

**Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Affordable Housing Committee, Town of Oak Bluffs, held on Tue Feb 15<sup>th</sup> 2022 at 5pm.**

**Present:**

K. Mark Leonard, Chair  
Jim Bishop, Vice.Chair  
Peter Bradford  
Mark Crossland, Planning Board  
Katherine Donahue

**Absent:**

Garri Saganenko

**Attending:**

Phil Cordella  
Matrice Kirk  
Maura McGroarty  
Carole Lee

**1.Call to order**

Chair Mark Leonard called the meeting to order at 5.05 pm.

**2. Minutes of the last meeting of Feb 1<sup>st</sup> 2022**

Were approved as presented, as proposed by Katie Donahue, seconded by Mark Crossland and subsequently approved of by all members present.

**3. Updates from the AHC Chair**

- i. Chair has been working with Mark Crossland on the Southern Tier project; wastewater management is a major issue; IHT is working with MVC of the requirements; Chair also attended a CWMP meeting with Gail Barmakian, the Board of Health's Tom Zinno, IHT, and IA, over requirements that KleenTu needs to meet; KleenTu is certified for less than required, so adjustments have to be made accordingly; Mark Crossland is setting up a further meeting with CWMP to address these concerns on Feb 23<sup>rd</sup>, you all will get invitations and are welcome.
- ii. Habitat for Humanity has its Eastville permits; once it gets contractors scheduled, work will begin.

**4. Veterans Housing**

- 4.1 Chair did a screen share showing the Veterans Housing project's plot location and the surrounding Jessica Lane area, with credit to Phil for the diagram showing the subdivision, and summarized events thus far; the Lot of 4.7 acres had been identified as suitable for Affordable Housing and was approved by the Special Town Meeting of Fall 2021; it will have Veterans housing in the front section, and the back half project will be decided later; AHC intends a building in character with neighborhood design; Chair stated that discussion tonight on this item is about the front half of the property, the entrance to it, and the make-up and design of the Veterans Home.
- 4.2 Jessica Lane falls within the subdivision, map of which Phil kindly provided; having abutters give feedback about possible use is important to us; an easement or an agreement of shared use could resolve this; the Town's Highway Department is not in favor of a curb cut, but has tentatively agreed to

maintain the road in exchange for its use; so, our first task is to discover what our abutters think of possibilities: should we consider building a road beginning some 50 feet in from Jessica Lane? we expect to build 2 homes with each housing 5 veterans; we intend to keep the buildings in the center of the property, with a single main entrance to serve both homes.

4.3 Jim: we'll keep the entrance up front, away from the property lines, and have fast growing cypress plantings to provide screens; further, being up front, it will be easier for the Veterans to get to the bus stop, we'll have more open space towards the rear of the property, and it will be easier to deal with any wastewater issues with MVC that come up. Jim will be working with the local Veterans Association building committee and the Mass State Veterans Group from the Cape & Islands; while the Town will retain ownership, the Veteran's Association will handle all building costs at no expense to the Town; parking areas? the only possible issue will be with the MVC on the nitrogen load. Jim also invited responses from Matrice Kirk, abutter.

4.4 Pete: has spoken with Chris Alley of Schoefield & Barbini et al; Chris thinks that two 5 bedroom houses will maximize the nitrogen capacity load permissible to 4.7 acres; this makes further development a question; MVC's policy is based on the number of units, and as Chris says it, at 1 unit per 2 acres.

Chair: is that assumption with a Title V or with an IA system?

Pete: that's based on their Sengekontacket area policy, and it's based on the number of units, not the number of bedrooms.

Matrice: I had a couple of questions, and I heard about a possible resource center there as well?

Chair: this is supportive housing, with supportive services offered by the VA, like a resource center for counselling and classes; it will not have an office for full-time administrative staff.

Matrice: the facilities will be, structurally, apartments or homes?

Chair: they are intended to be independent apartments; but the external façade will be that of a 5 bedroom sized house with a single entrance; no separate entrances on the outside.

Matrice: will it be a single or a 2 story building?

Chair: more likely it will be a 2 story building.

Pete: I thought we were talking about having a 5 bedroom building with a common area, and not individual apartments? That would make for 10 units and would probably not qualify for MVC nitrogen policy approval.

Chair: the original intent was to have a 5 bedroom building with a common area, but because of the concerns of the Cape & Islands Veterans Outreach Association over Veterans needing individual space, it has morphed into an individual space concept, each with its own small kitchen and bath.

Pete: We'll need to find out if that will meet MVC's nitrogen guidelines.

Jim: agreed; the Veterans Group will keep an eye on what's acceptable to MVC; with no individual kitchens, it would cost less; all we want is housing for 10 veterans – clean, comfortable, code compliant and environmentally correct; the most transparency possible for the project, and the least amount of pushback; and we hope to have a team leader for each building to keep track of the folk there; and on the building committee, there's myself, Mr Peters, Tom Perkins, and we still need one more person.

