

MINUTES

Meeting Date: **April 4th, 2018**

Board/Committee: **Housing Partnership Committee**

Location: **Walpole Town Hall, Room 116**

Members Present: **Andrew Flowers, Audrey Grace, Jeanne Nickola, Michael Teeley, Philip Czachorowski, Willa Bandler**

Members Not Present:

1. **The meeting was called to order at 8:06 p.m.**
2. **Mr Teeley has been sworn in by the Town Clerk and is now a voting member.**

3. **Approval of minutes.**

A motion to approve the minutes from March 21st was made by Mr Czachorowski and seconded by Ms Nickola.

VOTE: 6-0-0 UNANIMOUS.

4. **Discussion with Community Planning Director Tim Higgins**

Mr Higgins gave a summary of his background, including work both as a planner for the towns of Belmont and Foxboro and, more recently, in private real estate development. He offered insight into the potential interests and motivations of each party, and how the two may overlap.

- To his knowledge, the town has not asked, much less required, developers to incorporate affordable units in existing developments, so there may be some room to make improvements just by changing that.
- "Friendly 40B" development may be a good avenue to learn more about.
- Inclusionary zoning sounds good, but may only net a handful of actual affordable single-family units. To get to the numbers needed, multi-family developments will work better.
- Inclusionary zoning could work better if paired with a fee structure for developers who can't or don't want to produce affordable units; it's important to ask for enough money that it helps meaningfully with building up a housing trust fund, though obviously not so much that developments simply don't proceed.
- To get to the numbers the town needs, multiple strategies need to be pursued concurrently.

Mr Higgins also discussed the Housing Production Plan, which is required to be updated every 5 years and is due for an update by this November. Last time the plan was updated, there was not an active Housing Partnership Committee; since there is one this time, the committee can take an active part in the update, including participating in choosing the consultant retained to prepare it. The 2013 plan was prepared by PGC Associates; the town must solicit at least three proposals, but may include PGC again.

5. Housing Production Plan Implementation Strategies

Mr Czachorowski notes that it is imperative that we focus on smaller units, and Mr Flowers points out central paragraph in the 2013 HPP regarding the need for diversity of housing types; there is general agreement that the town has an oversupply of medium and large single-family units.

Mr Czachorowski wants to evaluate how the existing problematic situation (new developments going in in several locations with no affordable units) could have been avoided.

Mr Flowers says we need to pay close attention to not just the policies, but also the *people* who have been behind them.

Ms Grace notes that the old HPP was filled with what sounded like great action items, none of which was ever implemented, and wonders if we should use a different consultant.

Ms Grace wonders if the Housing Authority could serve as the manager of a rental property if the town was able to build affordable town-owned units; Mr Czachorowski will reach out to Denise Landry regarding this.

6. Walpole Housing Partnership Committee Website

Mr Flowers now has access to the committee's page on the town website, and can update information there. The names of current committee members are now listed there.

7. Ethics Training

All members have now completed the required ethics training.

8. Email Protocol and the Open Meeting Law

In order to comply with the OML, Mr Flowers reminds members to exercise caution in sharing documents or other references with a quorum of other members outside of meetings. Members may use a disclaimer at the top of an email among a quorum of committee members containing information or documents about matters that may come before the committee, similar to this one which he has used: "NOTE: This email is not for discussion or deliberation, as that would violate the Open Meeting Law. My purpose is just to inform you of some logistics and share information."

Ms Bandler adds that "deliberation", as defined in the OML, need not include back-and-forth among members; even if no one replies, a member may not share his or her opinion on a matter with a quorum of other members via email, though the sharing of documents, links, etc needed to prepare for future meetings is allowed.

9. Citizen Comments

John Hasenjaeger, town resident and retired real estate developer, attended the meeting and shared some thoughts. Mr Hasenjaeger feels that there have been many missed opportunities for affordable housing in Walpole, and that if the town imposed fewer regulations, more could be done.

10. Old Business

- Report by Members on assignments to get information from other Towns/Boards:
Some relevant town departments have not yet been contacted. Ms Bandler spoke to Building Inspector David Norton, who stated that he is unable to influence the creation of new

affordable units, and feels that this committee must work with the zoning and planning boards to create consequences for developers not including affordable units.

- **Report to Spring Town Meeting:**

Mr Flowers and Ms Grace have contacted Moderator Dan Bruce, who says the committee will have 3-5 minutes to present, and two members can present together.

Just over 4 weeks remain before the beginning of Town Meeting; the presentation should be ready by then even though the plan is not to present until at least the second night.

It is generally agreed that the main point of the presentation should be to convince people that affordable housing is desirable for the town.

Ms Grace would like each member to think of two talking points for the presentation by the next meeting.

11. Agenda Items and Preparation for Next Meeting

Each member to think of two talking points for the Town Meeting presentation by the next meeting.

12. New Business

No new business.

13. Reference

links discussed:

walpole-ma.gov/housing-partnership-committee

documents presented:

Section III of 2013 Housing Production Plan

14. Next meeting to be held April 18th at 7:30 p.m.

15. The meeting was adjourned at 9:44 p.m.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr Czachorowski and seconded by Ms Nickola

VOTE: 6-0-0 UNANIMOUS.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Willa Bandler

Minutes Approved by Committee on:

4/18/18

Chairperson Signature:

Andrew Flowers