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DATE: February 11, 2026  
TIME: 2:21 PM

**Belmont Housing Trust  
Minutes for 1/13/2026 Meeting**

**Members present:** Judie Feins, Gloria Leipzig, Mark Kagan, Rachel Heller, Sally Sennott, Meg Clough, Karen Bauerle, Michael McNamara, Tomi Olson (for portions of the meeting).

**Town:** Chris Ryan, Conor McCormack (Office of Planning and Building)

**Presenter and guests:** Andrea Hassol (Age Friendly Action Committee); Anne Mahon (Belmont Housing Authority); Didier Moises (Belmont Against Racism). Other attendees: Jane Shapiro, Lisa Pargoli, Mark Paolillo, one person monitoring the meeting at (617) 331-9515, and two other members of the public who did not identify themselves.

The meeting was called to order at 7:33.

1. We reviewed draft minutes from 12/8/2025 and adopted them unanimously.
2. Andrea Hassol of the Council on Aging and Age-Friendly Action Committee presented the findings of the Belmont 2025 Needs Assessment with respect to housing. The assessment was conducted by researchers from the Gerontology Institute at U. Mass Boston. About a fourth of those 65 and over have low incomes, and half of the renters in that age group pay more than 30% of their incomes for housing. Issues cited included high taxes, difficulty of aging in place in older homes, lack of options for down-sizing or finding accessible units. The presentation will be posted on the Trust web page.
3. HOME FY 2027 Funds allocation: Two possible uses were mentioned. The Sherman Gardens redevelopment will add 60 affordable units (construction in 2027). A rental assistance program is to be considered later. Members of the Trust voted unanimously in favor of allocating these funds for administrative use (5k) and the remainder to Sherman Gardens (45k).
4. The Trust voted to adopt a statement presented by R. Heller tying the 2024 Belmont Housing Production Plan to support for the entirety of the Belmont Center and Center Gateway Overlay zoning proposals. In an effort to share the statement of support of the Housing Trust with Belmont residents, M. McNamara will draft a letter to The Belmont Voice. If possible, an article may also be of interest to Town residents.
5. From the Office of Planning and Building:
  - a. Chris Ryan and Conor McCormack provided a McLean update. All the paperwork required to be completed by Jack Dawley is in place, but the State is moving slowly on the Local Action review process. Chris is pushing for a more expedited conclusion

via email and conversations with the approving authority. R. Heller requested that an update of progress be presented prior to Town Meeting.

- b. Chris Ryan reported that the Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw we have approved will be postponed until Fall 2026 or Spring 2027 Town Meeting. The Town Administrator will not permit Town Counsel to review the document (which includes both significant changes related to substantial rehab plus several housekeeping changes) now.

J. Feins suggested that the less substantive “housekeeping” changes be fast-tracked to the Planning Board. R. Heller noted that the loss of naturally occurring affordable housing requires action, and that the Trust has spent a year working with the Town on this policy. Chris Ryan suggested that the Select Board and Town Administration are unaware of the proposed changes to the IZ bylaw. In addition, they think there’s no appetite for housing-related changes because “people are tired after the passage of the MBTA 3A zoning.” However, the Planning Board unanimously supports changes to the IZ bylaw. Therefore, Chris Ryan suggested the Trust make a formal request for reconsideration. Then, once the revised bylaw is on the Warrant, Town Counsel will review it.

- c. Chris Ryan distributed the Comprehensive Plan housing chapter in draft form and requested that comments in writing be sent to him separately from the shared document.

- 6. Fair Housing Training: Chris Ryan spoke with CPTC and Elaine Vanja regarding this opportunity, and dates are being sought actively. March 12 or 26 at 6PM was suggested. The presentation may not be recorded. The Trust list of relevant committees to extend an invitation to attend includes: Human Rights Comm., Disability Access Comm., Planning Board, 1 Select Board member, the Town Moderator, Zoning Board of Appeals, Belmont Against Racism and School Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 9:09.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Karen Bauerle