



JOINT MEETING
HINGHAM AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST &
LINCOLN APARTMENTS, LLC BOARD OF MANAGERS

DATE: Monday, March 9, 2026
TIME: 7:00 PM
PLACE: Remote Meeting via Zoom

Trust Members Present: Elizabeth Cullen
Jack Falvey
Brigid Ryan
Julie Strehle
Mike Sutton

Trust Members Absent: Pam Bates, Cullen McGehee

Staff Present: Jenn Oram, Zoning Administrator/Senior Planner
Donna Thompson, Land Use and Development Coordinator

Lincoln School Apartments Neighbors' Informational Meeting

Call to Order

At 7:04 PM, Chair Falvey called the meeting to order.

Mr. Falvey provided an overview using a Powerpoint presentation concerning the Warrant Article for Town Meeting concerning Lincoln School Apartments. The PowerPoint included the language of the Article as submitted. He outlined the property's urgent capital needs and lack of sufficient funds to address them, and the proposal to ask Town Meeting to authorize but not require the Select Board to dispose of the property to carry out renovations and potential expansion. If approved, the Select Board would issue a request for proposals (RFP) for the Town's conveyance of the property to private ownership via sale or a long-term lease, as well as exploring opportunities to expand the site. A proposed warrant article would require that the property remain affordable housing under a deed restriction. The request for this Town Meeting vote is being made now because recent experience has shown that developers are unlikely to commit the significant resources needed to prepare an RFP response without prior approval from Town Meeting. If Town Meeting approves the article, there would be opportunities for further public input in connection with the RFP process and the Select Board's consideration of the results. After talking through the topics set forth in the PowerPoint presentation, including the advantage that private owners have in being able to access capital sources unavailable to the Town, Mr. Falvey opened the meeting to public comment.

A neighbor questioned why the town is rushing this process to the upcoming April Town Meeting while providing the neighborhood roughly a month's notice. He also requested transparency regarding the current balance sheet and financial status of the Lincoln School Apartments LLC.

Mr. Falvey stated that the annual budget is public and that the LSA Board of Managers is working on getting more precise numbers for all capital needs. He noted there is currently approximately a \$1.3 million capital reserve as of the recent year end, which would be entirely depleted just by addressing the necessary building envelope repairs that are the first priority.

A neighbor questioned why the town is willing to spend \$30 million on a new senior center but will not commit \$5 million to improve existing senior housing. She expressed concern that transferring the property to a private developer would result in a loss of control over the building's atmosphere and functionality. Mr. Falvey explained that running residential affordable housing is a significantly different administrative and financial burden than a senior center. He noted that private developers have access to financing mechanisms like low-income housing tax credits that municipalities cannot access for renovations or expansion.

Another neighbor expressed concern about rushing the project to town meeting and asked for clarification on whether selling the property legally requires a town meeting vote. Mr. Falvey confirmed that a town meeting vote is required for any disposition of town-owned property.

A neighbor questioned the financing advantages of a private developer, suggesting that the terms of municipal bonds might provide a similar benefit to tax credits. Brigid Ryan of the AHT explained that rehabilitation projects typically benefit from a combination of low-income housing tax credits and bond financing. She emphasized that even with these tools, the financial margins on these sorts of transactions are very tight.

A neighbor expressed skepticism about the project being a "defensive" move to stay compliant with 40B. He mentioned concerns about similar developments in other towns like Lexington. Mr. Falvey acknowledged the neighbors' concerns given the uncertainty of what would be proposed, but suggested that a proportional expansion could preserve a portion of the green space while providing approximately 30 more affordable units. He noted that at the 1979 Town Meeting a neighbor argued that the proposal at that time to expand for conversion to affordable housing would saddle the neighborhood with a monster, but that the resulting building but is now considered a beautiful asset.

A neighbor expressed concern about a sale given that if the town were to fall below the 40B affordable housing threshold by the time a sale occurs—potentially two or three years down the road—a private developer could build with far fewer restrictions. Although she said would support expanding the Lincoln School Apartments under town ownership, she does not want the Town to lose oversight and is troubled by the speed of the process. She said that the neighborhood is only now receiving information, yet the Select Board is scheduled to vote the very next night. Her broader worry is that if 40B compliance is lost in the future, all assurances about open space or development limits could become meaningless, leaving the future of the property uncertain.

