



Affordable Housing Committee

Town of Hinesburg

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Meeting Minutes – September 27, 2023 In-person and Zoom Meeting – 7:00 PM (Town Hall Third Floor Conference Room) DRAFT – SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Committee Members Present: Carl Bohlen, Dave Nagel, Beth Whitlock, Rocky Martin, Xander Patterson, Andy Miller, and Dale Wernhoff

Also Present: Amy Demetrowitz (Chief Operating Officer, Champlain Housing Trust), Javier Garcia (Project Developer, Champlain Housing Trust), and Tyler Labrie (Developer, Evernorth)

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:00 PM.

Additions/Deletions to Agenda: This afternoon Andy sent out an email that summarized our discussion from our 9/20/23 meeting on inclusionary zoning. We'll review that later tonight.

Public Comment: There were no members of the public present.

ADU Forum Follow-up: Rocky reported that we're all set for our second Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) forum. It will be on Thursday, 10/26/23, at 7:00 PM at the Parish Hall of the United Church of Hinesburg at 10570 VT-116. Rocky has speakers lined up to explain the ADU process. Rocky and Xander are going to do a trial run of the forum on Monday, 10/23/23 to shake out the kinks. Rocky is hoping to get some photos of ADUs around town. Xander said a PowerPoint presentation of the photos might be a good idea. If we do that, Carl suggested we get a list of people at the forum who want the presentation sent to them. It was also suggested we put it on our committee's page on the town website. At an earlier meeting, Emily had volunteered to do the advertising for the forum to get the word out.

Windy Ridge Project, Champlain Housing Staff Will Join Us: Amy Demetrowitz and Javier Garcia, both from Champlain Housing Trust (CHT) and Tyler Labrie from Evernorth, gave us an update on the Windy Ridge project. This development is north and west of the NRG complex, which is on the east side of Route 116. Javier will be the project leader for CHT. Amy showed us the preliminary master site plan. CHT is partnering with Evernorth on the rental units and is working with Sterling Construction and Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity (GMHFH) on the ownership units. The unit count is 10 single-family homes, 30 multifamily units, and 37 rental units, for a total of 77 units. The 37 rental units will hopefully be converted to ownership units after the 15-year compliance period of their loan structure. On the north side of the project, there are plans for a building that will house a daycare, although that is still up in the air. The biggest restrictions on the site are the wetlands and the slopes. Dale asked if the wetlands were bigger than originally thought because the

preliminary plan was for more than 77 units. Amy said the state's latest definition of what constitutes a wetland was the reason the wetlands increased.

Xander asked if there would be any one-bedroom rental units. Javier provided the preliminary rental unit breakdown by size:

- Four one-bedroom units
- Twenty-one two-bedroom units
- Seven three-bedroom units (Note: This preliminary list does not add up to the 37 units mentioned above.)

Carl asked which units are going to have GMHFH involvement. Amy said possibly some of the condos and hopefully a couple of the single-family homes. Also, most of the condos are in four-plex or six-plex buildings.

Amy's request tonight is for our committee to continue to support the project as we have in the past. Our select board approved moving forward with a Neighborhood Development Area (NDA) application that will include the Windy Ridge development. This is very important for CHT because it streamlines the approval process. Any support we can provide for this application or the overall project at Development Review Board (DRB) meetings would be appreciated.

Dave asked Amy what their financing strategy would be to get this project going. Amy said just the infrastructure cost estimate is at least \$4.5 million so their first step is to get a construction loan. They do have numerous partners involved, so once the infrastructure is in, they can move forward simultaneously on several different phases of the project. They can start building the rental units with Evernorth and the homeownership units with Sterling, GMHFH, and CHT at the same time. The emphasis is to get the rental units online first so those units can help finance the remaining construction.

CHT is working with VGS (formally Vermont Gas Systems) on a potential community geothermal system. VGS received a Department of Energy grant for a feasibility study. If it looks feasible, VGS will apply for an installation grant. In addition, CHT will be making extensive use of rooftop solar.

At best, they will be breaking ground in a year, but more than likely they're looking at a spring 2025 start date. Carl asked if the town's current water situation was an issue for them. Amy said it was and they would need the new town well to be online.

Beth asked what the plan is for the daycare building if that doesn't go through. Amy said they would instead build more housing, possibly a tiny home style development.

In closing, Amy asked if it would be okay for them to provide additional updates as the project proceeds. We said please do. (Amy, Javier, and Tyler left at 7:40 PM.)

Carl stated that at our 9/20/23 meeting, Alex Weinhausen, Director of Planning and Zoning for the town, said the new well is three years away from being online. Rocky explained the holdup. This new municipal well is located on the Haystack Crossing development site. The developer, BlackRock Construction, is going to connect the well to the town's pump station but will do it when

it fits their schedule. Beth and Carl asked Rocky if he knew that the town's current wastewater situation would also be a constraint on Windy Ridge, but Rocky wasn't sure.

