



Grafton Affordable Housing Trust

Grafton Memorial Municipal Center
30 Providence Road
Grafton, MA 01519

Status Report

2009-2010

The Affordable Housing Trust is comprised of six members. The current members are John Carlson, Chairman; Deborah Kochevar, Vice Chairman; Todd Brodeur, Clerk; and Members Peter Adams, Lou Boersma, and Charles Pratt. The Trust meets monthly. Work completed during the previous year included:

- **395 Providence Road, Unit #4:** The Trust entered into negotiations with the Town of Grafton for the purchase of this condominium unit that had been a tax title taking. Funds were spent on a home inspection which turned up high levels of mold. Additional inspections and tests were conducted by to determine the extent of the mold problem and potential remediation scenarios. The Trust further sought additional legal advice. Once all the information had been received the Trust opted to withdraw its offer to purchase the unit from the Town due to potential long term liability issues. This work item consumed most of the efforts of the Trust from August through October.
- **Legal Memorandum and Legal Services:** Services required to assist the Trust in the implementation of the 2006 Affordable Housing Plan as well as the promotion and development of affordable housing in Grafton. The RFP was issued and the firm of Blatman Brobowski and Mead were retained to develop three separate legal memorandums. Work items included:

Operation and Procedures

- Administration of the Trust
- Buying, Selling, Leasing and Holding Real Property
- Buying and selling Personal Property
- Managing Real Estate
- Investment and Expenditure of Trust Funds, Financial Reporting
- Compliance with the Open Meeting Law

Analysis and Review of the Town of Grafton Affordable Housing Trust Fund Trust and the 2006 Town of Grafton Affordable Housing Plan

- Declaration of Trust
- 2006 Affordable Housing Plan

Practical Strategies for the Creation of Affordable Housing Through the Initiative of an Affordable Housing Trust

- Preliminary Considerations
- Strategies
- Overview

In addition to providing the material required in the RFP, Ms. Mead met with the Trust on several occasions to discuss key points and procedure to guide the Trust in their next steps. Ms. Mead provided additional legal services with regard to negotiations for Unit #4 at 395 Providence Road.

- **Affordable Housing Trust By-Law:** Upon advice of legal counsel, the Trust put forward a new general Town By-Law at the May 11, 2009 Annual Town Meeting. The purpose of this was to follow best management practices required by the Attorney General and Inspector General offices.
- **Project Review and Management:** Several developers made presentations to the Trust for projects that will include affordable units. The Trust provided feed back and in some cases formal support either in the form of endorsement or staff support in publicizing lotteries. Projects included:
 - **Peters Estates** – the developer ran two lotteries for the designated affordable units, one of which had local preference attached to it. Staff assisted in publicizing the lottery informational sessions and monitoring the progress of the lottery. Both units sold and will be listed in the DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory.
 - **Habitat for Humanity** – The organization made a presentation to the Trust for the purposes of developing a long range partnership in both groups’ efforts to promote and develop affordable housing. Presently HFH is constructing a house in Millbury. Staff provided support in publicizing the Family Selection Informational meetings. The Trust is investigating avenues to locate appropriate parcels and are anticipating partnering with HFH in the near future.
 - **AHEPA National Housing Corporation** – Proponent looking to locate a 3-5 acre site in town for the development of HUD-subsidized senior housing. AHEPA presented their requirements to the Trust and was seeking support in securing a Town-owned parcel for the first of two 50-60 unit buildings on site. The Trust recommended that AHEPA contact the Town Administrator to discuss the acquisition of Town-owned land.
 - **20 Nelson Place** – 13 units; 5 units existing in structure currently on site to be affordable plus 8 new condominium units to be built on site. Preliminary review by the Trust on two separate occasions. Project still under development.
 - **123 Ferry Street** – 32 Unit, 40 B project – the developer, Stormfront Realty, received formal support from the Trust for this project based on the information presented at two separate meetings.
 - **Afonso / Institute & Westboro Roads** – The developer met with the Trust to discuss their progress in forwarding this mixed use project which had been in the design stages for several years. The developer was unable to create a financially feasible pro forma and the project as abandoned for the traditional subdivision process.
- **Annual Trust Workshop:** The Trust met on Saturday, January 9, 2010 for the first annual workshop designed to create a work plan and action items for the upcoming year. The Trust identified four functional work areas and populated each list with goals and work items. From those lists, the Trust focused on key work items for the upcoming year and assigned members to work each.

Development

- Non-private land database and map – to include town owned land, state-owned land, semi-public owned land, development parameters, environmental constraints, and other factors.
- Private Land Donations – legacy building
- Habitat for Humanity – site identification

Programs

- Inclusionary Zoning By-Law
- Grant programs
- Developing partnerships with other agencies

Outreach / Advocacy

- Annual Public Workshop – to be held in winter / early spring of 2010.
- Development of a brochure and public informational materials
- Web site – ongoing development

Administrative

- Budget development
- Accounting Systems
- Staffing – long range planning
- Mission Statement