

# **News Articles FY 2014**

**July 1 – June 30**

# Board rejects land bid, votes to list property anew

By Kendall Hatch  
Daily News Staff

MARLBOROUGH - The cash-strapped Community Development Authority voted Thursday morning to reject a \$400,000 offer for a piece of public land on Winter Street and then voted to list the property again.

The board voted last month to list the 2.1-acre parcel at the rear of Stevens Park for the appraised value of \$175,000, with the understanding it would only accept an offer that came in significantly higher.

The board only received one bid, for \$400,000, although board members said on Thursday they were rejecting the bid for a few different reasons.

First, authority members said they wanted to get more money for the parcel. Although the formal appraisal came in at \$175,000, a real estate broker estimated the property value closer to \$800,000, board member Joyce Torelli said this spring. Board members at the time said they were hoping for some amount that fell somewhere in the middle of those two numbers.

The board voted in April to list the property on the Multiple Listing Service as an "entry only listing," in which a listing agent merely places the property in the system but does not provide any other service.

Vigeant said on Thursday he never signed off on the entry only listing because he felt that there "were too many conflicts." He said the same broker who gave the \$800,000 valuation to the property was involved in the deal, and that although the deal was sound, it could have the appearance of a conflict of interest.

Member Stephen LeDuc said that listing the property on the MLS would have opened the property up to other brokers and the city could have received other bids.

Additionally, Vigeant referenced an apparent Open Meeting Law violation by the board ahead of Thursday's meeting, in which board members discussed the sale in an email thread. In a phone interview after Thursday's meeting, Vigeant said the violation, which consisted of a few exchanges, was unintentional and was stopped when other members realized the communication

was illegal.

"It got a little messy," he said. "It was completely unintentional."

The board voted on Thursday to reject the bid and start the process over again, although Vigeant said he was opposed to restarting the process.

The board voted, with Vigeant in opposition, to declare the property as eligible for disposition, to set a minimum price of \$450,000 and to do a full listing on MLS, with a commission capped at 4 percent. The only vote Vigeant took in the affirmative regarding the property was a vote to carry over deed restrictions on the property.

The board, which is strapped for cash, is trying to sell the property to bring in cash in order to fund its operations. The board voted later in the meeting to continue to pay Finance Manager Anne Marie Blake on a full-time basis only until the end of July. She will then be offered a 25-hour-per-week position until the end of December.

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LIBERTY HILL APARTMENTS

# Ernest R. Holt Courtyard rededication

**T**he Liberty Hill Apartments Grand Reopening and Rededication of the Ernest R. Holt Courtyard was held July 22 at 240 Main St. After a year of being closed, the Courtyard renovations were completed and a celebration for its grand re-opening and re-dedication was held. At this time, the late Ernest R. Holt, the first executive director of Marlborough Public Housing and the Marlborough Community Development Association, was honored by naming the Courtyard in his honor.



This plaque, honoring Ernest Holt, hangs in the courtyard of the Liberty Hill Apartments at 240 Main St.



The late Ernie R. Holt was represented at the Liberty Hill Apartments Grand Reopening and Rededication by his son and three daughters as well as other members of his family. In the photo, from left, are Mary Saltus, daughter; Judy Ryan, daughter; Jim Holt, son; Patty Cumming, daughter; Jaimie (Holt) Goliger, granddaughter; and William Goliger, great grandson. The Courtyard at 240 Main St. was named in Holt's honor. WICKED LOCAL PHOTOS / MARY WENZEL



PHOTO: RICHARD CYGAN

### New courtyard opens

The grand opening of the newly renovated courtyard at Liberty Hill Apartments was celebrated last week. The courtyard, which is adjacent to the senior center, was named in honor of Ernest Holt, the first executive director of Marlborough Public Housing.

Shown in picture, James Holt, speaking on behalf of his family, thanked all who attended the rededication ceremony and those instrumental in planning the event honoring his father. See story above for more details.

Main Street Journal

Aug 2, 2014

# LOCAL NEWS

MARLBOROUGH: ELDERLY HOUSING COMPLEX

Daily News

Fri, April 25 2014

## Grant could supply new heating/cooling systems

By Kendall Hatch  
Daily News Staff

### MARLBOROUGH

— The Community Development Authority on Thursday morning gave its tentative approval to a grant program that would pay for new energy efficient heating and cooling systems for some residents at a Bolton Street elderly housing complex.

