

March 12, 2007

Present: Liddy Adams, Don Brigham, Wayne Hileman, Jean Suddaby

Guests: Washington Community Housing Trust (WCHT): Bill Fairbairn, Joan Gauthey, Marty Meyers, John Millington, Walter Whitney

Visitors: Chris Charles, Dick Sears

Call to Order

Chairman Wayne Hileman called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. He distributed an article to members entitled "2 for the price of 1: Combining conservation land and affordable housing."

Minutes of February 12, 2007

Jean Suddaby moved to accept the minutes as submitted. Liddy Adams seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

WCHT

Wayne Hileman welcomed members of the Washington Community Housing Trust, complimenting them on the fine work they have been doing. He asked to hear their viewpoints. WCHT members described their efforts, opportunities that have slipped away, and how limited equity housing works. They looked forward to working with the Housing Commission to provide affordable housing. Wayne Hileman thought the Housing Commission could support joint projects as long as these fit into the definition of affordable as defined by state statute. Also, the Housing Commission must be attentive to the various opinions and interests of all the town's citizens. Don Brigham said the Housing Commission wasn't ruling out its support for the idea of buying an existing property as another way to increase the affordable housing inventory. However, the pros and cons of the limited equity approach, as well as other approaches, should be clearly delineated. Also, regarding the respective roles of the Housing Commission and the WCHT, he sees the former as doing the facilitating and the latter as doing the implementing. Bill Fairbairn wondered if the Conservation Commission's goal of preserving 30% of the town as open space can be met through conservation easements, then perhaps the budget monies now assigned to open space could be transferred to that of housing. How funding had been put together on past projects such as Dodge Farm and Meeker Swamp was discussed. Chris Charles and Bill Fairbairn had questions about the feasibility of using existing housing stock because of the money needed to renovate these houses to bring them up to code. Wayne Hileman said they would be working to clarify the different approaches to accomplishing housing goals.

2008 Town Budget

Wayne Hileman distributed a letter that served as the official request by the Housing Commission for funding for the 2007/2008 Budget Year. Starting at the establishment of the commission in 2005, an annual allocation over 5 years from the Capital Non-Recurring portion of the Town's Annual Budget was provided. The coming year's request is for \$50000 from the Capital Non-Recurring portion of the budget and \$1000 from the General Fund to cover incidental Housing Commission expenses (postage, printing, etc.). The members unanimously consented to submit this letter.

Senior Housing Survey

Members worked on the draft of the article about the senior survey they were submitting to the town newsletter. They also continued work on the official report of the survey results. A handout of finalized tally results was distributed.

Other Business

These items were tabled until the next meeting. Also, time would be set aside to go over Don Brigham's memo which sets out some procedures for the Housing Commission to consider.

Adjournment

Wayne Hileman moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Jean Suddaby. The meeting adjourned at 6:45.

The next scheduled meeting is Monday, April 9, at 5:00 p.m. in the Land Use Room, Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Patte Doran