

TOWN OF WASHINGTON
Washington Housing Commission
Meeting Minutes
March 14, 2023- 5:30

All Meetings are subjected to the approval by the Washington Housing Commission

1. Call to Order: 5:30

Members Present- Judie Gorra, Daryl Wright, Robert Woodroffe, Henrietta Small, Carrie Loyd, Charles Jackson

Staff- Michelle Gorra

Public-Jocelyn Ayer, Bill Fairbairn, Chris Charles, Alan Fox

2. Motion to accept the minutes of Feb 14, 2023- made by Darryl Wright, seconded by Henrietta, all voted in favor.

3. Old Business

- a. **Update on Baldwin hill property** - Mike Alex has completed the survey. Mary Coleman, who is the soil scientist will be working on getting all the soils identified. Ready to cut Mike a check for the remaining balance, will reach out for an invoice from him. The fee is \$800 for a soil sample
- b. **Vote on soil testing expenditure-** A motion made by Woody that the housing commission will request from the board of selectmen and board of finance committee to approve \$3300 for the balance of the feasibility study that cannot be not be covered by the ARPA Grant seconded by Henrietta, all in favor.

Jocelyn stated that we need both multifamily rentals and single-family homes for purchase. The tricky thing is getting funding with a parcel this small. Multifamily projects often have to find sites that can fit 10 units to get the department of housing interested in the project. For a smaller parcel, it is probably going to be easier to get homeowner gap funding than it would funding for a small unit multifamily. One of the things we were looking at when acquiring land in Washington is looking for larger parcels to do a bigger multi-unit project CBGD. The Housing Trust is applying for a rehab grant for Dodge Farm. Need three letters of support. Judie wrote a letter in support of the Dodge Farm affordable housing. Woody made a ***motion*** to endorse by the commission seconded by Darryl. All voted in favor. The grant is through Johanna Hayes office and she only gets to pick 15 projects, so it's quite competitive - We may be able to submit to Senator Murphy as well, they all have to be submitted by Sunday.

4. New Business-

- a. **Discussion on how to get more land for affordable housing- Jocelyn Ayer, Director of Litchfield County Center for Housing Opportunity-** She is hosting A communications Planning Webinar March 27th, basically going to be around communications planning for housing nonprofits. What we are finding in a lot of towns, the more towns start reaching out about what they are working on and what they need, and how the lack of housing affects the town. Town of Salisbury hired a communications consultant for a plan on how to reach residents in town, how to make it easier for residents to donate to the local housing organization. The plan includes for example, Facebook town E-Newsletter, talking to the newspaper to get articles in there of how they are going to reach out to residents- they have a yearlong plan of content of how to reach out to people. Can share success stories. Encourage the commission to come to the webinar, Bill mentioned he's working with a family now who is planning on donating 15 acres to the Housing Commission.

- b. **Report on Zoom lecture of CT Land Use Law for Municipal Land Use Agencies, Boards, and Commissions sponsored by CT Bar Association March 11, 2023-** Henrietta, Michelle and Judie attended. Michelle stated that it gave her huge appreciation for what zoning and wetlands have to do. It's helpful for anyone trying to work with the commissions. The lawyer who was in charge of the whole day, who did the opening welcome, talked a lot about affordable housing and how he said it was a state issue. They get that this is needed and on the agenda.

5. Visitors-

- 6. Motion to adjourn at 6:38 made by Darryl seconded by Henrietta, all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amanda Reale
Selectmen's Assistant

Meeting recording can be found here.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4yR5FuFUuc>