The DRB will be looking at this development at their 10/3/23 meeting. Carl, Dave, and Dale hope to attend to provide support. Xander said it may be a good idea if Carl officially stated our committee supports it, and everyone agreed.

Home Modification Update: Carl posted a blurb to the Front Porch Forum on this program. It's run by the Cathedral Square Corporation. It pays for home repairs for those over 62 and in certain income brackets to make their homes safer and livable. Carl is going to repost the blurb monthly to keep it in the public eye.

Budget Request for FY25: For FY24 we asked for \$12,000 (\$2000 for our operating expenses and \$10,000 for the housing fund) but this was reduced by the Select Board to \$5000. Carl gave a rundown of our previous budget requests going back to 2018. Prior to last year, we only exceeded a \$ 1,000 request for years where we needed to update the housing assessment. Carl is looking for feedback on what we should initially request for our budget. (Regarding the housing fund, Beth said the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO) is planning on having a conversation for affordable housing committees about how different places have set up housing trust funds.) Andy suggested talking with CHT about what their permitting fees are and sizing our request to help offset those fees. Carl is thinking of \$10,000 for the housing fund like last year and \$ 1,000 for our operating expenses like in prior years, but also checking with CHT to help with the permit fees. Andy suggested we find out their permitting fees for the rental units because those are the first units to be constructed, and Dale agreed. Carl asked what exactly are the fees CHT would incur. Rocky said there would be a zoning permit application fee, which is based on the number of units. Once they receive all their permits, then CHT will pay their impact and hookup fees. We decided to ask for \$11,000 as stated above unless we get feedback from CHT about their fees, in which case we'll adjust our request as required.

Continue Discussion of a Work Plan (part 1): We decided to set up another in-person meeting as we did on 9/20/23. Carl is looking into what dates the third-floor conference room is available, but it will be before our ADU forum.

Fall Festival Outcome: Emily, Dave, and Carl manned our table at the fall festival. *The Citizen* took their photo. There were a lot of tables there for different groups. If we do it next year, we will set up our table closer to the town department tables. Emily had some ideas to improve our presentation for next year.

FPF Post from Mobile Home Resident: There was a post on the Front Porch Forum (FPF) by a Hinesburg mobile home resident whose contractor walked away from some home improvements they were hired to do. Carl and others in town have gotten involved. She's already gotten a partial solution, but we'll monitor the situation.

Upcoming Meetings Schedule: Our November meeting is the night before Thanksgiving and our December meeting is two days after Christmas. We may want to move the dates of both of those meetings. We'll discuss it at our October meeting.

Consider Next Guests to Discuss Affordable Housing: Carl wonders if we should hold off on figuring out our next guests until we figure out our work plan priorities. Everyone agreed that made sense.

Andy's Email Proposal for Inclusionary Zoning: Andy walked us through his email. Before he wrote it, he refreshed himself on the town's current inclusionary zoning ordinance. In summary, Andy proposes the following:

- On for-sale housing:
 - Increase the percentage of affordable for-sale units in a project from 10% to 15%.
 - Increase the for-sale price from 80% of Area Median Income (AMI) to 100% of AMI.
 - Increase the sold price from no more than 100% of AMI to 120% of AMI.
- On for-rent housing:
 - Increase the percentage of affordable rental units in a project from 10% to 15%.
 - Keep as is the for-rent price at 80% of AMI.
 - Keep as is the actual rent price at 100% of AMI.

We also discussed a waiver provision. Currently, there is not one in the ordinance. A waiver could be needed because funding isn't available for either for-sale or rental units, to encourage more rental units, in case for-sale units are not feasible, or if the developer is trying to do all for-sale units but can't. We discussed a few other scenarios as well. Carl asked Andy to send Alex an email with the information we just discussed.

HCP2 Act 250 Permit Issues: Beth mentioned an article in *Vermont Digger* about the stormwater issues the Hinesburg Center Phase 2 (HCP2) development was having. It was regarding the reduction of the floodplain for the LaPlatte River. She posted the link in the Zoom chat.

Continue Discussion of a Work Plan (part 2): Carl made a list of all the issues we've raised over the years. We decided to break down the issues by priority as follows:

1. Top priority
2. Medium priority
3. Low priority

Dale asked if Carl could email out his now-numbered chart, so we all have the same list. We can also add additional items to the list; Beth suggested rehabbing mobile homes. Dave suggested since Roberta and Emily weren't here tonight that they have a say in the numerical rankings as well, and we all agreed. Xander suggested that committee members take ownership of some of the low-priority items to see if we can further them along.

Approve Minutes from July 26th and September 20th: We reviewed the 7/26/23 and 9/20/23 minutes. Xander motioned they are to be approved and Rocky seconded. They were approved as minorly amended by voice vote.

Motion to Adjourn: Xander motioned to adjourn, and Dale seconded. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 PM.

Next Meeting –

October 25th – Time and topics to be determined; see agenda on the town website.

Respectfully submitted,

Dale Wernhoff
HAHC Secretary

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