Street for potential affordable housing units. There is no update on this property; the owner was unavailable to contact.



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### **5. Update on Busa (Bob Pressman)**

On December 16, LexHAB held a meeting at Depot Square for abutters of the Busa property. This was the second and final meeting with the abutters. Mr. Pressman, Ms. Walker, Ms. Manz and Ms. Weiss attended the meeting.

The abutters brought up 3 traffic issues: (1) the dangers of adding traffic to the Lowell/Westminster intersection; (2) more traffic caused by the additional families; and (3) the driveway exit is after a bend in the road and there are line-of-sight issues with the entrance to the road from the Busa housing area. The amount of additional traffic to be added to the already busy intersection and an already busy intersection is considered by LexHAB to be insignificant. A traffic engineer will address the third concern.

Another issue was related to water flow through the farm field due to the addition of housing. Studies have shown there no change to water flow through the farm. There was a request for landscaping along the street, but may exacerbate the line-of-sight issue. Abutters requested 1 building with 4 apartments. The architect pointed out it would be more expensive to be the 1 building rather than the 2 buildings. In addition, the idea of a single building had been discussed with the Board of Selectmen who had indicated that there would prefer not to have a “McMansion” on the lot.

LexHAB addressed the additional concerns of the abutters to the extent possible.

LexHAB will have a noticed meet on Tuesday, January 28 with the Lexington Community Farm Coalition (LCFC) and any other interested residents to discuss issues related to the farming area on the Busa property. The LCFC chair attended the Depot Square meeting and indicated to LexHAB that the LCFC wants to ensure their concerns would be addressed, specifically that the affordable housing not unduly impinge on the farm.

LexHAB will be requesting that the Board of Selectman put them on the agenda. They are expected to make this request in the near term.

### **6. Request for a letter to the BOS (Bob Pressman)**

Mr. Pressman is requesting that LHP send a letter to the Board of Selectmen asking for town-owned land to be built on in a timely matter, as the move towards approved affordable housing on town-owned land has been exceedingly slow.

The lack of quick progress has, in part, been due to the fact that LexHAB has limited capacity and can only take on projects serially.

The LHP will wait until the new Board in place; and then possibly send the letter in conjunction with the submission of the HPP.

### **7. Update on Housing Production Plan Draft**

The LHP has provided significant input to the goals and objectives section. The Town Planning Department will submit the report to the Board of Selectmen. The Planning Board agreed that the 10% affordable housing level should be maintained and that moderate housing will be supported as well. The Planning Board voted 4 to 0 to accept the report and place it on file.

### **8. Saatvik Ahluwalia, BoS Candidate**

Mr. Ahluwalia is a candidate for the Board of Selectman. He has worked for Representative Kaufman



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and done constituent work. He has seen that government can be a force for good. He has also observed inefficiencies exist in government and that there are groups that are not engaged in Lexington. His goal is to eliminate the inefficiencies and engage those groups that are not engaged. In addition, Mr. Ahluwalia recognizes the need for economic diversity in the town. For example, in his neighborhood, the people who were retired were forced to move from the town because they cannot afford the ever increasing service costs and property taxes. His goal is to have the BoS address these issues.

### **9. Discussion of Draft Remote Participation Policy**

There is a policy to permit committee members to attend meetings remotely in exceptional circumstances (such as illness). Remote participation may not be used for executive session. Also, if assistive listening devices are in use, they must be [see policy]. A quorum must be physically present in an open meeting room; the chair of the meeting must be physically present. The LHP indicated that they understood the policy.

### **10. New Business**

Douglas House will apply for CPC funds in the next round of CPC grants.

Ms. Walker will convene a meeting of the HPP sub-committee to approve the minutes of the meetings

### **11. Next Meeting**

The committee will meet on February 27, 2014.

### **12. Motion to adjourn**

Ms. Walker moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Pressman seconded the motion. The committee approved the motion unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:03 pm.