

Minutes of the Meeting of the Affordable Housing Committee, Town Of Oak Bluffs, held on Tuesday April 2nd 2019 at 5pm at the Oak Bluffs Fire Station, upper level meeting room.

Present:

Jim Bishop, Chair
Pete Bradford
Karen Tewhey
Mark Crossland
Renee Balter
Mark Leonard

In Attendance:

Elizabeth Bonifacio
Regan Fisher
Seth Charter
Ed Charter
Llewellyn Rogers
Richard Leonard

1. Order

Chair Jim Bishop called the Meeting to order at 5.03pm. Informed all present that future Meetings would be held at this venue, same time.

2. MVC Update

Karen Tewhey shared an update from the latest MVC Meeting. MVC is redrafting its Affordable Housing policy via a DRI – Developments Of Regional Impact focus. This is still in process, but is pertinent to Affordable Housing. MVC is considering three options for Developers:

- a. that they set aside 10% of total buildable lots towards MV Affordable Housing;
- b. consider monetary contributions based on specific formula;
- c. have offsite buildable lots that match the number of onsite lots for the development ie buildable lots of equal value;

Karen is sharing this information because of issues raised by the Planning Board, which has concerns over builders who choose the offsite buildable lot option. Why? Because this could result in options not being exercised and land ending up vacant, with no Affordable Housing accomplished, and no accrued value to the Town of Oak Bluffs.

3. Buildable Lots

Mark Crossland, Planning Board Representative, stressed that the notion of buildable lots needs to be focused by an overall plan for Developers who should:

- a. allow for Affordable Housing availability in Oak Bluffs;

- b.put up housing that fits in with surrounding houses per shape and appearance and does not have the distinct look of being Affordable Housing;
 - c.pay appraised value for the property and set this aside, with an entity lined up to do the work;
- Mark also noted that the Planning Board is looking at possible amendments to the By Laws that involve site plan reviews, specifically, Clause 10.4.2.

4. MVC & Related Issues

Peter Bradford noted that he had written to MVC on related issues, viz:

- a.that a mechanism for development of lots ie the building of houses - is needed;
- b.that monetary contribution be based on appraised, and not assessed value – the difference can be substantial;
- c.that the units created be built to established specifications that will ensure their designation as Affordable Housing units

5. Chair's Response

Chair stressed that the Town of Oak Bluffs must benefit from DRI considerations for MVC's policy changes to be of measurable value to us. He also noted that

- a.there is untaxed land in OB that is not used;
- b.while AHC's Ice Rink project is some 18-24 months away, we have a plan to cover both the funding and the infrastructure that will make it amenable to a developer;
- c.given the existing Regulations, ground Lease requirements and sewerage constraints, building Affordable Housing is not a simple task, but the need is clear.

6.Existing Building Conversion

Renee Balter proposed the purchase of existing buildings that have come on the market and could be converted into Affordable Housing. She mentioned two apartments now available at about \$650,000.00. She also noted that while AHC could not function as Landlord, the Oak Bluffs Library project was an example of what might be done.

The discussion that followed concluded that such a move, although commendable in theory, would be unworkable in practice. Members reached mutual agreement that Renee could check out possible developers who would be interested in short term land acquisition for small affordable housing projects. Karen also mentioned that Harbor Homes is creating its own contribution to affordable housing rooming.

In further discussion, Chair stressed that AHC needs to hold on to what \$ it has and figure the expense carefully, project wise; we still have a pending report from RKG and will need to move on that in the near future. It would be hard to justify the expenditure for the two mentioned apartments. Discussion concluded with a clear view that we need to be going after a much larger number of apartments – as with our goal of 72 units within a 5 year period.

7. Ongoing Projects

Pete Bradford noted that AHC has 4 ongoing projects that we must stay focused on. Specifically, these are:

- a. The ice rink property
- b. The 3 'scattered' lots on Marvin, Alpine and Columbia;
- c. The last phase of Title work that involves septic engineering;
- d. The nitrogen aggregate project to fix credits for our Lots;

Starting with the 3 scattered lots, Pete noted that they all have good title and road access; they have been surveyed, and we have \$2,500.00 available for each to get the perc. testing done; At the last meeting we talked about getting an RFP and also voted to find a non-profit developer. Philippe Jordi has a friend who does good RFP work, but she is currently very tied up and can only help if she has back up support ie a Committee member to work with her. After a little discussion, Mark Leonard indicated his willingness to help out. Karen Tewhey will also help as needed. Both will coordinate this effort via an initial conference call. Pete will pass contact info on to Mark and Karen.

e. On the issue of needed perc. testing Pete is working on getting engineers who would do the lots individually and keep costs within our budget; Chairman said that if we could get a discount we could keep testing costs down; Mark Crossland informed AHC that he would not charge for the excavation. Pete will meet with George Serrati next week and will check if we can move forward on this.

8. Old Business

a. Discussion began with the Leite encroachment. Chairman will be seeing Town Administrator Bob the next day and will see if we can resolve this quickly, because we are being held up and can't work on the affected Lots! Renee would be happy to follow up on this issue. Noted also that the Town of Oak Bluffs has a contract with John Leite, who does all the auto recovery work on MV; John has put together machinery and structure to get his crushing done, but the permits required have given him some difficulty. Members expressed frustration, but agreed that diplomacy is better than taking this to Court.

b. Mark Crossland and Pete Bradford will meet with Chris Alley and follow up on the nitrogen credits work.

c. Peter Bradford circulated a map of the Ice Rink property and raised the issue of the potential well head on Land Bank property. AHC would like to see the well placed within our property which could then be classed as Zone 2. If the well is constructed on Land Bank property, that will have an adverse effect, and would reduce our bedroom capacity by about two thirds of the total of what could be built on both the front and rear areas of the lot. We would lose the full developability of the land and the potential number of units that could be built. Peter noted that while the Land Bank was entering into a land swap with us, such actions would reduce the developability of the land we would end up with! Chairman pointed out that while there was no technical need for a second well, the need had emerged because the present well was being maxed out at peak times, and a reserve or second well would fill up during off peak hours, and be available as needed. The issue really comes down to where exactly the well should be sited.

Mark Crossland noted that the OB Board Of Selectmen have also written to the OB Water Dept about this.

Proposal: that we write the OB Water Dept to reinforce the BOS letter and make our position clear. Proposed by Pete, seconded by Jim, and approved of by all members present. The letter will be copied to the Land Bank and to the Board Of Selectmen, and will note our opposition to the idea of locating the well out of our property.

d.discussion next moved to the need to request changes in zoning By Laws, which would go to the Planning Board for decision. Frontage requirements now constrain AH efforts. Could Mark check with the Planning Board on its current position re frontage for affordable housing and us know? Mark will follow up. Chair's opinion is that AHC should write to the Planning Board with reference to current zoning By Laws, because our work now requires special permits where none were needed before.

9.New Business

Discussion on the All Island Land Bank:

Chair opened the discussion by raising concerns about the mechanism that needs to be in place and was of the impression that too many questions have been left unanswered. Discussion followed along lines of 'Should we create a Land Bank and how should it be funded?' Of those in attendance, Richard Leonard distributed a handout on the Land Bank proposal, emphasizing that nothing would be finalized until a final vote was taken take two years down the road.

10.Adjournment

The meeting went into adjournment at 7.30pm, as proposed by Pete Bradford and seconded by Mark Leonard, with all in favor.

**R George Eli
Secretary
Affordable Housing Committee
Town of Oak Bluffs.**