

Minutes of the Virtual meeting of the Affordable Housing Committee, Town of Oak Bluffs, held on Apr 20th 2021 at 5pm.

Present:

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

In Attendance:

Barry Fradkin
Laura Silber
Juliette Fay
Christine Flynn
Philippe Jordi
Ron Di Orio
Richard Leonard

In partial (time) attendance:

Kira Sullivan
Rene Ben David
Christine Todd
Doug Ruskin
Ryan Bushey
Sandra Bryants

1. Call to order

Chair Mark Leonard called the meeting to order at 5.00pm.

2. Minutes of the last meeting of Apr 6th 2021

Were proposed for acceptance by Peter Bradford, seconded by Jim Bishop, and approved by all members present.

3. Updates from the AHC Chair

AHC's Facebook page is active as of this week and may be publicized. If anyone has related info to share, they should check with Katie Donahue or the Chair.

b. the Habitat transfer is moving along well. Lawyers from both sides have cleared the documents, and the transfer will go before the Town's BOS for approval next Tuesday, after which we can expect work to go forward at the Prospect and Eastville sites.

c. IEH has requested a Letter of Support for its Aidylberg project in Oak Bluffs. Chair invited questions and comments if any. Jim noted that the project has been moving forward steadily through the process. It has received CPC support, and the necessary Planning Board waiver. It will bring five single unit apartments into the Town's affordable housing count. Peter Bradford moved that AHC write a letter of

support as requested. Motion was seconded by Jim Bishop with most members in support, and one abstention noted from Mark Crossland. Chair will follow up with the request.

d. Chair introduced Barry Fradkin of J M Goldson to give us a quick rundown on the most recent Webinar of the Southern Tier housing project which is specifically for the 8 acre site next to the Ice Rink. Gary showed several slides per screen share and presented a general overview and analysis of the Webinar, using a display of stats and explanatory notes that covered meeting turnout, responses to objectives, minimum threshold criteria, developer experience, affordability and next steps.

Chair made follow up comments on the selection process: every Developer has to meet minimum requirements as set out; once there is a shortlist of Developers, the 'advantageous' level criteria would kick in for Selection Committee review and final decision;

Garri raised a question over the minimum requirement threshold of 25 % for Affordable Housing; Barry responded that the criteria would balance out in the detailed evaluation of each applicant; Chair added that the language used ensured that the project would qualify for 100% of the available subsidy, over and above the varying levels represented in the makeup of the project.

Barry ended with a 2 item share: presentation would be made to the BOS meeting of the 27th and the next Webinar would take place on May 6th. Barry also noted that he had posted his email address on the chat window barry@jmgoldson.org

Jim and Peter expressed concern that AHC avoid possible comment about the development of the adjacent area to the 8 acre site, since folk were already assuming that an affordable housing community of some 200 units could be built (or 'jammed in') on that location. Chair agreed and reiterated that this initial RFP is limited to the 8 acre site only.

e. Chair's last item was to share that the BOS had approved the TRI modified arrangement and so work on the Noyes building could move forward into a design phase.

4. The CCMVHB Presentation

Began with introductory comments from Juliette Fay that laid out the objectives of the Housing Bank Committee and the process and procedures involved. The goal is clear – provide funding for year-round housing in the sum of 7 – 10 million dollars a year, by establishing transfer fees from real estate transactions; requires both local and state level work; HB is essentially a funding mechanism; needed as the median home price on MV is now at 1.5 million. Structure of the HB will be similar to that of the LB; a lean admin is intended, with no duplication; if all goes as expected, final resolution will be in the Spring of 2022;

Oak Buffs Committee Co-Chairs are Sandra Bryants and Kira Sullivan – their work is to raise awareness of the HB, be in communication and outreach, and especially, to listen to and respond to feedback from the local folk. The steering committee has 14 MV reps, and each Town has a BOS person on this Committee.

