



Affordable Housing Committee

Town of Hinesburg

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Meeting Minutes – January 24, 2024 In-person and Zoom Meeting – 7:00 PM (Town Hall Third Floor Conference Room)

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

Public Present: Lisa Zengilowski and Andrea Morgante

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:05 PM.

Public Comment: Lisa and Andrea are attending as interested citizens.

Additions/Deletions to Agenda: There was one deletion and one addition:

1. Vermont Smoke & Cure Follow-up postponed: We spoke with a representative of Vermont Smoke & Cure at our 11/29/23 meeting about how affordable housing impacts their business. Roberta will provide some follow-up information about that discussion at our February meeting.
2. Andy joined a Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA) webinar regarding their rental revolving loan fund and will provide a summary tonight if time allows.

Budget Update: The Select Board will be approving the town budget amounts tomorrow (1/25/24). We originally requested \$10,500, which we reduced to \$5500 after meeting with Town Manager Todd Odit. Our request is in the current budget at \$5000. The notes in the budget documents state that we are also still seeking \$50,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.

ADU Forum Update: The video recording of the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) forum we presented on 10/26/23 has been added to our committee page on the town website. We received feedback that it wasn't of particularly good quality, but we decided to keep it on the page. If we do another forum, we'll need to figure out a way to provide better audio recording. All the PowerPoint presentations from that forum are also on the page. In addition, Carl had Assistant Town Manager Joy Dubin Grossman reorganize prior links to previous recordings for easier access. Joy is working through a glitch that requires you to log into the town's Zoom account to view the 10/26/23 video. Once that is corrected, we'll make a mention of this on Front Porch Forum.

Carl asked if we should send the attendees to the forum an email when the video is available, along with any other follow-up information. He also was wondering if we wanted to do anything with the ADU checklist from the state, possibly tailoring it to match Hinesburg's criteria. A third open item was for Xander to reach out to a representative of the National Bank of Middlebury to discuss ADU

funding options. Xander has been ill this past month so he's going to check into that for our February meeting. Rocky volunteered to email the attendees once everything was figured out on the website. Rocky also said he could look at the ADU checklist to see if it could be tailored to Hinesburg; check with Town Zoning Administrator Jim Jarvis if he has any updates; and check with Champlain Housing Trust (CHT) on the \$50,000 grant program that was waiting for additional funding.

Andrea, who has an ADU, stated she would be glad to talk to anyone who is considering an ADU. She also thought a good topic would be what it's like to be a landlord. Carl thought that would be a promising idea.

Vermont Smoke & Cure Follow-up: As mentioned previously, we'll discuss this at our February meeting.

Housing News Articles Update: Emily did an article on the ADU forum for the local papers. Since then, we discussed doing an article for every issue of *The Hinesburg Record* (which would be ten articles a year) and also sending them to *The Citizen*. Dave provided the first article in this series, about an overview of the Housing Needs Assessment (HNA). The next deadline for submittal is 2/15/24. Dave suggested the next article could be something on affordable housing in general. Carl thought the next article should be a continuation of information from the HNA before we leave that behind. Dale volunteered to do the next article, which needs a rough draft by 2/8/24.

Inclusionary Zoning Discussion: Carl shared Hinesburg Director of Planning and Zoning Alex Weinhagen's email from December. A member of the Planning Commission suggested changing the trigger on inclusionary zoning from ten units to eight units. The Planning Commission is planning to change the inclusionary zoning requirement from 10% of the units to 15% of the units. Carl said if we as a committee have any formal thoughts on the topic then he would send them to Alex. Andy's preference is to keep the trigger as is because it will make it even harder for developers to provide affordable housing. Carl thinks changing the trigger and the percentage at the same time would be too confusing. We do want the 15% tied to the total number of units and not the base number. Carl will pass this on to Alex.

Framework Plan Discussion: Carl updated our spreadsheet of committee tasks and goals with the rankings we gave them this fall. We'll each review it and then we can discuss any fine-tuning required at our February meeting.

