

**Minutes of the meeting of the Affordable Housing Committee, Town of Oak Bluffs, held on Tue Apr 5<sup>th</sup> 2022, at 5.00 pm.**

**Present:**

K. Mark Leonard, Chair.

Jim Bishop

Peter Bradford

Mark Crossland

Garri Saganenko

**Absent (apologies)**

Katherine Donahue

**In Attendance:**

Phil Cordella

David Vigneault

Laura Silber

Elaine Miller

Celeste Drouin

Tim Peters

Meghan Peters

Juliet Mulinare

Moss Hanrahan

Diane Gandy

David Flanders

Emma Green-Beach

Kira Sullivan

Maura McGroarty

Richard Toole

Kim Averill

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Mark Leonard called the meeting to order at 5.03 pm.

**2. Minutes of the Meetings of Feb 15<sup>th</sup> and Mar 1<sup>st</sup>**

Minutes of the meeting of Feb 15<sup>th</sup> were approved, as proposed by Jim Bishop, seconded by Mark Crossland, and accepted by all members present; Minutes of the Mar 1<sup>st</sup> meeting were held over for approval at the next meeting.

**3. Chair's Update**

The Committee on Municipalities held a public hearing on the 'doughnut hole' swop; no comments relevant to us other than that pertinent details of the swop were read into the record.

**4. The Housing Bank Warrant**

Chair: we have Laura and associates from the Housing Bank with us tonight; the request before us is for a formal proposal of the Warrant Article.

4.1 Question from Peter: do we need the Selectboard's permission to proceed?

Chair: my conversations with our Selectboard staff have made it clear that AHC is able to provide its own opinion; we have done that: formally, through the Selectboard, we have endorsed the Legislation proposed; and informally, we have endorsed the Warrant Article.

At the present time the AHC (Affordable Housing Committee) of Oak Bluffs is the only Affordable Housing Committee that has yet to endorse the Housing Bank. Over to Laura at this point.

4.2 Laura: this is an opportunity for conversation about and support for the Legislation; we had come to an earlier meeting, but some of the members were not present, hence the re-invite from the Chair to return this evening;

Just to clarify, we need voting support – at Town Meeting and at the Ballot Box as well; not to adopt the Housing Bank proposal, but to send the Legislation for it to the State; that will take a year to process, and it will then return to the Vineyard for a final adoption vote.

Tonight, it is for AHC, Oak Bluffs to recommend support for this effort and move it forward up to State level; after that we have a year for extended discussions; we just need to get the process started.

4.3 Chair: AHC has already sent a letter to the Selectboard encouraging them to endorse the Legislature, which they have done; this is now a step for AHC to be recognized as being in support of this.

4.4 Laura: By AHC's endorsement of the Warrant Article you are asking the Selectboard and the voters to join you in support; the initial endorsement was only for the State enabling Legislature; this is the next step.

4.5 Garri: has the Selectboard endorsed this? Laura: only the State level Legislature;

4.6: Emma Green-Beach: No more Selectboard meetings at this point before Town Meeting, although there has been some discussion; personally, in favor of it, hence my presence here to encourage you all.

4.7: Garri: we should ask Oak Bluffs voters to pass this at the Town Meeting, and for the Selectboard to do the same.

4.8: Peter: Still wondering if this is the best route for Oak Bluffs; but it is important for AHC to present this at the Town Meeting, and to discuss it over the rest of the year.

4.9 Chair: Having a functional Housing Bank would take pressure off Oak Bluffs.

4.10 Question from Jim: in a given project, what would the Housing Bank support – only the Affordable Housing units, or both Affordable Housing and market rate units? Laura: only the deed restricted units; Laura here made a distinction between work force housing and attainable/affordable housing; also, transfer fees would cover a host of items – from Grants to septic system upgrades.

4.11 Mark Crossland proposed that AHC recommend endorsement of the Housing Bank Warrant at the upcoming Town Meeting; seconded by Jim Bishop, approved by all members present;

Clarified, per Garri Saganenko and Laura Silber: what this entails is the support of the Warrant at both Town Meeting and Town (ballot box) Election. This requirement had been set by the Oak Bluffs Selectboard – that voting support would have to be at Town meeting and at the Polls. As such, it would be good to have AHC speak on this at Town Meeting.

## **5. Compliance Letter to MVC**

Chair: this notion went before the Selectboard, as represented on our behalf by Peter. Peter: we can send a letter to MVC as long as its clear that it's from us and not from the Selectboard. For its own reasons, the Selectboard has chosen not to take a position on this.

