

**ACTON COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION**  
**Minutes Tuesday, October 11, 2022 – online via Zoom**

Pursuant to notice given, a Regular Meeting of the Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC) was held on Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at 4PM via zoom. Present and constituting a Quorum for the purpose of conducting business were regular members Janet Adachi, Andy Richardt, Bernice Baran, Judy Hodge, and associate members Corrina Kreuze and Dan Buckley. Janet designated Dan and Corrina as a voting members for today's meeting.

Lara Plaskon from RHSO serves as ACHC's off-board Clerk and was present for the meeting.

**Guests:**

- Larry Beals, Beals Associates, Maryellen Johns, DeMaximus (project manager); David Cantrell WR, Lou Tamposi, Bryan Oos – Toll Brothers; Colleen Weber, W.R. Grace;
- Community members and abutters to W.R. Grace property: Kim Kastens, Lou York, Terra Friedrichs, Alissa Nicol, Anand Krishnamurthy, Ariel, David Martin (Select Board), Heidi Porten, Jim Snyder-Grant (Select Board), Julie Pierce (Economic Dev. Director), Lawrence R., Marion Maxwell, Matthew Costa, Nora Master (Asst Planner), Regina, Richard Keleher, Ron Parenti, Sonja Pyle.

Janet Adachi, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:09 pm. Janet read the updated meeting notice, including guidelines for public participation in the meeting.

- I. **4pm Appointment:** Presentation, conceptual affordable housing proposal for W.R. Grace North property (north of RR tracks)
    - Representatives from W.R. Grace and the developer working on the project gave presentations and then fielded questions from ACHC members and from the community
    - Refer to Powerpoint presentations included in the Statement of Documents presented at the meeting for details about the plans
    - Some highlights from the plans - 320 units – 108 1-bed; 170 2-bed; 42 3-bed; 84% of site will be open space
- Questions –
- Judy – is design settled? Design is not settled, they are just in the early stages; 4 story buildings
  - Dan – clarified that they will be rental units; Preliminary cost of units – commensurate with other similar rental developments in Acton; Has a traffic study been done? – not yet, but there will be one; Any information on the solar farm? – still will be happening on another part of the property
  - Bernice – question about the relationship between the property and the Town – W.R. Grace has tried to re-engage with the Town to find the best use of the land; W.R. Grace will not be resuming their industrial activities; they will continue their environmental obligations; Who would manage the rental units? – Toll Brothers;

Has there been discussion with the Town already? – a few preliminary meetings – initial discussions pre-pandemic were about a potentially different use, as well as the solar farm on the South side of the property, but this is really the first meeting with the Town about the 40B project

- Andy – how many affordable units? – 25% - 80 units – evenly split among bedroom sizes - 25% of the total number of each unit size; How will sewage be handled? – they are investigating all options, but too early to know yet; Is it possible to do additional housing in the South parcel? – not part of the plan at this time
- Janet – watched EPA presentation and saw that parcel had been zoned for technology district– is that still the case? - All of Grace land is currently zoned for technology, but will ask for a waiver of this through 40B process; Water? – plan to be connected to public water system; Janet offered some feedback on parking and design - 576 parking spaces seems like a lot and encouraged meeting with Design Review Board; Presenters clarified that W.R. Grace's EPA obligations will continue even after property is sold – remediation has concluded and property now in a monitoring phase, but obligations to EPA will continue permanently; Grace is required to give notice to EPA on any potential sale
- Kim Kastens (community member) – How safe will the property be for future residents give the history of pollution? What is the status of the North Lagoon wetland? What steps have been taken to remediate the pollution? – a determination has not yet been made re: whether this area is a wetland; all of the resource areas will be mapped; Moratorium on irrigation wells – can you show on the maps where the moratorium area is? –they don't have maps available to share right now, but they can provide them down the road
- Lou York (community member) – Can you tell us how far the buildings would be set back from Fort Pond Brook? – it will be well outside any required buffer, but they don't have the exact numbers right now; Will there be fencing around the property? – landscape design isn't complete yet; What are the effects of removing a lot of trees and disturbing the soil? – reiteration that they are very early in the design process and don't have the details yet; However, they are keeping 84% of the land open and appreciate that wildlife lives there; Will there be wheelchair accessible units? – 100% of the units are ADA adaptable and 10% will be 100% accessible
- Terra Friedrichs (community member) – What AMI level will affordable units be? – affordable to households at 80% AMI; question about sewer betterment – they are evaluating options and still need to figure out what makes sense for the site
- Jim Snyder-Grant – are we expecting that this project will be a LIP? – they are in conversations with the Town and would love to do a LIP
- Sonja Pyle – does not like the idea of four 4-story buildings being constructed where there is currently green space; What is the zoning override process? – ZBA reviews project and decides whether to grant waivers; Is there a distinction about going from single family homes to multi-family? – presenters clarified that it is not housing now, it is zoned technology (commercial), so use would be going from industrial to residential; Another question about traffic study and bedroom sizes –

presenter pointed out that State wants to see a minimum number of 3-bedroom units so that family housing is available

