

To: Members of the City Council

From: Mayor, City of Medford

Date: June 10, 2024

RE: Recommendation for the Medford Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board of Trustees

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In accordance with the Medford Affordable Housing Trust Fund Ordinance, the Board of Trustees shall be appointed by the Mayor upon approval from the City Council. The Board must consist of seven members, including the Mayor or their designee. The Ordinance stipulates that the initial appointment of trustees must be staggered, with three members serving a one-year term and the remaining four serving a two-year term. Subsequent appointments and re-appointments (except for the Mayor's seat) will be for two-year periods.

The Office of Planning, Development, and Sustainability has received and reviewed applications for the Board of Trustees and has met with applicants to understand their backgrounds and interests in affordable housing.

The Affordable Housing Trust Fund will convene once a month on a Wednesday, with its first meeting to be scheduled in July 2024. The specific date for monthly meetings will be determined after consultation with the Trustees. The Trust may establish a sub-committee or a working group that will meet more frequently to develop an Action Plan for the Trust.

Below are the six recommended candidates with their initial staggered terms:

1. Kayla Lessin (2-year term)

Kayla Lessin is a resident of South Medford and works as an asset manager with a legal background. Kayla has 13 years of experience working for a real estate company that owns mixed-income (market rate and affordable) apartment buildings in the Greater Boston area. Kayla has worked with MassHousing and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulators to manage regulatory compliance. She is well-versed in affordable housing policies and programs initiated by MassHousing, EOHLC (former Department of Housing and Community Development), and MassDevelopment.

2. Roberta Cameron (2-year term)

Roberta Cameron, a Medford Hillside resident, is the Community Preservation Act Manager with the City of Somerville and serves as a chairperson on Medford's Community Preservation Committee. As a former planning consultant, Roberta has 25 years of experience working with Massachusetts cities and towns. Her areas of expertise include affordable housing, economic development, land use, public facilities, and impact assessment. She has also established and advised affordable housing trusts and community preservation committees across the region.

3. Lisa Anne Davidson (2-year term)

Lisa Anne Davidson is a South Medford resident and the Deputy Housing Director with the City of Somerville. In the past, Lisa has served as a Trustee on the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund and as a Director of the Somerville Homeless Coalition. She has created five permanent support housing programs and has worked with the unhoused population for nearly 20 years.

4. Kerri Weaver (1-year term)

Kerri Weaver resides in Glennwood, Medford, and works as a childcare professional. She is passionate about affordable housing and currently lives in an affordable home. Kerri is eager to share her lived experience in affordable homes. She has also assisted the Medford Housing Authority in administering the Family Self-Sufficiency Program for voucher holders.

5. Lisa Sun (1-year term)

Lisa Sun is a South Medford resident and works as an architectural designer specializing in sustainability and affordable housing. She holds a dual master's degree in architecture and urban planning with a focus on Ecological Design. Lisa has worked with local housing authorities to retrofit affordable housing in order to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. She also has experience reviewing development projects and has volunteered at Homeless Outreach and Habitat for Humanity.

6. Penelope Taylor (1-year term)

Penelope Taylor, from Medford Hillside, works at the City of Somerville's Office of Housing Stability as a Program Development, Policy, and Outreach Coordinator. She advocates for low-income clients with housing needs and assesses the effectiveness of housing programs. She serves on the Somerville Residential Anti-Displacement Task Force, researching housing policy suggestions for the city, and has also served on the Union Square Neighborhood Council Board for three terms, focusing on affordable housing.