



BOSTON CITY COUNCIL

Committee on Housing and Community Development

Liz Breadon, *Chair*

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REPORT OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

October 21, 2024

Dear Councilors:

The Committee on Housing and Community Development was referred the following docket for consideration:

Docket #1165, Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of Seventy-Five Million Dollars (\$75,000,000.00) in the form of a grant, for the Commonwealth Builder Program, awarded by the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency to be administered by the Mayor's Office of Housing. The grant will fund the creation of workforce homeownership housing units and the long-term availability of those units to eligible moderate-income households.

This matter was sponsored by Mayor Wu and was referred to the Committee on August 7, 2024. A virtual public hearing was held remotely via Zoom on Friday, October 18, 2024.

Two speakers representing the City of Boston Mayor's Office of Housing (MOH) discussed the docket before the Committee: Mr. Rick Wilson, Director of Administration and Finance, and Ms. Christine O'Keefe, Director of Neighborhood Housing. Mr. Wilson and Ms. O'Keefe briefed the Committee on the background of the Commonwealth Builder (CWB) Fund and provided an overview of MOH's anticipated use of the funds. A summary of their presentation follows.

The Commonwealth Builder (CWB) program, administered by MassHousing, supports moderate-income homeownership by providing grants and forgivable subordinate construction loans to eligible projects offering deed-restricted affordable homeownership units for households earning up to 100% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

Pursuant to a Grant Agreement between the two agencies, MassHousing and MOH coordinate on awarding CWB funds to projects, and MOH administers the funds along with its other housing development sources. MOH takes the lead on the project once a commitment letter has been issued, including disbursement of funds, construction monitoring, and ongoing compliance.

In 2021, MassHousing awarded \$25 million in CWB funding to the City of Boston for eligible projects (Docket #0953, approved by the City Council on September 22, 2021). An additional \$25 million was awarded in 2023 (Docket #1375, approved on September 27, 2023), bringing the total grant to \$50 million. This funding has supported the creation of 299 homeownership units across the City. A summary of the funded projects is provided on the following page.

MassHousing has since awarded the City another \$50 million, increasing the cumulative CWB funding to \$100 million. MOH anticipates that this additional funding will support the production of at least 300 more affordable homeownership units.

CommonWealth Builder Fund (CWB) Projects Funded to Date			
270 Talbot Avenue	\$4,700,000	18 units	Dorchester (61)
405 Washington Street	\$1,950,000	13 units	
120-122 Hancock Street	\$2,358,000	15 units	
Norfolk Scattered Sites	\$2,886,940	15 units	
127-159 Condor Street	\$1,562,185	7 units	East Boston (7)
SAIGE at Fountain Hill	\$5,000,000	40 units	Jamaica Plain (85)
Stonley-Brookley	\$10,000,000	45 units	
872 Morton Street	\$1,800,000	12 units	Mattapan (122)
Blue Hill Ave Sites	\$8,000,000	30 units	
The Preserve at Olmsted	\$7,700,000	80 units	
PLAN Nubian	\$1,200,000	12 units	Roxbury (24)
24 Westminster Innovation	\$3,436,047	12 units	
Total	\$50,593,172	299 units	Citywide

Summary of Legislation

Passage of Docket #1165 by the City Council, in accordance with section 53A of chapter 44 of the Massachusetts General Laws, would authorize the City of Boston to accept and expend Commonwealth Builder Funds awarded by the Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency to the Mayor's Office of Housing. These funds would support the creation of workforce homeownership housing units and ensure their long-term availability to eligible moderate-income households.

Summary of Changes

During the public hearing, it was explained to the Committee that the docket was initially submitted with an incorrect grant amount of "Seventy-Five Million Dollars (\$75,000,000.00)" due to a clerical error. As discussed at the hearing and noted on the previous page, the correct grant amount presented for City Council acceptance is "Fifty Million Dollars (\$50,000,000.00)." A new draft of the docket reflecting this amount has been prepared and accompanies this report.

Committee Chair Recommended Action

As Chair of the Committee on Housing and Community Development, I recommend moving the listed docket from the Committee to the full Council for discussion and formal action. At that time, my recommendation to the full Council will be that this matter **OUGHT TO PASS IN A NEW DRAFT.**

For the Committee:



Liz Breadon, Chair

Committee on Housing and Community Development