The CDA voted unanimously to accept the grant during its meeting Thursday morning, although the acceptance hinged on

Public Works Commissioner John Ghiloni signing off on the program.

The grant, from Action for Boston Community Development, or ABCD for short, would pay for the installation of 30 air-source heat pumps at the Bolton Street complex, or enough pumps to outfit half of the units there.

Bruce Ledgerwood of ABCD told the board that the units use technology that takes heat from the air, compresses it and pumps it into an apartment for heat during the winter. In the

summer, the process works in reverse, taking heat out of the air inside and pumping it outside.

The project, which is being supported by the state Department of Housing and Community Development, could reap about \$9,000 in energy savings each year, according to a report by Marlborough Housing Director Douglas Bushman. Ledgerwood said that the pumps are three to four times as efficient for heat as baseboard heaters, like the type currently at Bolton Street, as well as three to

four times as efficient at cooling as a window air conditioner.

Ledgerwood told the board that ABCD is also working with housing authorities in other communities, like Southbridge, Cambridge and Newton, to install and test the units, although Marlborough would receive the highest number of them.

The units on Bolton Street would come from two separate manufacturers — Mitsubishi and Fujitsu, Ledgerwood said. He said that the units — there would

be 15 of each — are similar in appearance and function. He said the ABCD wants to use Marlborough to test the models against each other.

To go along with the upgrades, the DHCD has also moved money to pay to replace outdated utility boxes at Bolton Street.

Board member Lynn Faust said she had some concerns with the reliability of the new technology, a concern echoed by Mayor Arthur Vigeant.

"We have new technology in (City Hall) and it's fair at best," Vigeant said.

Ledgerwood said that the work wouldn't include the removal of the old heating systems, which could be easily reconnected later.

The board voted to approve the grant, but members hinged the approval on a sign-off from Ghiloni, who they wanted to confirm the viability and reliability of the units.

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# LOCAL NEWS



## Right on "Target"

A group of employees from Target in Marlborough gathered at the Pleasant Street Senior Housing Community last week to provide upgrades to living conditions for residents. Among those in the work party, headed by Douglas Bushman, Marlborough Housing Director, were (l-r) Cyé Cygan and Mary Ryan seated; and standing, Housing Board member Sally Swartz, Jeff Campbell, Melissa Skinner, Kristen Heath, Dustin Webb, Target team leader Heather Anderson, Barbara McGuire, Shayla Zanni Thatch, and Douglas Bushman.

# Section 8 audit leads to eviction attempts

By **Kendall Hatch**  
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**MARLBOROUGH** — The Marlborough Housing Authority is attempting to terminate section 8 housing certificates for a handful of tenants who have violated the terms of their Section 8 agreements, Housing Director Douglas Bushman said last week.

Bushman told the Community Development Authority last Thursday that the Housing Authority was holding hearings on some Section 8

vouchers to try to take them away from tenants who have a criminal background, had unauthorized people living in their apartments or violated the terms of the Section 8 agreement in some other way.

The move comes after an in-depth audit of the city's Section 8 program, he said.

With a ten-year waiting list for the units, Bushman said the department is trying to make sure that the vouchers go to the many people in need on the waiting list who truly qualify for the program.

Complicating the issue is the fact that the department doesn't have the cash on hand to adequately fight back if a tenant being kicked off the Section 8 rolls for a violation appeals the eviction.

Bushman said last week that one tenant has already surrendered his Section 8 voucher and said the housing authority is in the process of holding hearings on a few more vouchers.

He said on Wednesday that the authority held one hearing on Friday and two more this week. He said

three more will be held in February. Bushman said that if the authority moves to revoke a tenant's certificate, the tenant can appeal the decision to the district court. Fighting against that appeal requires money for legal fees, but Bushman said that there isn't any wiggle room in the budget to pay for attorneys. One appeal last year cost the Community Development \$6,000 in legal fees, he said.

"If we go into regular court as in last year, the cost could be significant to" the Community Development

Authority, Bushman told the CDA board members last week. "We simply don't have the money."

Bushman said that officials were trying to figure out how the CDA can afford to defend its positions if a tenant who is kicked out decides to hire a lawyer and take the case to court. He said that CDA member Lynn Faust suggested bringing on law school interns who are capable of doing some legal work in an effort to get cheap legal work done.

Bushman said that he will be looking into the suggestion.