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

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

Board Members Present: Elizabeth Cullen
Jack Falvey
Matt Dillis

Board Members Absent: Connor Fallon, Ben Jarvis

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

Call to Order

At 7:05 PM, Board of Managers Chair Elizabeth Cullen called the meeting to order and read the open meeting law statement.

Attend Lincoln School Apartments Neighborhood Informational Meeting

Hingham Affordable Housing Trust Chair Falvey and Board of Managers member, Jack Falvey, provided an overview of the background information on Lincoln School Apartments at 86 Central Street. He outlined the property's urgent capital needs and presented proposed plans for renovation and potential expansion. These plans include issuing a request for proposals (RFP) for private ownership or a long-term lease, as well as exploring opportunities to expand the site. A proposed warrant article for the April Town Meeting would authorize—but not require—the Select Board to sell or lease the property, with the condition that it remain affordable housing under a deed restriction. The request for this vote is being made now because developers are unlikely to commit the significant resources needed to prepare an RFP response without prior approval from Town Meeting.

Chair Falvey opened the meeting to public comment.

Marco Boer, 33 Elm Street, questioned why the town is rushing this process to the upcoming April Town Meeting without providing the neighborhood more than a month's notice. He also requested transparency regarding the current balance sheet and financial status of the Lincoln School Apartments LLC. Chair Falvey clarified that the annual budget is public and that the town is working on getting more precise numbers for near-term capital needs. He noted there is currently a $1.2 million capital reserve, but that it would be entirely depleted just by addressing the necessary building envelope repairs.

Alison Ferrante, 19 Elm Street, 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. Chair 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.

JoAnne Blakey, 29 Elm Street, expressed concern about "rushing" the project to town meeting and asked for clarification on whether selling the property legally requires a town meeting vote. Chair Falvey confirmed that a town meeting vote is legally required for any disposition of town-owned property.

Jim Blakey, 29 Elm Street, questioned the financing advantages of a private developer, suggesting that municipal bonds might "wash out" any benefit from tax credits. B. Ryan 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 "skinny deals" are very tight.

Neil Hernberg, 24 Elm Street, expressed skepticism about the project being a "defensive" move to stay compliant with 40B, calling it "offensive" from the neighbors' perspective. He mentioned concerns about similar developments in other towns like Lexington. Chair Falvey acknowledged the neighbors' concerns about the unknown but argued that a proportional expansion could preserve green space while providing 30 more affordable units. He noted that the original building was also once called a "monster" by neighbors in 1979 but is now considered a beautiful asset to the neighborhood.

Alison Ferrante, 19 Elm Street, expressed concern about the Town's plan to consider selling a property in her neighborhood, particularly because if the town falls below the 40B affordable housing threshold by the time a sale occurs—potentially around 2028—a private developer could build with far fewer restrictions, leaving residents with no control over what ultimately happens on the site. Although she said she strongly supports affordable housing and even favors 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, which she finds unsettling. Her broader worry is that if 40B compliance is lost before the Corcoran contract expires, all assurances about open space or development limits could become meaningless, leaving the future of the property uncertain.

J. Strehle committed to looking into the legal options for adding protections or restrictions that could prevent unwanted development if the property were ever sold. J. Falvey said that zoning would still provide at least one layer of control over what a developer could do. He says 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 further review.

Monica Conyngham, 77 Central Street, asked for access to documents, including reports from consultant interviews held the previous fall. She also asked if there was a dedicated town website where these materials were posted and expressed concerns that the property be restricted to senior affordable housing.

Chair Falvey indicated the town is working on providing information and transparency as the exploratory process continues. J. Strehle commented that the Warrant Article, as presented, will be discussed by the Select Board tomorrow night and also by Advisory Committee at a later date. Refinements, including restrictions for senior affordable housing, can be written into the Advisory Committee recommended motion.

Adjournment

Chair E. Cullen left the meeting at 8:42 PM and the Lincoln School Apartments Board of Managers meeting was adjourned due to lack of quorum.

Minutes for the remainder of the meeting are available from the Affordable Housing Trust.

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)