

CARLISLE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT

Calendar year 2021

What is the Carlisle Affordable Housing Trust?

The Carlisle Affordable Housing Trust (CAHT) was established by the Town of Carlisle through a Declaration of Trust in 2006 for the purpose of providing for the preservation and creation of affordable housing in the Town of Carlisle. In 2019, the Trust absorbed the responsibilities of the Carlisle Housing Authority. In 2021, Town Meeting approved a bylaw that reorganized the membership of the Trust and reaffirmed its financial and legal powers.

The Trust is administered by seven Trustees, at least one of whom is a member of the Select Board. The remaining six members are Carlisle residents appointed by the Select Board. The Declaration of Trust authorizes the Trustees “to acquire by gift, purchase or otherwise, in accordance with procedures set forth in the Declaration, real estate and personal property, both tangible and intangible, of every sort and description . . .” in furtherance of the Trust’s purpose.

Mission

The Trust (CAHT) voted on its mission statement at its June 2021 meeting:

“It is our goal to purchase or otherwise develop one affordable property per year or whatever the budget will allow in order to provide one family at a time the opportunity to live in Carlisle where they otherwise would be unable to afford it.”

Events and Accomplishments

During the first half of 2021, the CAHT focused on developing its mission statement and the warrant article for the Declaration of Trust which passed in June.

In January, the CAHT applied to the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) for a grant of \$125,000 to help defray costs being incurred by Neighborhood of Affordable Housing, Inc. (NOAH) to repair the septic system at Benfield Farm. The grant was ratified by Town Meeting in June and the Trust continued to monitor progress at Benfield in repairing the malfunctioning septic system which was only finished in late November.

The trust also applied for and received a grant of \$100,000 from CPC to be able to fund hiring a consultant to produce a new Housing Production Plan (HPP), do due diligence on any properties which might come up for sale, and to develop any parcels which may be town owned that would be appropriate for housing.

The Trust was pleased to be informed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) that their application for a grant to fund the creation of a new HPP was granted in the amount of \$20,000. The CAHT went on to engage with MAPC to write the HPP. Work is underway, and a new HPP committee has been formed which includes representatives of the School Committee, DEI Committee, Planning Board, Select Board, Council on Aging, a developer, and residents at large.

During the second half of 2021, the Trust spent some time recruiting new members due to the new bylaw which required replacement of three Select Board Members. Effort was made to search for and attract members who had experience with affordable housing, and to extend invitations to residents who represent the BIPOC community.

Unfortunately, little progress was made toward encouraging the bank owner of the foreclosed income-restricted condominium unit at Rocky Point to do what is necessary to prepare the property for marketing and sale to a qualified buyer.

The Trust continues to keep in touch with Habitat for Humanity of Greater Lowell, looking for an opportunity to find a property that can be developed with affordable housing that fits the neighborhood. Habitat works closely with a family advocate, churches, and schools to support new residents in a town and has not had one foreclosure in the 50 homes they have built. Habitat does the land inspection, the work leading up to building and conducts the required Fair Housing lottery. They also have experience with septic systems which is helpful for us in Carlisle. This is would also provide a great opportunity for residents to get involved in community service in town.

Current members:

Maureen Deery

Gina Fox

Carolyn Ing, Secretary

Mark Levitan, Treasurer

Bertide Neptune

Kate Reid, Co-Chair

Beverly Shorey, Co-Chair