Green Mountain Habitat Update: Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity (GMHFH) is interested in the property for sale on Mechanicsville Road. The asking price is just outside what GMHFH can afford for the property. There is a \$50,000 gap between the asking price and what they can afford. If the town can make up the difference, then the project could probably go forward. Todd suggested to Carl using the \$50,000 in ARPA funds that we have requested. We all agreed it's a wonderful use of the funds. Carl mentioned that GMHFH relies on community volunteer hours to build the units so any help would be appreciated. Rocky asked if GMHFH has had any preliminary talks with the town zoning department about the feasibility of doing a project on that site. Carl thinks that Todd has spoken with GMHFH, but Carl isn't sure about anyone else. Carl thought we should entertain a motion to make a recommendation to the Select Board to use \$50,000 in ARPA funds for a GMHFH

potential project on Mechanicsville Road. Andy made the motion and Rocky seconded it. It was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

CVOEO Striving for Equity Project Discussion: Carl provided a recap of this project. The Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO) received a one-year grant that will end within the next few months. The goal was to bring together housing committees throughout the state. Every month they have a drop-in meeting for anyone to Zoom in to discuss housing issues. They also have a workshop once a month. CVOEO has been switching up the times between noon and 5:30 PM to see when they could get the most attendance. Carl attended last night's 5:30 PM meeting, and there will be a workshop on 1/30/24 at noon on "Community Engagement on Municipal Decision Making." If anyone can attend that's great, but they are also recorded so you can view them on your own later. Committee members can be added to the CVOEO mailing list if they choose, but Carl will also forward the emails he gets. The next drop-in meeting is on 2/13/24. Carl asked if the noon and 5:30 PM times work well. Andy said 5:30 PM is difficult due to picking up kids and other constraints.

Town Plan Update & Community Survey: Alex has sent out links to a survey regarding updating the town plan. All residents are encouraged to participate. Also, a Planning Commission member will be reaching out to Carl to get our involvement in editing the housing chapter in the town plan. These rewrites may be dependent on the survey results.

Project Updates: Updates are as follows:

- Hinesburg Center Phase 2: In the deliberation stage of the Act 250 process.
- Haystack Crossing: In Act 250 post-hearing evidence and rebuttals.
- Windy Ridge: They received sketch plan approval on 12/20/23. They are working on an application for preliminary review now.
- Joe Laster property: The Planning Commission is changing the zoning in part of the project so the number of units in the master plan can no longer be built. Alex suggested the boundary between the two zoning districts be moved so the entire project would be in the village district, but the Planning Commission didn't approve that.
- Mobile home grant issue: Carl continues to work with the property owner to get funding from the state housing authority to renovate a bathroom.

Consider Next Guests to Discuss Affordable Housing: Carl is hoping the National Bank of Middlebury will come to our February meeting. We also discussed having a member of the Economic Development Committee come to a future meeting. Carl wanted to know if we would like both parties to attend our February meeting, or one at the February meeting and one at the March meeting. We all agreed it would be best if they were at separate meetings. Carl also mentioned that GMHFH may attend our February meeting but that would be a shorter discussion.

VHFA Webinar: Andy attended this VHFA online forum in November at the kickoff of the rental portion of their missing middle program. This covers subsidizing housing for those making \$55,000 to \$100,000 per year for a household of four. This pilot program is starting with a grant of \$10M from the state for a revolving loan fund for rental housing. If you build rental homes for households in this income range, VHFA will give the builder below-market loans to subsidize the units. The loan stays in the project for ten years and then goes back into the fund. The loans are for between \$100,000 and \$125,000 per unit at 0% to 3% interest. There are some strings attached, and the

loans are geared towards smaller projects. They prioritize small and new developers to get more folks into the marketplace. They are also looking for projects with employer or municipal investment. VHFA also ties this funding to community outreach. To get the funding you have to put out a survey of area employers to see what the needs of the community are. Andy thinks there will be a fair number of applications, and that VHFA will be pursuing a second round of funding.

Approve Minutes from November 29th: We reviewed the 11/29/23 minutes. Rocky motioned they are to be approved and Dave seconded. They were approved by voice vote.

Motion to Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:15 PM.

Next Meeting –

February 28th – Time and topics to be determined; see agenda on the town website.

Respectfully submitted,

Dale Wernhoff
HAHC Secretary