

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING APPROVED

Councilors also gave conceptual approved to a proposal by Midcoast Maine Housing Coalition to develop a transitional housing facility on the ground level of the Methodist Church on Mill Lane.

MMHC first made the proposal at the council's Dec. 21, 2024, meeting — seeking to develop the facility for three or four families who were experiencing housing insecurity. The group is partnering with Waldo County Action Partners and the Greater Bay Area Ministerium on the project.

When MMHC first proposed the project on Jan. 7, councilors were supportive but cautioned the group that the proposal lacked several specifics that would be required by the Planning Board.

The proposal would also require an ordinance change, as the current ordinance does not allow transitional housing in that part of Belfast.

MMHC Chair Kathy Muzzy told the council that MMHC representatives met with the Planning and Codes Director Bub Fournier and Councilor Mary Mortier on Jan. 8 to work through most of what the council required.

On Jan. 21, several representatives from MMHC updated councilors on most of the missing elements.

“The commitment that has been put forward by this group, the changes they have made; and the professionalism of their presentation says a lot about them,” Mortier said.

Still, more will be required. The council voted unanimously to send the proposal back to the Planning Board to draft an ordinance amendment that would allow the project as “special use.”

“There is absolutely no doubt that the council is going to support this proposal,” said Councilor Neal Harkness. “Let's not dilly-dally on this. Let's get this done.”