

January 11, 2010

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

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Housing Commission was called to order at 5:04 pm by Chairman Wayne Hileman.

Minutes of December 14, 2009 Regular Meeting

Wayne Hileman moved to accept the minutes as submitted. Sue Werkhoven seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Inclusion of Items Not on Agenda

Chairman Wayne Hileman opened the floor to public comment.

Peter Tagley, board member of Quarry Ridge, asserted that those attending the Town Meeting on January 7 from Quarry Ridge were not an organized group. Rather, he felt that the community-at-large was not disposed to view this project positively. One of his own concerns was the plan's possible impact on adjacent property values. Other concerns included the question of proper upkeep of the proposed houses.

Sue Werkhoven commented that the WCHT's presentation could have benefited from people coming forward who were interested in buying a proposed house. She had left the Town Meeting feeling that there was a "we don't want that in our town" sentiment. Liddy Adams said that some of the comments made at that meeting made her feel ashamed for the Town. Wayne agreed, stating that he felt some of the things that were said "did not show Washington in the kindest light." Mr. Tagley concurred.

Mr. Tagley said that feedback he had gleaned from casual encounters with people in Washington indicated a renewed interest in condominiums for those thinking of downsizing. Also, there have been many requests for one floor living from potential buyers looking at Quarry Ridge condos. He suggested that the Housing Commission do a survey of residents to elicit their thoughts on housing needs. Jean Suddaby responded that the Housing Commission had done such a survey three years ago, publishing its findings in a full report (which is available on the Housing Commission's web page). The survey showed a desire for this kind of housing and even more demand for senior apartments and a congregate living facility.

Peter Tagley wondered whether Mr. Hileman could approach the WCHT with suggestions on how to more fully recognize community desires/needs/expectations. Wayne explained that the Housing Commission is an advisory public board and has no authority over the WCHT or any other private organization. The Housing Commission doesn't choose who comes before it with requests for funds. It analyzes proposals brought to it and makes recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. Unlike the WCHT, which focuses on affordable housing, the Housing Commission studies all types of housing in Washington.

Andy O'Hazo thanked Mr. Tagley for his comments but felt that some of them concerned the WCHT, not the Housing Commission and that those should be directed to the Trust.

Election of Officers

Sue Werkhoven nominated Wayne Hileman to serve as Chair. Andy O'Hazo seconded the nomination which was approved unanimously. Wayne Hileman nominated Liddy Adams as Vice Chair. Sue Werkhoven seconded the nomination which was approved unanimously.

Updates

A. Wykeham Rise LLC's Affordable Housing application: Inland Wetlands has approved the application. However, there is a possibility a neighbor may be appealing this decision.

B. Town Meeting on Marbledale Meadows on January 7: 139 voted against the plan and 81 voted in favor of it.

C. Few Good Acres Initiative: Nothing to report; inclement weather has hampered progress.

D. Talbot–Mill Race Road proposal: Wayne Hileman has forwarded to the Selectmen a copy of the November 9, 2009 letter he sent to Peter Talbot, in which the Housing Commission expressed its interest in pursuing further dialog about Peter’s proposal.

Working Discussion

Members discussed doing a written study detailing ideas for keeping Washington’s village centers viable. Having some possible plans ready would make it easier to respond to the pressures of future development. These plans would build on the goals given in the Town Plan of Conservation and Development. Wayne Hileman gave members a draft of questions they could use as a guide for developing this study and share responses at coming meetings.

Adjourn

Wayne Hileman moved to adjourn the meeting. Jean Suddaby seconded the motion which was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on Monday, February 8, 2010, in the Land Use Room at Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Patte Doran

Secretary

Housing Com