5.1 Mark Crossland proposed AHC write a letter to the MVC; seconded by Peter Bradford; the letter will urge the MVC not to accept any modifications from the original project; proposal subsequently approved by all members; Chair noted that he would write accordingly.

## 6. Veteran's Housing Update

6.1 The kerb cut – Chair informed that Mark Crossland had spoken with Richie Combra and this is doable; Mark Crossland added that there would be about a 10 foot distance between Jessica Lane and where the kerb cut would come in; Chair asked Peter Bradford about the need to do a perc. test and a survey for the area. Peter noted that the Veteran's Association had their own engineer who could see to those requirements. Jim Bishop said that he would follow up on that at the next Veteran's meeting.

6.2 on the nitrogen issue – Chair informed that he had forwarded basic plans on the proposed Veterans project to Christine Flynn of the MVC and asked for an informal review; she will go over this with her colleagues and revert to us. Chair then asked Jim to share his findings on the nitrogen issue. Jim noted that the Martha's Vineyard Hospita project in Edgartown had adopted a method of measuring for a total no. of units that allowed for galley style kitchens; if we followed suit, we could equip 12 units over a 2.6 acre area.

6.3 the RFP – in response to questions from Peter, Chair confirmed that the above two issues were just about totally cleared, so the RFP could be sent to the Selectboard for approval. Chair would take a motion on this.

Motion subsequently proposed by Peter Bradford, seconded by Jim Bishop.

Vote was held up by Garri's questions about drug and alcohol use. These were adequately answered by both the Chair and Jim Bishop, with Peter Bradford also contributing. No alcohol restrictions. No illegal drugs; the Veteran's Association folk, as with Bob Tankard et al, would supervise these outworkings; as Jim pointed out, this is not in any way, shape, or form a drug rehab. facility; Veterans needing such help are housed in a Western Mass facility. Garri voted in favor. Motion passed accordingly with all members in favor. Chair would get the RFP together and circulate to members.

### 6.4. Point of Order

There were at this point in the meeting various questions and comments from unidentified persons signed in as '15 & 19 Quantapog". In brief, in past in-person meetings, folk were asked to sign in for the record; the chat function is for information, not 'side-bar' question raising. Hands need to be raised and speakers self-identified in order to be recognized by the Chair, before they are called upon by said Chair to address the meeting. The record cannot be effectively maintained when two or more are speaking simultaneously; Folk need to read previous Minutes to not waste volunteer time. The right to speak is not denied at any time in a public meeting, but the order of the meeting in such procedure, according to Open Meeting Law, is clearly stated. Folk should do their own homework on these procedures. A Committee meeting is not the place to question a Town Meeting decision.

6.5 Noted also that Jim invited both speakers or one if preferable to join the Veteran's working project Committee; no responses were ascertained to this.

### 6.6 Chair's response to submitted questions

Chair responded to several questions raised in writing by Kim Averill, noting that he did not have all the answers but would do what he could, viz:

i. who will maintain the property? The Veterans Group will; they will build, maintain, select residents.

ii. will there be an on-site Manager? Most likely, the most senior resident will carry out supervision of day-to-day operations.

iii. An office? No.

iv. parking space? tbd (to be determined) Jim thought perhaps 1.5

v. has the Town approved the wastewater aspect of the project? This is in process and is TBD with MVC.

vi. final plans? Are tbd. Currently at RFP status ie set goals, select Developer;

vii. timeline? If possible, Fall 2022.

6.7 General questions and comments:

a. from David Flanders, in connection with the RFP draft re: trees in the area that could be moved and replanted as a natural barrier; Chair will consider how this might be part of the RFP if possible;

b. from Tim Peters on two aspects: i. that the RFP needs to be specific and detailed, and ii. that the development of the remainder of the land remains a genuine concern for the area folk. Jim Bishop invited Tim Peters to join the local Committee. A response was not determined.

## **7. Member Updates**

7.1 Garri asked about upcoming meetings – would we be going back to in-person meetings soon? Chair indicated that there has been no decision on this as yet. (at the time of this draft Chair had circulated a memo to committee members indicating that Zoom Mtgs had been approved for continuation until July of this year).

7.2 Peter Bradford reported that John Leite has begun clearing out the Linwood Ave area.

## **8. Public Comment**

Phil Cordello shared his view on an aspect of the Housing Bank proposal relating to a final vote a year from now, the interim 'discussion' period, and what specifically would transpire under the auspices of Commissioners and Commissioners as self-appointed Advisory Board Chairs. Chair took note of this.

## **9. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the Chair looked to a motion to adjourn. Subsequently proposed by Garri Saganenko, seconded by Jim Bishop, approved of by all members present.

R G Eli  
Secretary, Affordable Housing  
Town of Oak Bluffs