

Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Affordable Housing Committee, Town of Oak Bluffs, held on Tue Mar 1st 2022 at 5 pm.

Present:

K. Mark Leonard, Chair
Peter Bradford
Katherine Donahue

Absent:

Jim Bishop
Mark Crossland, Planning Board
Garri Saganenko

Attending:

Phil Cordella
Laura Silber CCMVHB
Juliet Fay CCMVHB
Elaine Miller
Juliet Mulinare
Matrice Ellis-Kirk
Emma Green-Beach, Selectboard

1. Call to Order

Chair Mark Leonard called the meeting to order at 5.05 pm once a quorum of members present was reached.

2. Minutes of the last Meeting of Feb 15th 2022

At the request of Peter Bradford, Chair agreed to confirm the Minutes of the last meeting at the next AHC meeting.

3. Chair's Updates

3.1 On the progress of the Southern Tier project, there had been meetings with the CWMP and the MVC, towards developing a better handle on wastewater requirements.

3.2 Chair mentioned the access road from Vineyard Haven/Edgartown Road leading into Southern Tier – should it be a Town Road or a Developer's Road? Peter thought this should be referred to Counsel; Chair felt that a recommendation from AHC would be helpful as there are questions to be worked through that would help identify and demarcate essential issues here.

3.3 on the lamp post issue, Chair had written to the Selectboard as AHC voted to do, and the matter might be on the Agenda for their Mar 8th meeting; our letter was copied to the Planning Board, which has endorsed it and holds that there should be no changes to the DRI and the plan for workforce housing should be retained; Chair also attended the pre-public meeting with MVC at which the owner brought in a new proposal to modify the DRI with market rate housing; the public MVC meeting for this will be on Mar 17th.

4. The Housing Bank Warrant Article

4.1 Chair noted that supporting documentation on the article and its new version had been sent to all committee members, Chair gave the meeting over to Laura Silber and Juliet Fay.

4.2 Laura noted that revisions to the Warrant Article had resulted from questions and concerns raised during the CCMVHB's numerous presentations, and for AHC, in response to questions Jim and Peter had asked. There have been multiple meetings in all 6 Towns, with Selectboards, Planning Boards, Affordable Housing Committees of each; 4 out of 6 Towns must approve the Warrant Article at their 2022 Spring Town Meeting; the process now moves on to non-binding (ie not adopted) ballot votes; once the Act passes Legislation, there would be a 2nd ballot vote.

4.3 Chair: The Article, as presented to the Town's April 2022 Meeting, will not be binding until Legislation approves it; it would then return to the Town for a second vote?

Laura: Yes, for a formal vote in all member Towns; not necessarily at Town Meeting; the first ballot is non-binding because the Legislation would still be in process; once passed, the Article will need a formal ballot vote of confirmation. Laura then proceeded to take the Meeting through each section of the Summary of the Warrant Article & Legislation, touching on specific areas that reflected changes.

4.4 Phil Cordello: would Housing Bank meetings be recorded? He noted that the Land Bank does not record its meetings.

Laura: we are the coalition to create the Housing Bank and not the Housing Bank itself; however, the Housing Bank would be committed to maintaining a recorded record; but the actual decisions would fall to the elected leadership of the Housing Bank; nevertheless, the Housing Bank is structured but not modeled on the Land Bank, and she expected that it would be so.

4.5 On point 3 of the Fees & Expenses section, Laura asked Julie to comment on withdrawal and exit from the Housing Bank, and the issue of bonding debt service in response to questions Jim had previously raised. Julie noted that under this clause, the restriction would allow Towns to exit the Housing Bank within a year or two, if they so wished; by comparison, the Land Bank has no such restriction, and so more than 50% of its revenue goes towards debt servicing; these changes had been made in response to concerns raised.

4.6 Chair: If you have a house bought with Housing Bank funding, now valued at over a million, and its sold; would you still have to pay the 2% despite the perpetual restriction?

Laura noted that you would not have to; that was part of the program's intention; so that the price could be held down.

4.7 Peter: the Land Bank has a waiver for property transfer between family members; and the Housing Bank?

Laura referred this to Julie; response is that 'yes, this can be done with the Housing Bank per a transfer without consideration.

4.8 Katie: Does the exemption apply to first time home buyers?

Laura: Yes, it does; and it will stay that way for a bit; it will probably be some 2 years at least before we look at possible changes; and then we will need to look at threshold appropriate levels.

4.9 on the 'sunset' clause – Laura noted that membership will auto-expire after 30 years;

4.10 Chair noted the advantages of the Housing Bank for AHC's work, given that AHC's housing Trust has no funding stream.

4.11 Laura summed up, emphasizing that formal support is needed from AHC; its support thus far is most appreciated; but the need now is to reach State Legislation.

4.12 Chair indicated that this would go back to the full committee.

4.13 Katie: and limits for Towns not involved and not participating?

Laura responded that Towns not participating could not seek help from the Housing Bank. But they could opt in after the fact.

4.14 Pete: AHC would need to seek direction from the Selectboard first; Pete also reported that he had been approached by some Selectmen who had said that AHC had not been working through the Selectboard.

4.15. Comment from Chair: it'll go to the Agenda for our next meeting, scheduled for Mar 15th, but Chair is traveling then; meeting will prob. Be in April, since Chair will be away for the date of the next March meeting; if need be, Chair will try for a meeting as soon as he returns to the Vineyard. Laura noted that she would be happy to come back and answer questions from the full Committee.

5. Land Bank Nitrogen Credits transfer

Chair turned to Peter for updates on this.

Peter reported having spoken with Chris Alley of Schofield & Barbini; the nitrogen credits transferable from the doughnut hole would allow AHC to provide for 24 bedrooms, possibly in the Bellevue and Grovedale properties; ... *Pete's comments at this point were lost because of reduced signal bandwidth - they were not recorded on the audio clip. Pete said he would try to get a better signal going.

6. Member Updates

6.1 Chair: Outreach to the Jessica Lane abutters is ongoing; thus far 4 have responded to our invitation to be in touch, going forward.

6.2 Matrice asked if she might have a copy of the RFP on the Jessica Lane project; Chair responded that it is in process, but he would give her the first 2 draft pages which are relatively complete with an overview so she would have an idea about it.

6.3 Pete suggested that the RFP be an agenda item for the next meeting; he also said that he would try to get a letter together that could be sent to all for information. On the question of a 'kerb cut', Chair responded that Jim and Mark are working on that. Pete noted that he just wanted folk to be comfortable with how the Committee was proceeding on the Jessica Lane project.

6.4 On the nitrogen credits transfer, Chair mentioned that the Land Bank had written to the Town Administrator and that the Chair had responded on it to the Town Administrator but did not know if his letter had ever been sent out.

6.5 Pete reiterated that the Selectboard needs to follow due process and write to the Land Bank requesting the nitrogen credits transfer; the Land Bank would agree and execute same; but the request

needs to be made. He also noted that Chris Alley is on the Land Bank Committee and one of their charters is to preserve the environment. Pete will draft a letter and circulate it to AHC members.

6.6 Phil Cordello noted that the Land Bank would be entirely in favor of the nitrogen credits transfer having indicated the advantages of proceeding thataway before any transfer of property; the required procedure just needs to be followed.

7. Adjournment

Chair noted that because of travel, there would not be a meeting on Mar 15th. If need be we can have a meeting the following week, or we can wait until April. No objections noted. There being no further business, Chair looked to a motion for adjournment; so proposed by Pete Bradford and seconded by Katie Donahue, upon which Chair K Mark Leonard declared the meeting adjourned.

R G Eli
Secretary, AHC
Town of Oak Bluffs