



Affordable Housing Committee

Town of Hinesburg
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Meeting Minutes – October 7, 2020

Remote Zoom Meeting – 7:00 PM

Committee Members Present: Carl Bohlen, Andrea Brainard, George Bedard, Rocky Martin, and Dale Wernhoff

Also Present: Brett Grabowski, Alex Weinhausen, Mitch Cypes, and Joe Laster

The meeting came to order at approximately 7:05 PM.

Brett Grabowski, Milot Real Estate to Discuss Hinesburg Center Phase II

Brett Grabowski, Director of Development for Milot Real Estate, provided us with an update on the Hinesburg Center Phase II project. Between phases 1 (Kinney Drugs and nearby buildings) and II there will be a total of nine affordable units. There is currently one affordable unit in phase I. Phase IIA will have three affordable units while phase IIB will have the remaining five units. This phasing is due to current water allocation available from the town. All phase I units (affordable and market rate) are rental units and all phase IIA units are for sale. Brett can recoup his costs on an affordable rental unit but not on an affordable for sale unit without the help of a partner like Champlain Housing Trust (CHT). For this reason, if Brett can't get CHT involved then he'd like to convert three of the rental units in phase I to affordable units, making all for sale units in phase IIA market rate. The Hinesburg Development Review Board does allow for turning existing market rate units into affordable housing. Alex pointed out that one of the goals of the town plan is for developments to have a mix of market prices that provide housing opportunities for all income levels. George feels it's better to get clustered affordable housing than none at all. Dale stated that he prefers a mix, but due to issues related to the coronavirus pandemic (per Brett, lumber prices since April 2020 have doubled and other building materials have gone up in price by 30% to 40%) we may have to compromise for this project. Carl offered Brett our support in getting CHT on board, and in lieu of that, support to convert the three phase I units to affordable housing. The committee also supports a review of the town's water and wastewater allocation fees. Per Alex, we need to follow the state's mandates for allocation volume (gallons per day) but that the fee per gallon is set by the town. Brett stated Hinesburg's fees are much higher than neighboring towns and would like the town to review if there's any way these fees can be decreased, which would make the permitting process more affordable.

Haystack Crossing Preliminary Plat & Conditional Use Approvals and Housing Committee Recommendations to DRB

The committee provided the Development Review Board with ten recommendations on 5/14/2020 regarding the Haystack Crossing proposed affordable housing. In the DRB's 9/15/2020 Preliminary Plat

Approval, eight of the ten items were not mentioned. Alex and Mitch explained, item by item, where the DRB stood on those particular recommendations.

August Local Housing Committee Webinar Briefing

Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO) hosted a free webinar on local housing committees on 8/21/2020. The webinar explained how to start a committee, how they can help with affordable housing, and how to instill community involvement. Carl joined the webinar via Zoom.

Committee Member Reappointments & New Leads on HAHC Members

Andrea will be leaving the committee by January 2021, leaving four members out of seven. Somehow, we need to get some recruits. If anybody is reading these minutes, please attend a meeting and see if this is something you are interested in joining.

Future Meeting Plan and Topics

We discussed a few possibilities for our upcoming meetings. Please refer to future minutes for additional information.

Approve Minutes from March 4

We reviewed the 3/04/20 minutes. George motioned they be approved and Andrea seconded. They were approved by voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:50 PM.

Next Meeting – November 4th – Topics to be determined; see agenda on town website.

Respectfully submitted,

Dale Wernhoff
HAHC Secretary