



CONSENT 7/12/04

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TOWN OF ACTON
P.O. Box 681
Acton, Massachusetts, 01720
Telephone (978) 263-4776
Fax (978) 266-1408

Acton Community Housing Corporation
Nancy Tavernier, Chairman

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: Nancy Tavernier
SUBJECT: Request for BOS endorsement of DHCD grant application
DATE: July 9, 2004

The ACHC is applying to the state Priority Development Fund program seeking funds to perform a feasibility and preliminary design for the town-owned land on Willow and Central. This new one-time program is being administered by DHCD and MassHousing. They are making available \$3 million in planning assistance to communities seeking to increase housing production. They are eager to allocate these funds as soon as possible on a first-come, first-served basis and want to have them committed within the next 12 months. I recently attended an info session for the program and heard that only two applications had been filed. We have a good chance to be selected.

Priority will be given to applications that address or encourage new housing production within town centers, on brown fields, using both sustainable development and Smart Growth principles. The parcel on Willow and Central, in the West Acton Village area, jumped out at us as a perfect project for these funds. Even though CPA funds of \$25,000 have been appropriated for a feasibility study for this site, I am sure the Town would be grateful to have them be supplanted or supplemented with state funding. The maximum amount that can be requested from this fund is \$50,000. I am working to get hard figures for the four tasks we have identified so that the request can be fairly accurate.

Because the Board does not meet again until August, I need to have your endorsement on July 12. I plan to submit the application by July 16. A signed letter from the Chief Elected Official MUST be filed with the application. I have been working with Roland and Doug on the application and have it 90% complete except for the budget figures. Roland will read the final draft and anyone else is welcome to see it. Here is a synopsis of the proposal:

“The Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC) is seeking \$50,000 (TBD ?) to hire expert consultants to prepare a financial feasibility study for two adjoining parcels of land located at 28 Willow Street and 214 Central Street in West Acton village. As the town’s affordable housing committee, the ACHC would like expert assistance in determining the best means for creating up to four affordable housing units on the site. This study would examine all aspects of the project: rental vs. condominiums, gap funding sources, eligible household income range, building design and floor plan options, site design, mix of unit sizes, wastewater disposal options, and financial viability of the proposed development. The intention is to put

the property out to bid with a very specific RFP that would meet the criteria determined to be viable by the Town, based on the feasibility study results. We also seek funding to have a Request for Proposals (RFP) prepared by a consultant to expedite the disposition of the property.”

I have included a draft letter that ACHC proposes for Chairman Hunter’s signature. Any other version of the letter is fine with us, the Chairman’s signature is the important thing.

We hope you will support our grant request. Thank you.



TOWN OF ACTON
472 Main Street
Acton, Massachusetts, 01720
Telephone (978) 264-9612
Fax (978) 264-9630

Don P. Johnson
Town Manager

July 12, 2004

Miryam Bobadilla
DHCD
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 300
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Ms Bobadilla:

The Acton Board of Selectmen voted on July 12, 2004 to endorse the application for Priority Development Funds submitted by the Acton Community Housing Corporation, a Selectmen-appointed town board.

The Town seeks these funds to determine the feasibility of developing a specific parcel of town-owned land for multi-family housing that would contain up to four family units with a mix of household incomes. To determine the viability of the proposal, the Town will need to have a consultant prepare a financial feasibility study, a preliminary architectural and site plan design, a site evaluation, and a Request for Proposals that can be used for purposes of public bid requirements.

Acton has recently completed an EO418 Community Development Plan that lays out options for creating more affordable housing choices. Among these options are the development of town-owned land, creating affordable units in the village core areas, using Smart Growth principles, and building small scale properties that are consistent with the neighborhood character. These specific options would be met with the development of this parcel of land. Pre-development planning is needed to maximize the potential redevelopment of this land. This effort will serve as a template for future development opportunities in similar scale projects across the Town.

Acton has an active local housing partnership group, the ACHC, who have toiled for years to increase affordable housing opportunities in this wealthy suburban setting. As the cost of land increases, the Town falls further and further behind in meeting the housing needs of the community. The infusion of state funds from the Priority Development Fund would be a great shot in the arm for housing advocates in the community and would help ensure the success of this proposed development.

Thank you for your consideration of our Town's request for funding.

Sincerely,

F. Dore' Hunter, Chairman
Acton Board of Selectmen