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2 **Approved March 15, 2023**

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4 **HISTORICAL COMMISSION**
5 **MEETING MINUTES**
6 **Tuesday, February 28, 2023 6:30 PM**
7 **McAuliffe Hearing Room – Southborough Town House**
8 **17 Common Street, Southborough, Massachusetts**
9

10 Members present: Kevin Miller, Kate Battles, Jim Blaschke, Annie Pfaff, and Grant Farrington.

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12 Members of the Select Board present: Kathy Cook, Chelsea Malinowski, Sam Stivers, Lisa Braccio,
13 Andrew Dennington, and Mark Purple, Town Administrator.

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15 Members of the Southborough Housing Opportunity Partnership Committee present: Doriann Jasinski,
16 John Wood, Jesse Stein, Tom Bhisitkul, Doug Manz, and Andrew Dennington.

17
18 Members of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committee present: Lisa Braccio, Andrew Dennington,
19 Doriann Jasinski, Sam Stivers, Kathy Cook, and Chelsea Malinowski.

20
21 Also in attendance: Al Hamilton, 35 Pine Hill Road; Bonnie Phaneuf, 179 Middle Road.

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23 **CALL TO ORDER:**

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25 Mr. Miller called the Historical Commission (HC) meeting to order at 7:52 PM.

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27 **Discussion: Joint meeting with the Select Board, the Southborough Housing Opportunity Partnership**
28 **Committee, and the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committee to review options for 5 Cordaville**
29 **Road, currently under demolition delay:**

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31 Ms. Braccio explained the charge of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committee (AHTFC.) She
32 explained that the Southborough Housing Opportunity Partnership Committee (SHOPC) does
33 not have the ability to expend funds so the AHTFC functions in that capacity. Housing funds are
34 acquired through Southborough’s acceptance of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) which
35 is a 1% surcharge on tax bills.

36
37 Ms. Cook stated the goal of the joint meeting was to discuss 5 Cordaville Road, the potential
38 significance of the property due to its location, and, thus, the potential interest of various
39 boards.

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41 Mr. Miller expressed his thanks to the various boards for being in attendance. He provided
42 some history regarding the property. The home, built in 1918, was owned by Raymond Huling,
43 a 27-year employee of Fay School who passed away in August 2022. Mr. Miller also summarized
44 the process of the Demolition Delay Bylaw (DDBL) as well as the process the Historical
45 Commission (HC) had followed thus far. Mr. Miller discussed the historical significance of the
46 property and its architectural features as a Craftsman Bungalow. At the January 5, 2023 public
47 hearing, the property was deemed preferentially preserved by a 5-0 Historical Commission
48 vote. On December 19, 2022, a site visit had been conducted by Mr. Miller, Mr. Farrington, and

49 Ms. Pfaff. Ms. Cook, the Chair of the Select Board (SB) was also in attendance, having been
50 invited by Mr. Miller due to the significance of the property's location in the historic town
51 center. Mr. Miller explained that photos were taken and shared within the HC pursuant to the
52 DDBL review process but were not shown during the public hearing or otherwise shared in
53 order to respect the privacy and dignity of the deceased owner and his family. Mr. Miller
54 indicated the property was structurally sound and retained many of its original details including
55 hardwood floors, built-in cabinets, and original door hardware. Subsequent to the Historical
56 Commission's vote to preferentially preserve the property, Mr. Miller felt that SHOPC might be
57 interested in the home for affordable housing. Mr. Miller emphasized that he brought the idea
58 forward because he felt it was an opportunity to save a historic house within the new National
59 Register historic district and to perhaps create a restored, affordable house within
60 Southborough for a deserving family. Ms. Cook agreed and attempted to schedule a joint
61 meeting with the SB, HC, SHOPC, and AHTFC on February 7, 2023. SHOPC indicated they could
62 not attend that meeting. Mr. Miller has been in touch with the estate's personal representative,
63 Sandra Huling, Mr. Huling's sister. Mr. Miller stated the property was perc tested and passed
64 for a 2-bedroom septic system. On February 19, 2023, at the request of the SB Chair, Mr. Miller
65 attended a walk-through of the property organized for representatives of Habitat for Humanity:
66 Al Hamilton and Paul Rebello, who is a local construction manager for Habitat. The Habitat
67 representatives felt there was potential for the property. The house currently consists of 1,120
68 square feet with an unfinished 2nd floor. During the site visit, Mr. Rebello had speculated that it
69 might be possible to add a bedroom and bathroom on the second floor if the septic field were
70 relocated and if the original footprint of the property were retained. The property is on a .67
71 acre lot with wetlands at the rear of the property. Mr. Miller stated the demolition delay was
72 effective through October 5, 2023. Ms. Cook asked what the executor of the property wanted.
73 Mr. Miller emphasized that Mr. Huling was devoted to his home and remained in it while he
74 was ill. The property did not pass the septic contingency with the current developer. The
75 current owner is eager for a resolution. Ms. Cook asked if the developer stated the property
76 would be razed, which was confirmed. The developer stated they would build a larger house,
77 estimated at 2,400 square feet, and would not be interested in renovating it as a historic
78 property.

