

**Minutes of the virtual meeting of the Affordable Housing Committee, Town of Oak Bluffs, held on Tue Sep 21<sup>st</sup> 2021 at 5.00pm.**

**Present:**

K. Mark Leonard, Chair  
Jim Bishop, Vice-Chair  
Peter Bradford  
Katie Donahue  
Garri Saganenko

**Absent:**

Mark W. Crossland, Planning Board

**Attending:**

David Vigneault, DCRHA  
Greg Orcutt, HFH  
Maura McGroarty  
Phil Cordella

**1. Call to order**

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

**2. Minutes of the last two meetings**

Of Aug 17<sup>th</sup>, as proposed and seconded by Jim Bishop and Garri Saganenko; and of Sep 7<sup>th</sup>, proposed and seconded by the Chair and Jim Bishop; minutes were confirmed respectively by those who were present on the respective dates mentioned.

**3. Chair's Updates**

Chair noted that these were already on the Agenda. The only item to mention is for each member to acknowledge the Town's Sexual Harassment policy as required by HR and from the Town's Admin Office. Chair will get this sent out and each committee member will need to respond as required.

**4. Nitrogen Credits Transfer discussion**

Was held over to a point when Peter Bradford would be able to join us. Jim said that he and Pete felt it was a great idea. Chair said that he had spoken with Selectman Brian Packish who was also in favor. All we needed was to review process and recipient Lot. Pete had looked into this and he would report on it in a bit, being tied up at the moment.

**5. Veteran's Housing project update**

Jim had draft plans to share, and informed that he is now the Chair of the Veteran's Project's Building Committee, which also serves as its fundraising arm; he asked if abutter Tim Peters had given us his email address; Chair confirmed that no abutter has given us contact information. Jim would like to invite Tim Peters to serve as someone from the neighborhood on the Veteran's Building Committee, as it would give clear opportunity for transparency and across the board perspectives on the project. He will follow up on outreach to Tim. Jim also pointed out that while the draft plan has provision for an admin building he is not in favor and it would not be supported.

2. Chair then screenshared the draft building plans from the Cape & Island's Veteran's Group; there are a total of 12 units planned for; and their design shows a four-building setup with one building set aside for administrative purposes.

3. Garri inquired about MVCS's views on such a building setup, and if direct services were being considered. Jim replied that MVCS wanted an admin structure but that he did not agree and would not support it; there is sufficient existing structure for admin support staff at MVCS.

4. Maura inquired about the plan design and origin. Jim said that he believed that to be the Community Services representative's architect and mentioned Bobby Tankard in this regard.

Chair stated that the design shared has nothing to do with AHC.

5. Peter noted it was a conceptual assumption (an architectural conception, as Jim said) at this point, nothing more. Process would require both Town Meeting action and an RFP process before we actually get to the design plan stage.

6. Katherine raised the question of access as off Jessica or off County? Chair confirmed that access would be through County Road.

## **6. Nitrogen Credit Transfers**

Peter has done the needed research on the doughnut hole and the nitrogen credit transfer possible; there is some 21-22,000 square feet with transferable credits that amount to 21- 22 bedrooms in total; from the AHC current Lots in hand, nitrogen credit transfers are needed for Bellevue Ave (110,000 square feet) and Linwood, which are all single bedroom Lots; while we have credits in hand for Linwood, Bellevue now supports 11 single bedroom units and with nitrogen credit transfers we could do three bedroom units instead.

Peter also reviewed the procedure needed – AHC would first need to get Selectboard approval; then move on to obtaining an engineer's project cost estimate and secure needed funds from the Affordable Housing Trust; next would come Board of Health approval, after which it would need to go to the State's DEP Dept for final approval.

Peter will reach out to Chris Alley to confirm both process and estimate; the doughnut hole does not offer as much of a credit transfer as some might have thought, but it still will allow for upgrading current capacity.

Chair asked if Peter would make this presentation to the next Selectboard Meeting. Peter indicated he would do so. Chair will work to get AHC on the Agenda.

