



OBSERVER REPORT

FAIR HOUSING COMMITTEE – November 18, 2021 at the Jacobi Community Center
LWVM Observer – Bonnie Grenier

Members Present -Dirk Isbrandtsen, Mimi Hollister, Teri McDonough, Deacon Joseph Whipple, Katie Farrell. Members Absent: Kurt James, Debra Larkin

The next meeting of the Fair Housing Committee will be on December 16, tentatively at the Judy and Gene Jacobi Community Center. Jason Silva, Becky Curran and Emma Battaglia, project manager from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), will attend to discuss development of the Coffin School property.

Committee members were asked to complete by the end of the first week in December, their inquiries into how other towns are funding their Affordable Housing Trust Funds (AHTF). The only source of revenue for the Marblehead AHTF is a percentage of money received from the sale of foreclosed on property. The committee is looking to explore other sources of revenue.

It was reported that two focus groups have already gathered to discuss development of the Coffin School property. One group was the immediate abutters and the other town department heads. There will be an additional public forum for the entire town on December 7th at 7:00 via Zoom.

There was some discussion as to whether or not the final financial reports have been submitted to the town for the 40B developments at Marblehead Highlands, and the Oliver Pond Property in Clifton. No money has come into the town from either of these developments. Dirk is going to follow-up on this. The committee would also like an update on the Sailmaker project being developed by Ted Moore near the Marblehead Highlands property.

There has been some interest in securing affordable housing in Marblehead for a few Afghan families. Given the high rental costs, this is a challenge. There is more affordable housing in Western Mass, but many of these families have relatives in this area and prefer to live near-by for their support.

Teri reported on the November 17th meeting of the North Shore HOME Consortium (NSHC), an organization representing 30 towns in the greater North Shore area. \$7,358,237 in American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds will flow into the NSHC region. Funds must primarily benefit qualifying individuals and families, who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or in some other vulnerable population. Funds will be used for the development and support of affordable housing, tenant based rental assistance (TBRA), provision of supportive services, and acquisition and development of non-congregate shelter unit. Funds cannot be used for home ownership and must be expended by 2029.

To try to better inform the communities of the need for and information on what comprises affordable, the plan is for a regional community education program to include videos and infographic materials.