Chair: would Jim and Peter take the lead on the wastewater issue on this project? Both are agreeable.

Pete: we just need to get the Veterans on board to work with MVC.

Matrice: I have spoken with some of the homeowners about the use of Jessica Lane, and there are concerns about increased traffic if we allow use for the new project; I live towards the end of it, and it's used often enough as a turnaround, as is.

Chair: hence the idea of a cut in, to get the traffic out of Jessica Lane quickly.

Matrice: and the Town is not in favor of another curb cut?

Chair: if we need to, we'll have to work through it.

Matrice: we don't want it paved.

Chair: the idea is to keep the road stable, no potholes, ploughed in winter; and we are happy to discuss this further.

Jim: we want to make sure the entry road is set as far away as possible from the housing, with sufficient tree plantings done to block sound; and we need a representative from Quantapog, to help keep everything transparent.

Matrice: I'm willing to participate as needed.

Jim: it's really important to have an abutters presence; it will help us make the right decisions and give us an ongoing understanding of what's important to you all.

Carol: I will ask folk on the other side of Quantapog.

Pete: we could have the driveway run perpendicular to Jessica Lane.

Chair: what we are trying to do here is streamline the needed process, decide what's needed, and what we can do – a curb cut, an added lane; and on the other side, what can be handled on wastewater issues; the IA system has a flexibility that needs to be explored and confirmed.

Matrice: if we can speak offline we can continue the conversation.

Chair: certainly; continuing the dialogue is important, and we're happy to do so. Other comments? If not. We'll move on.

## **5. Housing Compliance**

Chair: the issue here is one of compliance with zoning demarcation; we have Mark Crossland here, and so on the lamp post issue, do we need a letter to the Selectboard, and MVC, and the Planning Board?

Jim: it has to do with trying for a modification after the fact; makes the approving party look like a joke! Like getting someone an Affordable Housing unit, and then watching them rent it out the next summer! If nothing else, we need a letter voicing our opinion on it!

Chair: and who deals with compliance?

Pete: the building inspector!

Chair: but it's not necessarily what the building inspector says that goes...

Pete: we should work from the AH Committee to the Selectboard and then to the Commission; since this has to do with workforce housing, it is not within our purview; MVC probably won't allow the modification; but to take a position, AHC must refer first to the Selectboard.

M. Crossland: AHC should send a letter to the Selectboard in support of the original plan.

Pete: I'll second that.

Chair: we have a motion on the floor, requesting that MVC not allow modification on the lamp post issue.

M. Crossland: AHC should also send both a Committee letter and letters from each individual member.

Chair calls for a formal vote, which is taken with all members in favor.

Chair: I will draft the resolution and email to members.

Next, on to the issue of accessory apartments, and year-round versus summer rentals; the question here is, how to enforce an auxiliary rental policy?

Jim: those on a B & B plan will show up; they are held responsible to both Town and Mass State; some even do on site visits.

Phil Cordella: 5 -6 yrs ago, Chilmark had an Accessory Unit Law?

Chair: West Tisbury did the same to make sure that family members were in.

Pete: we're talking accessory units as being only year-round?

Chair: correct.

Pete: note that by Law, accessory units must be "attached" and not 'stand-alone'. Problem then becomes that not all homeowners want year-round folk.

Chair: even simple changes can have 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> order effects. effective.

M. Crossland: it's been a 3 yr process thus far, it's not cut and dried.

Pete: is the Zoning Committee against guest houses?

M Crossland: yes, but it also depends on location, watershed.

Chair: Without further discussion? Let's move on.

## **6. Member Updates**

Jim: have revised the numbers for the Noyes project; cost is estimated now at 148K; it might end up being more; Melissa will need to get the RFP out.

Chair: to Jim: please get this information to Melissa Vincent asap. Jim: ok.

Jim: also, I've been approved to run for the Selectboard; just an fyi.

Pete: I talked with Chris Alley about the nitrogen credits transfer from the doughnut hole to Bellevue; can we place this on next meetings agenda? Process would be that AHC goes to the Selectboard with the nitrogen credits transfer request; Selectboard reaches out to the Land Bank, and requests approval; once approved, swop can go ahead. It will provide for 24 bedrooms, including the Jessica Lane numbers.

Chair: I've made notes. Any further updates? No further updates.

## **6. Public Comments**

Carol: requests information about the scope of the Veteran's Association project. Jim responds with a historical summary.

No further public comment.

## **7. Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair sought a motion to adjourn, so proposed by Jim Bishop, seconded by Pete Bradford, and approved of by all members present. Chair Mark Leonard then declared the meeting adjourned.

R G Eli, Secretary  
Affordable Housing Committee

Town of Oak Bluffs