

MINUTES
Boxborough Housing Board Meeting
January 14, 2021
Via Zoom

Housing Board Members Attending: Al Murphy (chair), Ron Vogel, Channing Wagg

Housing Board Members Not in Attendance: Diane Friedman, Dolores Fromer

Invited Guest: Les Fox, Not in Attendance

Other Guests: Wes Fowlkes, Olivia Jones, Rebecca Neville

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 emergency, the Housing-Board meeting was conducted via Zoom

I. Information Items

A. Status of Community Services Coordinator (CSC) position.

Chair Murphy commented on steps currently being taken to recruit a CSC including places where the position has been posted. Additional information was provided by C. Wagg, including that perhaps it might have been mentioned in the posting that it was anticipated the position would be full time in the next fiscal year. There ensued some discussion that this might not be the case given that several additions to town hall staff may be brought before ATM. It was suggested that metrics would be helpful to support the full-time hours for the CSC.

B. Status of the evaluation of the Stow-Road property for a public-safety facility.

Chair Murphy commented on the professional engineering review of the property's suitability for the referenced use.

II. New Business

A. Discussion of down-payment assistance programs (taken out of order).

1. Mr. Fowlkes and Ms. Jones described the value of the referenced programs to those who seek to purchase mid-level, \$300–\$400,000 price range, homes in Boxborough, indicating that a down payment is the most difficult aspect of the purchase to either save or finance.
2. Chair Murphy sympathized with the dilemma but pointed out that the Housing Board's mandate was to focus on providing affordable housing in the community and that was governed by income averages by household within our Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area. He pointed out also that the infrastructure associated with managing a down-payment assistance program would be difficult to put in place due to town budget constraints.

III. Minutes

A. 12 November 2020 meeting of the Boxborough Housing Board (taken out of turn).

Old Business

B. Boxborough Rental Assistance Program (BRAP) (taken out of turn).

Chairman Murphy commented that the program was under control but without the assistance of a Community Services Coordinator's on-going involvement and supervision maintaining the status quo for long was problematic.

IV. New Business

A. BHB Town Report for 2020

Chairman Murphy reviewed the report. Ron Vogel moved that it be accepted as written with the Chair authorized to make any additional editorial changes required. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

V. Adjourn BHB Meeting

A. Channing Wagg moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded, unanimously approved and the meeting closed at 8:39 p.m.

List of Documents/ Exhibits used:

1. Town Report
2. Minutes of 12 November 2020 BHB meeting

Respectfully submitted, Channing Wagg meeting secretary