Julie Strehle stated that the Town would look into the legal options for adding protections or restrictions that could prevent unwanted development if the property were ever sold. Mr. Falvey said that zoning would still provide at least one layer of control over what a developer could do. He said they will explore what additional safeguards might be possible and notes that the Select

Board's upcoming vote is only an early step in the process—essentially just moving the matter to the Advisory Committee for its further review.

Another neighbor asked for access to documents, including reports from consultant interviews held the previous fall that had been mentioned and asked if there was a dedicated town website where these materials were posted. She was advised that relevant materials are posted on the AHT's webpage. The neighbor also expressed concerns that it was important that the property be restricted to senior affordable housing.

Mr. Falvey indicated the town would continue to provide information as the exploratory process continues. Ms. Strehle commented that the Warrant Article, as presented, will be discussed by the Select Board tomorrow night and by Advisory Committee at a later date. Refinements, including restrictions assuring senior affordable housing, can be written into the Advisory Committee recommended motion

A neighbor spoke in support of moving the process forward to the Select Board and Town Meeting. She noted that real estate development is a multi-year process and that delaying would miss an opportunity to proactively manage a unique town asset.

A neighbor expressed concern regarding the potential scale of the expansion and the resulting impact on traffic and parking. He noted that the neighborhood already experiences significant issues with double-parking near the Hingham Armory. Mr. Falvey acknowledged the importance of considering traffic and parking impacts.

Another neighbor expressed an emotional attachment to the property, where she used to take her children to the playground. She fears that a large, ugly structure being built in its place..

Matthew Dillis, a four year member of the LSA Board of Managers and a civil engineer, emphasized the growing urgency of the property's capital needs and the limitations of the current funding structure. He explained that over the years the Board of Managers has been forced to undertake only the most essential repairs given limited funds, even as major systems—such as the roof, heating and cooling, and accessibility features—are aging and increasingly inadequate for long term resident comfort. He noted that although the buildings may appear solid from the outside, persistent water intrusion and other structural issues require ongoing attention that cannot be sustainably managed through small, periodic requests to the town. He noted his personal commitment to the residents who he had worked with over the years, and feels responsible for ensuring their long term well-being. He stressed that the scale of the needed improvements goes beyond what can be handled through one-off funding requests and urged a more comprehensive, reliable solution to protect the property and its residents into the future.

Mr. Falvey noted that one of the urgent needs driving the project is the fact that the current building has only one elevator, which leaves residents on upper floors stranded when it breaks down, as it had again recently. He emphasized that an expansion would allow for the installation of a second elevator, which is a critical safety and quality-of-life issue.

Adjournment

MOTION:	M. Sutton moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 PM.
SECONDED:	B. Ryan
ROLL CALL VOTE:	P. Bates, aye; E. Cullen, aye; B. Ryan, aye; J. Strehle, aye; J. Falvey, aye.
MOTION CARRIES:	5-0

Sale, Lease or Conveyance of 86 Central Street

ARTICLE ____: Will the Town authorize, but not require, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 40, § 3, c. 40, § 15A and Article 5A, Section 4A of the Town of Hingham General By-laws and all other applicable laws, the Select Board to sell, lease or otherwise convey the property, with all buildings thereon, located at 86 Central Street, Hingham, MA, for community housing purposes as defined in M.G.L. c. 44B, § 2 and to authorize the Select Board to impose an Affordable Housing Restriction on said property under M.G.L. c. 184, §§ 31-33 to be held by a qualified governmental body or by a qualified charitable corporation or trust and which the Select Board is hereby authorized to approve and/or accept, all on such terms and conditions as the Select Board deems in the best interest of the Town, and provided further that the proceeds from any such sale shall be applied first to any outstanding indebtedness for the property under M.G.L. c. 44, § 63, or act on anything relating thereto?

(Inserted by the Select Board)