

Town of Lenox
Community Preservation Committee

January 18, 2022

Meeting Minutes

Via Zoom

Members present: Tom Delasco (TD), Frederick Keator (FK), Olga Weiss (OW), Mark Smith (SM), Kim Graham (KG)

Members absent: Neal Maxymillian, Chuck Koscher

Others present: Gwen Miller, Staff; Marybeth Mitts, Lenox Aff. Housing Trust, Charlene Rosen (Lenox Affordable Housing Trust), Kate McNulty Vaughn (Lenox Aff. Housing Trust) Charlie Adams (Pennrose), Becca Schofield (Pennrose), Susan Wissler (The Mount), Earl Persip (The Mount), Ute DeFarlo (The Mount)

1. Approval of Minutes:

The Committee approved the December 2021 minutes as prepared.

2. Presentation of Applications (to be updated upon application receipt)

a. The Mount, \$125,000

Susan Wissler of the Mount introduced their request for \$125,000 toward the exterior envelope of the gate house, stating it is the last building on the property needing such work. She said the project will cost a total of \$800,000 and will use the same techniques as used at the stable restoration project. The facilities director, Earl Persip, III described a number of issues: stucco work, columns, drainage issues, dormers, structural unsoundness of the bulkhead. Utilities will be buried underground and the building will be made ADA compliant.

TD asked what the current use of the building is and the future use will be. Susan Wissler said it is and will be the administrative center of the Mount, though at some point it could host some programmatic uses. FK asked about the greenhouse. Earl Persip said that had been repaired to some extent in the recent past.

b. Pennrose, LLC, \$975,000

Becca Schofield of Pennrose provided examples of other housing development projects and explained Penrose's local experience. She explained local housing need, citing the Lenox Housing Production Plan. She showed the project site plan and renderings of the finished housing units and common space outside. She noted the playground would be a use of the recreation funds, as well as the lookout space from the property. TD asked what the cost requested from the CPC is. Becca explained that the total is \$975,000, with \$750,000 from Community Housing and \$225,000 from Open Space/Recreation. It is a small portion of the overall project budget. The request s for all the funding (\$975,000) at once. TD asked what the other sources are. Charlie Adams explained they will come from Low Income Housing Tax Credits, HOME funds, bond/stabilization funds, and Workforce Housing funds. The first mortgage will be supported by rents. KG asked for an explanation of how the recreation item will bring value to the whole community of Lenox, Becca Schofield indicated it could connect to broader trail network.

The August 11th letters of support shared by the Public Safety Chiefs were referenced in response to questions about the site plan. Becca explained parking, snow storage, hydrants and a fire pump are included in the site plans.

MS asked about parking. Becca Schofield said there will be visitor parking, and that there will be 1.5 spaces/unit. Charlie Adams mentioned there will be sidewalks on site and bicycle racks.

FK asked if units will be available to seniors. Rebecca Schofield said the majority of units will be 2-3 bedrooms and there will be no senior services. They will be deed restricted for affordability but non-age restricted. She referenced a recent Pennrose project in Eastham (Massachusetts) where there was a large 55 and up community in the one-bedroom apartments. These units (1-bedroom) will be “visitable”, meaning somebody with a disability will be able to safely and comfortably visit the units. MS asked if there will be accessible units. Charlie Adams said that 5% of the units will be, there will also be some units for visual accessibility.

FK noted CPC are the only local funds noted. FK also wondered if Pennrose needs all of the funds or if a commitment is enough. Charlie Adams indicated a commitment would be good. Becca Schofield says they will keep the CPC updated about their schedule.

c. **Lenox Affordable Housing Trust, \$150,000**

Marybeth Mitts presented the application for \$150,000 from the Lenox Affordable Housing Trust to support programs. The Trust owns two homes they will sell to income eligible households and subject to a deed restriction. These will go on the Town’s subsidized housing inventory. The funds will provide match to a potential Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) housing rehab program, and help the Trust respond to the Attorney General’s receivership program as opportunities emerge.

TD noted the application described projects the Trust has done, but wondered about projects the Trust wants to still do? Marybeth explained they want to participate in the CDBG program and be prepared to respond to other opportunities.

FK asked how many receivership properties have been rehabilitated in Lenox. KMV said there had been two properties—one duplex and one single family. She had lots of background information on the program.

KG asked what is in the trust account at the moment. Marybeth Mitts said approximately \$180,000.

FK motioned to adjourn at 7:45 p.m.