



**Walpole Housing Partnership
Tuesday, July 17, 2012 at 6:30p.m
Room 116, Town Hall**

Minutes

Attending: Bruce Norwell, Chairman; Bernie Goba, Denise Landry, Walpole Housing Authority and Stephanie Mercandetti, Economic Development & Grants Officer.

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:35pm by Mr. Norwell.
2. Approval of minutes: Minutes for the June 19th meeting were not available. This item will be held until the next meeting.
3. Old business

a. Recruitment and interest regarding membership additions:

No updates at this point in time. Members will continue outreach in the community to add additional folks to the Partnership.

b. Housing Production Plan:

Ms. Mercandetti stated that a grant program may become available once again that could possibly fund the cost of updating the Town's Housing Production Plan. The grant program is the Priority Development Fund. When the Fund was first established, \$3 million was set aside to award grants for various purposes. The Fund recently recaptured \$223,000 in unspent funds so they have reopened the grant program on a rolling basis until these remaining funds are distributed. The Fund is of course to be used as a last resort, according to the DHCD. Eligible communities to use such for funds for this purpose are those that are not CPA (community preservation act) communities and do not have an affordable housing trust fund. DHCD would expect that if you have one or both then you should use that type of funding. But Walpole does not have either. In addition, we are limited as to what items with respect to the Plan could be done in-house. Ms. Mercandetti was informed by the State that the Town should wait before pursuing this program further until the request for proposals has been issued and there is a chance to speak with DHCD staff regarding project eligibility.

c. Potential town-owned land sites for Habitat for Humanity:

Mr. Goba reported that he would like to invite Habitat for Humanity to back to a future meeting to discuss this further. It appears that more is required of the Town than just simply donating a parcel of land. There would be additional expenses to get the land ready for Habitat. Members reviewed site selection requirements but it is unclear. Mr. Goba has started to visit sites that could potentially be viable options but further examination would need to occur. As a follow up to questions raised at previous meetings, Ms. Mercandetti shared some of the requirements under MA General Laws Chapter 30B when it comes to disposition of land.

4. New business:

a. MA Department of Housing & Community Development Peer-to-Peer Grant Program:

Ms. Mercandetti reported that the state awards small grants (up to \$1,000) for communities to hire a Peer Consultant from another community to provide technical assistance or resolve a short-term issue that supports local community development activities such as economic development, historic preservation, commercial or housing rehabilitation, etc. This assistance usually provides up to 30 hours from an appointed municipal official and includes reimbursement for travel and printing/material costs. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis – first come, first serve. This assistance could provide support for the Partnership's initiatives.

5. Next Meeting: There will be no meeting in August. The next meeting will be in September 18th.

6. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:54pm.