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80 Ms. Braccio expressed concern that the AHTFC was not invited to the walk-through and stated
81 that SHOPC should have been made more aware of the property earlier in the process. Mr.
82 Miller explained that the December walk-through was conducted strictly in accordance with the
83 due diligence requirements of the DDBL; the February walkthrough, arranged on extremely
84 short notice, was organized to provide expert rehabilitation input (via Mr. Rebello) for the joint
85 meeting currently underway; Ms. Jasinski was invited to the February walkthrough but was
86 unable to attend. (Ms. Cook interjected that Mr. Dennington, a member of both SHOPC and the
87 Select Board, was also invited to the December walkthrough but was unable to attend. Mr.
88 Dennington confirmed this.) Ms. Braccio asked about the agreement Ms. Huling had with
89 Kendall Homes, the developer. Mr. Miller explained that he had not spoken with Kendall Homes
90 subsequent to the public hearing at the request of Ms. Huling. Ms. Braccio expressed concern
91 that a contract was still in place between the developer and the current owner. Al Hamilton, 35
92 Pine Hill Road, described properties in Northborough, MA which were renovated with Habitat
93 for Humanity in conjunction with the Northborough Historical Commission. He explained that
94 he requested to visit the 5 Cordaville Road property. He stated that if Habitat were involved it
95 would be a gut renovation. He further added that Habitat houses typically have porches, so

96 they would be interested in fully restoring the home's existing porch. Mr. Hamilton stated he
97 would like the property to be saved and felt it was important that the town of Southborough
98 work to increase affordable housing rather than solely support developers.
99

100 Mr. Stivers expressed his support for creating more affordable housing and supported the
101 process as it was conducted by the HC. Mr. Dennington also indicated a strong desire to create
102 more affordable housing. He felt the location, the affordability, and the potential help from
103 Habitat made it a more viable option. Mr. Dennington referenced SHOPC's Housing Production
104 Plan (HPP) and the various scenarios presented for creating affordable housing. Mr. Dennington
105 felt the opportunity was in line with the HPP and felt the town should be receptive to the help
106 offered by Habitat. Ms. Cook stated there was \$239K currently in the AHTFC and there was over
107 \$900K in CPA funds. Ms. Cook suggested discussion regarding the financing be conducted in
108 executive session. Ms. Cook also indicated there were CPC monies available for historic
109 purposes. Ms. Cook felt the town owned it to the community to create affordable housing. Ms.
110 Malinowski expressed concern about the agreement between the developer and the property
111 owner. She requested clarification on how the funding would work for the project.
112

113 Mr. Stein stated the CPA funds were to be used for affordable housing. Mr. Stein requested
114 clarification regarding the septic testing. Mr. Miller explained that Mr. Rebello had speculated
115 that if the house maintained its original footprint there might be potential to relocate the septic
116 field to allow for a 3-bedroom. Mr. Stein asked if there would be a Preservation Restriction (PR)
117 on the property. Mr. Miller clarified a PR would not be required under the DDBL. Mr. Stein
118 indicated a deed restriction on the property would be critical so as to ensure credit with the
119 Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD.) Mr. Stein asked whether the
120 property would be owned by the town or the Southborough Housing Authority (SHA) and who
121 would manage the project. Mr. Wood felt the property would be an ideal location, size, and
122 price point to create an affordable unit for a family. He expressed concern regarding the legal
123 issues with the developer. He also expressed concern about restrictions imposed by the HC and
124 if they would make it cost prohibitive for a family to maintain. Mr. Miller explained the property
125 would be required to conform to current building codes, but the HC has no purview over the
126 interior of the property. Mr. Wood asked if there was any ARPA funding available. Bonnie
127 Phaneuf, 179 Middle Road, felt a letter from the trustees of the property would be required in
128 order for the town to move forward. She felt the property should be under the purview of the
129 SHA rather than the town. Mr. Bhisitkul explained that he and Mr. Stein are on a SHOPC
130 subcommittee charged with creating a report regarding the South Union Building at 21
131 Highland Street and the feasibility of creating affordable housing at the site. He indicated there
132 is potential to create 10-15 affordable units on the property while also preserving the historic
133 property. He expressed concern over utilizing funds on a single home versus a multi-unit
134 property such as the South Union School Building. Ms. Cook asked the SB if the intent would be
135 to move forward to further investigate the opportunity. Ms. Malinowski stated the legality
136 would need to be investigated first and suggested Town Counsel be asked to opine. Ms. Braccio
137 suggested SHOPC meet to discuss if they would like to move forward. Mr. Miller stated the
138 owner has a local attorney. Once the legal piece is addressed, the point of contact will be
139 determined.
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141 **ADJOURN: MOTION** by Mr. Farrington to adjourn at 9:31 PM. **Seconded** by Jim Blaschke. **ROLL CALL:**
142 **Miller-Yes, Battles-Yes, Blaschke-Yes, Pfaff-Yes, Farrington-Yes. VOTE to Approve: Yes-5, No-0.**

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144 **Documents Used at this Meeting:**

- 145 • None used at this time.

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148 Respectfully Submitted,

149

150 Kathleen Battles

151 Vice Chair, Historical Commission