

This communication is in response to the above-referenced request for a report on the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust's (aka, 'the Trust') meeting of May 14, 2020. The ensuing information summarizes main points of discussion and focus at the Trust's May meeting.

Housing programs administration and operations in response to COVID-19 emergency

Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD) Executive Director George Proakis and OSPCD Housing Division staff updated Trustees on the status of CPA and non-CPA Trust-funded Housing Programs that are part of the City's efforts to address COVID-19 housing related needs. Staff reported that rental assistance programs operated by Somerville Homeless Coalition, Community Action Agency of Somerville, and Just-a-Start Corporation had seen sharp increases in applications for their Tenancy Stabilization Programs (TSP). The table on Page 2 of this document contains information on the rate at which these agencies have spent down contract funds since January 2020, and remaining funds available for the Tenancy Stabilization Programs as of 5/22/20. (Staff is updating funding availability weekly.) Table 3 provides information on the full range of City funding, both Trust funds and other sources, allocated to date as part of the City's response to housing needs associated with the pandemic.

Social distancing precautions have made it difficult for applicants to provide all of the typically required documentation with their applications to providers. Housing staff have made accommodations determined to be permissible based on feedback and guidance sought from the Massachusetts Housing Partnership, Massachusetts Department of Revenue, and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. When it is feasible for applicants to meet application requirements, the requirements remain in place and required documents are to be submitted at the time of application. However, if applicants cannot obtain the required documents, self-certifications are permissible. Agencies are expected to document due diligence attempts to obtain required third-party verifications during and after the emergency response period.

Trust Home Rule Petition – status update

Housing staff provided an update regarding the Trust Home Rule Petition (HRP) approved by the City Council on 10/24/19. The HRP expands the purpose of the Trust to include housing related social service programs such as landlord tenant mediation, legal services for tenants, case management, homelessness prevention and start-up costs for new affordable housing production initiatives. In late February, the HRP was reported on favorably by the Joint Housing committee and placed in the Orders of the Day for the next session. It has not yet been taken up for consideration.

Summary information from monthly CPA financial reports for February and March, 2020

Uncommitted CPA Housing Trust funds at the end of March: \$464,631

Summary information from monthly non-CPA financial reports for January, February, and March 2020

Linkage payments received by the Trust in February 2020: \$206,397

Linkage payments received by the Trust in March 2020: \$340,050

Inclusionary fractional payments received by the Trust in March 2020: \$177,277

Uncommitted non-CPA Housing Trust funds at the end of March: \$4,866,250

TABLE 1 - SUMMARY OF MONTHLY CLIENT FUND COMMITMENTS, JANUARY THROUGH APRIL 2020								
Source of funds	Agency	Program Name	Funds available on 5/22/20 for client assistance	Spent in Jan	Spent in Feb	Spent in Mar	Spent in April	Contract term
Trust Non-CPA	Just-a-Start	Tenancy Stabilization Program FY20-FY22	\$73,240.14	\$14,624.09	\$4,974.00	\$9,408.71	\$12,401.00	7/1/19-6/30/22
Trust Non-CPA	SHC	Tenancy Stabilization Program FY20-FY22	\$139,929.08	\$197.55	\$2,157.00	\$0.00	\$3,173.00	7/1/19-6/30/22
Trust CPA	CAAS	Housing Stability Fund FY20-FY21	\$24,214.51	\$12,851.48	\$12,553.58	\$17,768.00	\$34,920.49	4/1/19-6/30/21
TOTAL			\$237,383.73	\$27,673.12	\$19,684.58	\$27,176.71	\$50,494.49	
CPA Trust	SHC	CPA PASS Program: A total of \$199,952 of FY20 CPA funds coming under contract for July 1 will allow SHC to serve approximately 6 additional households.						7/1/20--6/30/23

TABLE 2 - CITY FUNDING PROVIDED FOR HOUSING PROGRAMS PRE- AND POST COVID 19

FY20 funds allotted to housing programs (pre-COVID 19):	\$1,470,990
New funds allotted (as of April 27) during COVID 19 response:	\$2,324,215

BREAKDOWN

	FY20 funds allotted (pre-COVID)	New funds allotted during COVID response	Notes
HOME (TBRA)	\$85,000		
ESG	\$217,741	\$750,831	CARES Act
CDBG	\$380,789	\$1,493,384	CARES Act
TRUST NON-CPA	\$360,000		
TRUST CPA	\$377,460		
OHS Flex funds	\$50,000	\$80,000	
Totals	\$1,470,990	\$2,324,215	