- Janet asked ACHC members if they are ready to vote or want to take more time?
    - Dan supports in general, but would like to see more details – still has concerns about design, traffic, etc.
    - Bernice thinks the development is good in principle, but would like the developers to return when they have more answers to abutters' questions
    - Judy believes we need housing and that the project should move forward
    - Andy – were other housing proposals considered and how was this one chosen? There wasn't a bidding process – Toll Brothers came forward and they have been working together on the best use
    - Janet offered that ACHC has generally supported smaller scale projects
    - Terra requested that ACHC hold off on voting given the environmental concerns
    - Kim Kastens requested that ACHC put environmental concerns at the forefront, including requesting that an update on the environmental remediation be provided; also requested report on the impact of septic
    - Dan reminded that there are a lot of environmental checks that are already part of the process; ACHC is not an environmental group, so that isn't ACHC's main focus
    - Janet proposed putting off making any type of decision until the next ACHC meeting to give absent member, Bob VanMeter, a chance to contribute; Discussion will be on the agenda for the next ACHC meeting
    - Judy offered that it is very helpful to watch the video about the W.R. Grace environmental cleanup
- II. **Appointment:** Steve Joncas, Common Ground – Status update re Tavernier Place, 446 Mass Ave – postponed until November ACHC meeting

III. **Regular Business**

- **Minutes of July 12, 2022 & September 13, 2022** – Judy moved to approve both sets of minutes and Corinna seconded – Lara took a roll call vote and the motion passed unanimously

- **Financial Report**

Andy reported the following:

- Earned \$12.85 in interest on savings account
- Total ACHC assets as of 9/30/22 –\$69,357.73
- Balance for undesignated gifts funds is \$244,126.22. (excludes \$7,500 earmarked for monitoring or RHSO)
- Total all funds available for expenditures (checking account + gift funds +

CPA) = \$532,582.03

- Janet and Andy affirmed that they have both reviewed the monthly financial statements.
- Bernice moved to accept financial report and Judy seconded – roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

- **Regional Housing Services Offices Update**

Lara reported the following:

- RHSO staff, Kristen Guichard (Acton Planning Director), and Town of Newton are meeting on Friday to discuss the fair housing testing initiative and Acton's possible participation – Lara will report on this meeting next month
- Tenant Services meeting tomorrow with RHSO, Kristen Guichard, and Laura Ducharme (Town Community Resources Coordinator) – discussion about RHSO's possible role – Lara will report on this meeting next month
- Still trying to hire to replace Liz Valenta

- **Chair Update** –

- Janet has been attending webinar series about the new MBTA Communities legislation; Janet is the ACHC contact on the Town committee considering how Acton can comply with this legislation – committee is looking at a future vision for South Acton

- **Member Updates** – None

#### IV. **New Business**

- **Community Preservation Committee** – ACHC 2022 grant application

- Janet explained that ACHC doesn't have a specific project in mind for ACHC funds, but needs to replenish funds
- Janet suggests requesting at least \$100K – keeping in mind that we can anticipate that we will get another request for funds for Tavernier Place next month
- Bernice voiced that it is important to emphasize that ACHC still has a need for additional funds
- Andy, Corrina both voiced that they believe \$100-\$150K is a reasonable request
- Corrina offered that it makes sense to continue supporting Tavernier Place since it will provide housing to lower AMI households which don't come along often

- **MA Annual Report due 11/2022:** Chairman will submit

#### V. **Old Business – Chairman postponed discussion of these items to next month**

- Fair Housing testing – update about WestMetro Consortium RFP, ACHC as Acton contact/representative

- Project Updates (if any)

**VI. Future Agenda Items**

- To be determined

Corrina moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:53pm and Judy seconded. Lara took a roll call vote – motion passed unanimously.

The next ACHC meeting will be on November 8, 2022, 4pm via Zoom

**STATEMENT OF DOCUMENTS PRESENTED AT THIS MEETING:**

Agenda, October 11, 2022

Financial Reports through 9/30/22, including bank account and housing gift funds

Draft Minutes from July 12, 2022 and September 13, 2022 meetings

W.R Grace Property Re-Use Documents:

- Introductory Powerpoint Presentation
- Toll Brothers Powerpoint Presentation
- EPA Letter re: Site Re-use, 10/4/22
- Link to youtube video of EPA Public Info session re: W.R. Grace on youtube
- Link to Green Acton webpage re: W.R. Grace property

Memo to CPC chairman re: 5-year funding needs, 10/4/22