



---

# ***Lexington Housing Partnership***

---

## **Meeting Minutes for Thursday, May 26, 2016**

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

**Absent:** Joe Pato, Paul Linton, Betsey Weiss, Nancy Corcoran-Ronchetti

**Guests:** Desiree Pelletier

The meeting was chaired by Melinda Walker and the minutes were taken by Harriet Cohen. The meeting was called to order at 7:45 pm.

### **1. Approval of minutes of April 28, 2016**

Minor corrections were made to the minutes. Ms. Haskell moved approval of the minutes as amended. Mr. Pressman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **2. Announcement of Lexington Housing Authority designee to the Community Preservation Committee / Walker**

Bob Peters will be the representative for the Lexington Housing Authority to the Community Preservation Committee, replacing Leo McSweeney, who had resigned from the LHA.

### **3. Discussion of Lexington Housing Foundation / Foutter**

The LHP recessed briefly. A meeting of the Lexington Housing Foundation was convened during the recess.

### **4. Preparation of LHP's response to the Board of Selectmen's request for boards & committees to provide "input and suggestions" for the BoS's upcoming goal setting process/Walker et al.**

The LHP reviewed the goals submitted in 2015 for applicability in 2016. Ms. Foutter moved acceptance of the letter as written and Ms. Cohen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The letter is shown in Attachment A.

### **5. Report on LexHAB Activities / Pressman**

Issues at Fairview have been worked out and one of the projects, the triplex, is moving forward with a target date of November. The single family house has a longer lead time because it is being built in part by Minuteman Tech students who are now on summer break.

Busa status: The application to DHCD to allow the site to be considered affordable by state standards is in progress.

Wright Farm status: LexHAB will be filing Local Initiative Program (LIP) application for Wright Farm given the building plan and the lot size.

Keeler Farm status: no significant progress.

### **6. Discussion of Upcoming Planning Board Activities / Walker et al.**

The LHP discussed the Grove Street development.

### **7. New Business**

The committee shared information about various proposed housing developments.

Ms. Walker mentioned that she and Ms. Cohen had each received a call from a reporter at the



---

## *Lexington Housing Partnership*

---

*Boston Globe* who wants to talk to a family with school-aged children who have moved into affordable housing in Lexington for a human interest story. Ms. Walker will attempt to identify families who might be willing to talk to the reporter.

**8. Set next meeting date**

The next LHP meeting will be on June 23, 2016.

**9. Meeting adjournment**

Ms. Foutter moved that the meeting be adjourned and Ms. Walker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:26 pm.



---

## Lexington Housing Partnership

---

Attachment A: 2015 and 2016 LHP Suggestions for the Selectman's Annual Goal Setting Process



*Lexington Housing Partnership*

*Building a Diverse, Vibrant Lexington*

---

**From:** Melinda Walker, Chair  
Lexington Housing Partnership

**To:** The Board of Selectmen  
Town of Lexington

**Date:** June 9, 2015

**Re:** Suggestions for Selectmen's Annual Goal Setting Process

The Lexington Housing Partnership recommends the Board of Selectmen take the following actions:

1. Make an application to the Community Preservation Committee before 11-1-2015 for funds for design and construction drawings for community housing on the Leary parcel in accord with the recommendation of the BOS-appointed Ad Hoc Committee.
2. Make an application to the Community Preservation Committee before 11-1-2015 for \$750,000 to be available to purchase a site in Town for use for a community housing project similar to the LexHAB project on Fairview Avenue or the one on the BUSA land, each of which the BOS has approved.
3. Request that the Planning Department develop approaches for affordable housing on several Town-owned sites already identified by that Department.
4. Propose an annual allocation of levy funds for affordable housing purposes.

The rationale for these proposals is as follows:

A. Lexington is affordability-challenged. Evidence abounds. Both median and average home sale prices have risen above \$1,000,000. The unending replacement of modest homes has exacerbated related rising housing costs. And the market rate rents for apartments in Lexington are also rising rapidly. In mid-May of this year, rents for two-bedroom apartment ranged from \$2,200 at the Battle Green Apartments to \$2,635 at Captain Parker Arms (Avalon), to \$2,930 at Lexington Ridge (Avalon), to \$2,340 to \$2,520 at Katahdin Woods with some units at Lexington Hills (Avalon) renting for above \$4,000. Only half of the housing units counted in determining the Town's compliance with Chapter 40-B are actually affordable; 665 units are not affordable. There are generally long waiting lists for affordable units both at private-owned developments and in units owned by LexHAB and the Lexington Housing Authority.



---

## *Lexington Housing Partnership*

---



B. The 2002 Comprehensive Plan provides: "Lexington seeks to have a socially and economically diverse community, both over the whole of the community and within its neighborhoods. In support of that fundamental social goal, a basic housing goal is to provide housing opportunities supportive of the population diversity we seek." The 2020 Vision Statement includes the following "striving . . . to maintain a range of affordability." It is evident from the facts set forth in A (above) and the Town's statements of core values that Town officials and entities should pursue available approaches to increasing affordable housing with vigor.

C. A request for funding for design at the Leary site at the 2016 ATM will come 7 years after the 2009 ATM set aside about 6 percent of this 14 acre parcel for housing and 4 years after the BOS-appointed committee reported ideas for housing there. The Town should act without further delay.

D. There are several distinctions between the Leary, Fairview and Busa parcels. Town Meeting identified a housing parcel on the Leary land whereas on the Busa site, Town Meeting did not specify uses for the land. The committee appointed to identify the housing plan for the Leary land favored substantial housing on the site whereas the committee charged with making recommendations to the Board of Selectmen on the Busa parcel supported only minimal housing. Vine Street is not a "cut through" street, whereas abutters to the Fairview parcel expressed concerns about cut through traffic. In contrast to the Busa land on Lowell Street, Vine Street does not have a high volume of fast-moving traffic. The three sites are of different size. The Leary site, at about 29,000 square feet, is larger than Fairview Avenue (25, 200 square feet) and the Busa site (20,190 square feet).

E. We can determine from LexHAB's plans for Fairview Avenue and BUSA parcels (approved by the Board of Selectman), that competing with developers for the purchase of lots offers a cost-effective method of creating a substantial number of apartments, which are much needed and of a construction type consistent with Town sustainability goals.

F. Town Meeting has recognized the need to support affordable housing. During the 2014 ATM, 78 percent of those voting supported use of \$1,250,000 for housing on the Busa site, after 3-4 years of considerable opposition to housing on that site.

G. As of March 1, 2015, the amounts appropriated to the four CPA categories were as follows: Recreational Resources, \$4,202,392; Community Housing, \$7,797,857; Open Space, \$13,932,015, and Historic Resources: \$33,983,629. Recreation's position is attributable to original CPA provisions, which have been revised to expand the reach of recreation funding. The Town now has an aggressive 5-year plan for seeking CPA funding for recreation projects. The partnership hopes to see a more aggressive approach to CPA funding for community housing as well.