Then she handed over to Laura Silber. Laura backgrounded the work of attempts to establish a Housing Bank in initial effort and history, and briefly mentioned State level transfer fee history; the work of establishing a transfer fee system to fund Affordable Housing is ongoing; there is now State level enabling Legislation for this, and our local Amendment to the effort is to ensure that our regional Banks are able to serve housing needs; further, there is now a higher exemption threshold, so that no fees need be paid on the first million dollars of a real estate transaction

(NB the questions AHC submitted to the CCMVHB and that they answered have already been copied to members. Chair invited members to continue the process if and where clarity was still needed.)

a. Chair started off with a question about the legislation on payable transfer fees and the responsible party: buyer, seller? Response is that *this is yet to be finalized. The final legislation to determine this is still pending; as it stands it could be either and it depends on the municipality/region and the legislation that is active.*

b. Jim's Q: was about bonding to cover development costs; could we, for example, deny the bond? Response is that *the legislation on that has not been finalized at local level, and the Town's can decide on what they want or do not want; the bonding option is being discussed; the State only creates parameters; the CCMVHB's position is that it would be advantageous for the Housing Bank to be able to bond, to raise funds, to purchase property, and to partner with the Land Bank.*

c. Chair's Q on transfer fees: are we locked into 2 %? *answer is that it will run fr 0.5 to 2% max.*

d. Garri's Q: can we split the existing transfer fee that the Land Bank has'. *Response is that the Land Bank's fees can't be used for Affordable Housing; it's for the preservation of open space; but it can partner with an entity for purposes of Affordable Housing; it cannot do Affordable Housing by itself .*

e. Pete's 2 Qs were: i. what's the 'end game' ie what and where is the finish line?; and ii. 240 % of AMI doesn't seem to represent the folk on MV in need of housing ; *responses were that i. the Housing Bank has not yet finalized any 'end game', as it were; the work is in a malleable stage and is open to all feedback on what the Town's would like to see, so we have yet to come up with any kind of 'sunset' clause; but one of the model's we've considered is that of Aspen's APCHA (see chat for this info). Laura explained the Aspen model as one that MV's Housing Bank could adapt, given that the situations are similar. There they created two entirely separate housing markets so that folk in the lower reach would get the assistance they needed to secure housing and not have to leave. Pete's further comment: Oak Bluffs cannot get out of the Land Bank; it's needs are in a lower median range other than 240%; so if a Town decides that they want out, is there enabling provision? Careful consideration is needed on the wording related to such an option, and going forward, there needs to be flexibility to ensure that the folk most in need find housing assistance through the Housing Bank.*

f. Chair recognized Richard Leonard. Richard asked if Housing Bank funds might be used to cover wastewater management; response is that *that there is currently no specific language in State legislation on this, but it is being requested as an amendment to cover affordable housing; Richard's comment on existing wastewater legislation – are the Housing Bank's proposed definitions on land use broad enough? Do they allow for Housing Bank funds to mitigate properties? Response is that the language is still being drafted; but there is the possibility of Grants or loans to help with wastewater mitigation.*

g. Garri's Q on opportunities created and priorities recognized – how does the Housing Bank intend to address these? *Reply is that MVC's assessment of land provides the basis for recognition, and rentals currently take priority; referred to Philippe Jordi of IHT, who noted that this would depend on the ownership of the project and the utilization of operating revenue.*

In closing, Laura stated that liaison with the Affordable Housing Committee would be welcome and would build effective communication and feedback.

Chair in his closing comments stressed that Housing Bank support is imperative for the workforce in need of housing and means-tested and need-based applicants.

5. Veteran's Housing Project

Jim informed that the project committee would meet tomorrow; they are working towards an RFP that may be presented to the Town asap; he will forward RFP copy to Chair AHC when available; Chair noted that the process would be identical to that followed with HfH; Jim shared comm. info on this to the chat screen (check and provide)

Pete felt that where Jessica Lane is concerned, the Town would consider an Affordable Housing proposal if presented with a good project plan.

The address for the Veteran's project is at 519 County Road, is outside of Zone 2, and envisions a 2 bedroom unit enterprise, provisioning for caregivers in residence.

6. Member Updates

Pete: the Linwood site visit with Jim and Garri was done as planned; and we now have direction from the BOS on what needs to be done in order to get to a kick-off point from BOS perspective and requirements; perhaps we should focus on just that and nothing else so we can move forward. The abutter from Linwood would like to attend when this is discussed. Garri agreed with Pete.

Katie: reiterated that the FB page is active and moving. Posts on AH are welcome. Katie will invite all to be friends etc.

7. Public Comments

Both Richard Leonard and Philippe Jordi expressed appreciation for AHC's work and the leadership of the AHC Chair.

8. Adjournment

There being no other business, Chair looked to a motion for adjournment; so proposed by Jim Bishop, seconded by Katie Donahue, and approved by all members present. Chair Mark Leonard declared the meeting adjourned.

R George Eli
Secretary
Affordable Housing Committee
Town of Oak Bluffs