

Minutes of the Affordable Housing Committee Meeting, Town of Oak Bluffs, held on Tue Jul 19th 2022 5pm, at Oak Bluffs Town Hall, Conf Room #110.

Present:

K. Mark Leonard, Chair
Peter Bradford
Mark Crossland
Katherine Donahue

Absent:

Jim Bishop

Attending:

Phil Cordello
Maura McGroarty
Philippe Jordi
David Ennis
Skip Finley
Karen W. Finley

1. Call to Order

Chair Mark Leonard called the meeting to order at 5.01 pm.

2. Minutes of past meetings

Chair mentioned the Minutes of May 3rd 2022 and the fact that a quorum is no longer available to clear said Minutes; as such, under Open Meeting protocols, Chair is able to approve of the Minutes, unless there are objections. No objections were raised, and Chair approved the May 3rd 2022 Minutes accordingly.

2.2 Minutes of July 5th 2022 were approved, as proposed by Peter Bradford and seconded by Katherine Donahue, with the Chair assenting and Mark Crossland abstaining.

3. Updates from the Chair

Chair noted that tonight's meeting is the first test of a hybrid format for AHC, whereby members could meet at Town Hall and Zoom provision would allow those interested to be present. Chair invited views, noting that members could also attend by Zoom remote function. No objections noted.

3.2 Chair has been updating the Town's SHI – its Subsidized Housing Inventory. There are currently a total of 117 units. Maura had a question about Harbor Homes being considered as affordable housing? Chair confirmed this.

4. Veterans Housing Project at Bellevue Avenue

4.1 Chair briefly summarized the Veterans Project's plan to be at Jessica Lane and why it had to be moved - a Title issue that would take extensive time to resolve created a 'wait or move' situation. AHC had decided to move. And, having considered the options, Bellevue is a good available location, with clear Title. On the project itself, Chair reiterated that it was to provide transitional support for single Veterans, consisting of 12 units in 2 buildings. Chair then did a screen share of the Bellevue plans and distributed copies.

4.2 On the need to communicate with abutters, Chair had settled on a 300 foot range and had sent letters to some 19 letters, inviting them to join AHC's meetings to understand the process involved and share feedback from their perspective; 2 had turned up this evening – the McKinley's. Chair had not heard from anyone, and neither had the Secretary.

4.3 Mark Crossland noted that the RFP would need review. Chair agreed.

Mark Crossland also asked Pete Bradford about the abutter experience with the first Bellevue project attempt. Had there been sufficient public outreach?

Pete responded that there had been concerns about a new road going all the way through; about property values being affected; over proximity to the dump area;

4.4. The Finley's inquired about public comment being allowed at this point or later, as per Meeting Agenda; Chair invited them to share their ideas.

Skip Finley asked several questions :

- i. the impact of the Bellevue project on property values?
- ii. wastewater issues and studies that had been conducted?
- iii. how many apartments would be allocated to Veterans of color?
- iv. would there be a 2nd 50 foot green belt?

4.5 Chair responded that the RFP would cover essential provisions that a Developer would need to cover to win approval from the Town; for example, the area nitrogen load needed specific examination; any possibility of a road on the other side of Pennsylvania Ave would require the same; as for the number of Veterans of color, the RFP could mention the value of diversity in the make-up of Veteran applicants, and the decision would be left to whomever is managing the project; further, all issues raised would be taken into consideration, hence the value of having abutters at our meetings.

4.6 Both the Chair and Mark Crossland (Planning) emphasized the importance of having abutters attend and work with AHC on project considerations.

5. Southern Tier Housing Trust Request

Chair referenced the packet he had received from IHT/IA which had been circulated to all members, and invited Philippe to speak to the request.

5.2 Philippe reiterated the importance of IHT/IA developing a comprehensive and convincing pre-development presentation to apply for State funding. One difference from the original request is that it will now, taking into account Housing Trust limits, be spread over a two-year period and so is reduced to an initial 250K request to the Housing Trust. IHT/IA are putting up some 850K on their end. CPC aid will go towards hard costs.

5.3. Chair asked David Ennis to share a detailed map of the Southern Tier plan and asked if Building No's 3 & 4 could be pushed up so that the road could be straightened, thereby providing more green space. David affirmed that they would find a way to make it work. Chair asked for further questions from the Committee. There being none, Chair looked to a response as to approval/denial of the IHT request.

5.4 Pete reiterated the Housing Trust's limits, having no income stream; but also reaffirmed the critical need for affordable housing support and AHC's mission.

As such, Pete Bradford proposed that the IHT request for Housing Trust support of 250K for the Southern Tier project be approved; this was seconded by Mark Crossland and approved of by all members present.

5.5 Chair said that he would proceed with the prep work to bring the proposal before the BOS, have a Housing Trust Meeting, and get it cleared.

6. Nitrogen Credit Update

Chair informed that Isabel L. from Rappaport's office is checking on the Deed piece and the process involved.

2.Katie reiterated that in her conversations with Chris Alley, it was a matter of retaining the nitro credits and that these could go where needed; either to Bellevue or to Linwood Ave or the 8 acre project, as AHC determines.

6.3 Chair noted that the doughnut swop now has passed the House but still needs final approval and the Governor's signature.

7.Member Updates

Chair mentioned the Leite situation and the Amy Billings letter and his info that Leite is cutting down trees in order to get his cars out. Pete confirmed this, explaining that he had looked at our area; what is happening is simply that brush and tree growth which has grown through cars that have been there for more than 20 years, and now needs to be cleared before the cars can be moved.

7.2 Mark Crossland expressed the view that AHC needs to make a decision on Linwood as soon as possible. We could review the work details on the Linwood plan and improve on it. Chair was in agreement.

8. Public Comment

No further comment. see item 4.

9. Adjournment

There being no other business, Chair looked to a motion for adjournment. So proposed by Pete Bradford and seconded by Katherine Donahue, upon which Chair Mark Leonard declared the meeting adjourned.

R G Eli, Secretary
Affordable Housing Committee
Town of Oak Bluffs