

2021 Annual Report of the Affordable Housing Board of Trustees

The Affordable Housing Board of Trustees (AHBT) was established in June 2009 in accordance with the Town By-Law voted in May 2008. The Board met in January, February, March, and September in 2021.

In January a presentation was made to the AHBT by the developer of the proposed 40b project of 180 units, The Flats at Merrimac Square. The Board submitted a letter to the developer and to the Town to be included in the Town's response to Mass Housing regarding this proposal. The Board supports the intent to increase the number of state-qualifying affordable housing units to a number that represents 10% of housing units in town. It is noted in the eleven points cited in the letter that 130 units will be sufficient to reach this goal along with the units in another housing project already being pursued by the Town.

As referenced above, the Board continues to support the Town's efforts to re-develop the former site of Coastal Metals at Little's Court as affordable housing. North Shore Community Development Coalition (NSCDC) remains committed to develop approximately 38 affordable housing rental units on this site and that of the former fire station/senior center on School Street.

Once again the Board voted to support the release of annual HOME funds designated for Merrimac in the amount of \$12,919 for reuse for competitive bid by the HOME Consortium as the Town was not in a position to use these funds. It is hoped that when the affordable housing project with NSCDC moves forward efforts to receive a grant award from the HOME competitive funds pool will be successfully.

The Board was represented on the Strategic Planning Committee to develop five-year policy recommendations for the Board of Selectmen. Included in these recommendations was creation of a Planning Consultant position that could assist AHBT and several other Town Boards and Committees.

The percent of the affordable housing units in Merrimac that appears on the state's Subsidized Housing Inventory list remains at 5.6% at present. When the number of housing units in Town recorded in the 2020 Census becomes available, the state will recalculate this percentage.

Respectfully submitted by:

Sandra Venner, Chairperson

Term expires 2022

Philip Parry

Term expires 2022

Colleen Ranshaw-Fiorello, Secretary

Term expires 2022

Dawne Young

Term expires 2023

Holly Moran

Term expires 2023

Brienne Walsh (appointed in March)

Term expires 2023

Benjamin Beaulieu, Representative of Board of Selectmen

Term expires 2023