The Committee also reviewed which Lot would be the best recipient for the referenced nitrogen credit transfer and has the Bellevue Lot in mind.

## **7. Town Meeting and Articles AHC needs to bring**

a. Southern Tier property release – Chair informed that as it stands, the Southern Tier property is deeded to the RHC; Chair has sought to research the Qs of Has there been a release done? Is Town Meeting action needed? Chair continues to work on ascertaining the proper steps and will be talking both with Town Counsel and Selectman Packish on this.

b. Jessica Lane property release – this is Town owned property of some 4.6 acres, but not deeded to the Affordable Housing Trust; what is needed is for the Selectboard to make it land set aside for Affordable Housing; Chair continues to work with Town Counsel on this.

Peter proposed a motion that AHC asks the Selectboard to support and designate Jessica Lane as the property of the Affordable Housing Trust, and that an article on such a designation be submitted for Town Meeting; seconded by Jim Bishop, approved of by all members present.

c. The RHC situation, per AHC Chair's ongoing research and investigation – that AHC request permission for the Town to transfer all RHC properties to the Affordable Housing Trust. Chair said that this depends on how Counsel decides what is the best way forward.

## **8. The DMH Excess Property**

Chair recounted a little of the current status on this; IHT has been working with the State and the Town now wants to be involved; we are waiting on Mass Housing and its communication with the State on the exact procedure required; as it stands, it is an opportunity for the Town to gain property for Affordable Housing from the State and for a low price.

Garri inquired about the nature of the project – would it focus on ownership, rentals, or a mix?

Chair noted that, like the 7.8-acre project, it would run through a similar process; feasibility, feedback, and the HPP imperative;

Peter asked if we had spoken with MV Hospital about their interests and housing needs? Chair replied that he would do so. Peter noted that AHC needs to engage MVH as much as possible on this one to ascertain their staff housing needs and see what might work.

Chair noted this and said that parameters would emerge out of a feasibility study.

Maura asked if MVH involvement would result in reduced taxes? Both Chair and Peter responded; its affordable housing status would reduce the burden of taxation some, but not eradicate it totally.

## **9. Member Updates**

1. Chair: asked Jim when AHC will need to deal with CPC recommendations and who might be presenting? Jim indicated that we can expect Harbor Homes, IEH, and possibly the Autism Group, all probably in October.

2. Peter: asked about the number of applicants for the HfH house project. Chair provided a quick update - it has been resurveyed and perc tested; 22 applicants have been narrowed down to 3; lot markers are out; Peter noted Jim's comment that CPC could provide needed funding on this and suggested the wastewater infrastructure as good starting point. Chair said that he will talk to John Smith about a ballpark figure on this one.

3. Maura: inquired about the status of the Conroy's Rx conversion project; Chair provided a brief update on this, re 97K in Grant \$, and 97K in the Trust set aside; Jim noted that it would be insufficient and that we should ask CPC for additional funding. He added that he would get the CPC deadline from Margaret this week.

No other updates.

## **10. Public Comment**

Phil Cordello, noted by the Chair as the Town's Land Bank Advisory Committee rep, had a question and stated it thus: "When you're in the wellhead protected zone and nitrogen credits are used and you have enhanced septic, isn't there a requirement for annual inspections of septic that is an added cost to home ownership?"

Peter explained the following:

Within the Well protected zone,

- i. per the phrasing of the question, both the requirement and the cost are there; however,
- ii. with nitrogen credit transfer, 10,000 square feet provides for 1 bedroom, with no inspections and no added cost.
- iii. with an enhanced system, 6,666 square feet would provide for 1 bedroom.

The point is one of gaining developability at the lowest possible cost, so AHC is not talking about enhanced systems. Rather, transferring credits to meet nitrate needs accommodates the environmental requirements that have to be dealt with.

## **11. Adjournment**

There being no other business, Chair looked to a motion for adjournment. So proposed by Peter Bradford, seconded by Jim Bishop, and approved of by all members present, upon which Chair K. Mark Leonard declared the meeting adjourned.

R George Eli  
Secretary  
Affordable Housing Committee  
Town of Oak Bluffs