



The City of **WORCESTER**

Affordable Housing Trust Fund

Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 26, 2023, 5:30 PM

Esther Howland Chamber, City Hall

Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board of Trustees Present:

Victor Agudelo Ortiz (remote participation)

James Brooks

Benetta Kuffour

Jason Pincomb

Francisco Valdes (remote participation)

Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board of Trustees Absent:

Lucelia DeJesus

Johanna Hampton Dance

Gabriel Rodriguez

Xaulanda Thorpe

Staff Present:

Jeanette Tozer, Affordable Housing Trust Fund Manager

1. Call to Order

Mr. Brooks called the meeting to order with a roll call at 5:33 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes from June 21, 2023, Meeting

A quorum of Trustees that attended the June 21, 2023, meeting was not present, and the item was held.

3. Applicant Presentation – Worcester Lagrange LLC – Lagrange Lofts

Mr. Brooks introduced the agenda item. Ms. Tozer provided an overview of the application from Worcester Lagrange LLC, who is seeking \$2,000,000 for the adaptive re-use of four contiguous historical mill buildings on Lagrange Street into 63 units of mixed-income rental housing. Staff completed a review of the application and determined that it meets the minimum threshold criteria as described in the AHTF Application Review Guidance.

Taylor Bearden, representative from Civico Development, presented the Lagrange Lofts project. The meeting was opened for public comment. Hearing none, Mr. Pincomb made a motion to close public comment. Ms. Kuffour seconded the motion, and the motion passed 5-0 on a roll call.

The Board engaged in a discussion with Mr. Bearden. Mr. Brooks made a motion to place the application for the Lagrange Lofts 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 Mr. Agudelo Ortiz. The motion passed 5-0 on a roll call.

4. AHTF-Funded Projects Status Update

Ms. Tozer walked the Board through the AHTF-Funded Projects Status document that contains information about the five projects that have been awarded funding as of July 26, 2023. In addition to brief updates on each project in the notes column, the document shows the number of units in the funded projects (227 units), the number of units being supported by the AHTF (124 units), the number of ADA accessible units in each project (totaling 30), and the breakdown of the affordability levels. The update shows that approximately \$5M of AHTF funding is supporting nearly \$160M of housing development, with an average of about \$40,000 of AHTF dollars per affordable unit.

5. AHTF Application Resubmission Moratorium

Ms. Tozer reviewed the AHTF Application Resubmission Moratorium memo. The AHTF does not have a policy in place regarding the resubmission of project proposals after the Board of Trustees has declined an application. Given this policy gap, it is recommended that the Board of Trustees amend the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Development Request for Proposal to include the application resubmission policy proposed in the memo included in the Board packet. The proposal reads as follows:

"An applicant may resubmit a project proposal, but only after 1) it has undergone substantial revision and 2) more than one year has elapsed since the application was declined. This moratorium allows applicants sufficient time to revise/restructure the declined proposal accordingly. Please note that a submission the City of Worcester considers too similar to a previous proposal under the moratorium period may be returned without review. A resubmitted proposal that has not taken into account the major comments or concerns resulting from the prior AHTF Board of Trustees review may be returned without review. The City of Worcester and the AHTF Board of Trustees will treat the revised proposal as new, subject to the standard review procedures."

The Board discussed the merits of the proposed policy and decided to hold the item until the next AHTF meeting to allow for absentee Trustees to weigh in on the recommendation. Mr. Brooks made a motion to hold the AHTF Application Resubmission Moratorium until the August 2023 meeting, and the motion passed 5-0 on a roll call.

6. AHTF Application Due Diligence Process

Ms. Tozer reviewed the memo regarding the AHTF Application Due Diligence Process, which outlines the process for the review and vetting of AHTF applications. This process is intended to ensure the successful allocation of resources and the realization of the AHTF goals. There are essentially two stages in the review process. The first stage involves the staff review of a complete application to ensure that it meets the minimum threshold requirements as described in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Request for Development Proposal and associated Scoring Guidance. Unless an application meets all the threshold criteria, the Trustees will not review the application in the competitive scoring categories. Once an application is determined to meet the

minimum requirements, it then proceeds to the second stage, which involves review by the Trustees. These two stages are described in further detail in the memo.

Mr. Pincomb made a motion to send the memo to City Council, and Mr. Agudelo Ortiz seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0 on a roll call.

7. Potential Future Agenda Items

No additional agenda items were put forward.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM.