



The City of **WORCESTER**

**Affordable Housing Trust Fund
Board of Trustees
Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, June 21, 2023, 6:00 PM
Esther Howland Chamber, City Hall**

Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board of Trustees Present:

Victor Agudelo-Ortiz, Chair
James Brooks, Ex-Officio
Lucelia DeJesus
Johanna Hampton Dance
Benetta Kuffour
Jason Pincomb
Xaulanda Thorpe

Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board of Trustees Absent:

Gabriel Rodriguez

Staff Present:

Jeanette Tozer, Affordable Housing Trust Fund Manager

1. Call to Order

Mr. Agudelo Ortiz called the meeting to order with a roll call at 6:21 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes from April 19, 2023, Meeting

Mr. Brooks made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Hampton Dance seconded the motion. The minutes were approved 6-0 with one (1) abstention.

3. Applicant Presentation – 2 Gage Worcester LLC – 2 Gage Street

Mr. Agudelo Ortiz introduced the agenda item. Ms. Tozer provided an overview of the application from 2 Gage Worcester LLC, who is seeking \$471,770 for the construction of seven (7) rental units on the 2 Gage Street lot that is currently vacant due to a fire that destroyed the previous residential building in May 2022. The applicant is proposing to restrict three (3) units for households earning 30% or less of the area median income. The applicant has also stated that one unit will ADA accessible. The requested amount includes \$75,000 of bonus funding for the three units that are proposed for households earning 30% or less AMI. Staff completed a review of the application and determined that it meets the minimum threshold criteria as described in the Application Review Guidance. As part of this initial review process, staff also looked at the Inspectional Services Department's CSRS report for the last 16 months for the three other properties owned by the Resident Agent listed for 2 Gage Worcester LLC, which indicated that all violations have been closed or abated.

Nicole Fraga and Jaime Vargas presented the 2 Gage Street project. The meeting was opened for public comment. Ms. Tozer read comments provided by the Worcester City Council into the record. Public comment was provided by the following individuals: Kitty Bousquet, Aaliyah

Hazard, Rachel King, Daryl Abbas, Camila Mitchell, Robert Bilotta, and Eric Stratton. Hearing no more public comment, Mr. Agudelo Ortiz made a motion to close public comment. Ms. Hampton Dance seconded the motion, and the motion passed 8-0 on a roll call.

The Board engaged in a discussion with the representatives of 2 Gage Worcester LLC, including Daryl Abbas, an attorney for the LLC. Ms. DeJesus made a motion to place the application for the 2 Gage Street project on the next Affordable Housing Trust Fund agenda to review Trustees' scoring of the project and vote on a recommendation of funding, which was seconded by Ms. Thorpe. The motion failed on a roll call vote with zero (0) votes in favor and eight (8) votes against.

4. Financial Update

Ms. Tozer informed the Board that the Department of Administration & Finance is working to determine an appropriate means for allocating eligible interest to the Trust Fund in accordance with federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) financial requirements. Given this, the Board was provided a snapshot of the funding committed to date, which totals five million sixty-nine thousand four hundred and sixty-three dollars (\$5,069,463.00). Approximately \$9.9 million of ARPA funding remains in the AHTF, but this figure does not take into account any of the interest that has accrued. The Trust Fund has not yet received any monies through the Inclusionary Zoning ordinance nor the Community Preservation Committee; therefore, there are no monies beyond ARPA that are in the Trust Fund at this time.

5. Discussion - AHTF Board of Trustees Summer Meeting Schedule

Ms. Tozer noted that the July and August meetings need to be scheduled and she would send out a follow up email to the Board to determine the meeting dates.

6. Potential Future Agenda Items

The Board discussed the following future agenda items: outreach to property owners in Qualified Census Tracts to identify potential AHTF projects; establishing a "cooling off" period or moratorium for the resubmission of an application to the Trust Fund; a review of the AHTF's application review and due diligence process; and status updates for projects awarded AHTF funding.

7. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:54 PM.