

February 14, 2011

Present: Liddy Adams, Ted Bent, Wayne Hileman, Andy O'Hazo, Jean Suddaby, Sue Werkhoven

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Housing Commission was called to order at 5:00 pm by Chairman Wayne Hileman.

Minutes of January 10, 2011 Regular Meeting

The January 10th minutes were amended as follows:

Under: Preliminary Discussion – Courtesy Visit

A. Strawman LLC – Possible Affordable Housing Plan

Words after “emphasized that seniors were looking for places to downsize to” changed to “that have two bedrooms, with at least one on the first floor but preferably both, two full baths, and an attached garage.”

Sue Werkhoven moved to accept the minutes as amended. Liddy Adams seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Inclusion of items not on the Agenda

Jean Suddaby requested a discussion of the current moratorium on condominium development. Wayne Hileman moved to add this item to New Business. Jean Suddaby seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

Updates/Communications

A. On the agenda for the next Zoning Commission meeting is the Housing Commission's request that Housing in the Business District be freed from the requirement of minimum square footage as was recently applied to Conversions of Older Homes.

B. Chairman Wayne Hileman has volunteered to be on the Planning Commission's Sub-Committee that will work on revising the Plan of Conservation and Development, which must be revisited at least once every ten years. This sub-committee will meet this week.

C. The Selectmen's Office has inquired whether the Housing Commission foresees any unusual expenses for the coming year. The Housing Commission sees none.

Old Business

A. Overlay Zones for Village Centers

Wayne Hileman will present to the Planning Commission's Sub-Committee the concept of a Washington Depot Residential District, which is an overlay district. Its purpose would be to allow for a higher density of single-family homes around the village, and for age-restricted housing by Special Permit. Since little or no Federal and State funding will be available for housing issues in the foreseeable future, towns will have to be innovative in addressing these problems.

Sue Werkhoven liked the outline's phrasing of “preserving our way of life” rather than “preserving our rural character” as currently stated in the Plan of Conservation and Development.

New Business

A. Possible Survey of Accessory Apartments

A unanimous decision was made not to pursue this idea at this time.

B. CHFA Mortgages

Wayne Hileman informed members that each town can receive a point toward its affordable housing

count for each CHFA mortgage. Lisbon, CT for example has 34 CHFA mortgages. Washington has none. The Housing Commission will explore the possibilities and pitfalls of using some of its funds to help first time home buyers with a CHFA loan. The Housing Commission will get further information from CHFA officials as to whether this can be accomplished under their current regulations.

C. Condominium Moratorium

Jean Suddaby reminded members that the senior housing survey done in 2007 showed a majority of the Town's senior citizens wanted housing in Washington for downsizing. She feels that this demand has only increased since the survey. Therefore, she would like the Housing Commission to make a request to the Zoning Commission that it lift the moratorium on condominium development. Wayne will speak with Janet Hill as a first step about the best way to approach this concept.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 6:12pm.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on Monday, March 14, 2011, in the Land Use Room at Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Patte Doran
Secretary