

DRAFT Workforce Housing Commission Minutes
March 30, 2009
Falmouth Town Hall, Council Chambers

PRESENT:

Housing Commissioners: Ward Graffam, Chairman; Willie Audet, Donna Cheney, Paul Strout

Town Representatives: Nathan Poore, Town Manager; Theo Holtwijk, Director Long Range Planning

Developer Representatives: Kevin Bunker, Joshua Cushman, Jim Hatch, Architects Phil Kaplan and Richard Lo

Advisor: John Gallagher, Westbrook Housing Authority

Town consultant: Jim Damicis, Policy One

Public: Tim Flaherty, Bill Gardiner, John Graustein, Eydie Pryzant, Patty Weber

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ward Graffam at 6:05 P.M.

1. **Review and Approval of Minutes:** The Minutes of the February 23rd meeting were unanimously approved.
2. **Continued discussion of Follow-up to February 9th Town Council Workshop:** Jim Damicis of Policy One gave a presentation if the project had a 100% Affordable Housing Tax Increment Financing Program (TIF). This is a Maine State Housing Program for municipalities to use to assist affordable housing developments and to support related infrastructure and facilities including local schools. TIF is a flexible financing tool and municipalities have considerable discretion on how funds will be used. There are requirements for the Program and Falmouth's Workforce Housing would fall into these requirements. Jim discussed and distributed several spreadsheets.

There were several questions from Mr. John Graustein relative to the TIF formula. He was concerned that the Town would have to "give up" some \$2 Million dollars to gain \$3.5 Million. He also wanted to understand the mechanics of the TIF in terms of costs and benefits to the town. Jim from PolicyOne offered an explanation on that. He also wondered if a person making \$100K would be eligible to live in the proposed development and asked if it was possible get a mortgage with 5% down and what one's credit score needed to be.

The TIF presentation was followed by a draft presentation from the Developers Collaborative designed to meet the Commission's interest of presenting the project to the Public in a workshop format and to answer the questions the Town Council had during the February 9 workshop.

The public asked several questions. Patty Weber asked if the focus of the project had changed in terms of who the project would serve, since it was stated that a 1 BR condo would have few kids in it. She was concerned about a change in focus. The Commission commented that the project focus remained unchanged and would offer housing options from 1, 2, and 3 bedroom housing units that would be targeted towards the people who work in Falmouth, but can't afford to live in here. The Commission gave examples of the type of people, such as policemen, teachers, and town employees. She was concerned that this didn't include families. The Commission clarified that this did indeed include families. Patty stated that people were excited about the proposed program.

Tim Flaherty stated that he felt that an adequate buffer along his property boundary had not been discussed and that a proposed stormwater pond close to his house would affect that. Kevin Bunker stated that the Developer Collaborative team was mindful of his concerns and planned to incorporate appropriate mitigation (such as raingardens) into the site plan. The stormwater discussion was included the last part of the presentation, but due to its length the Commission had not heard that yet. The site plan has not yet been updated since the Commission originally received Tim Flaherty's concerns.

Bill Gardiner asked about the Habitat portion of the project, how those house designs would work, and about the habitat volunteers building the houses. He had sent a summary of council comments to Councilor Libby, who asked via e-mail that they be distributed. Staff distributed those comments at the end of the meeting.

John Gallagher hand out a 2009 affordability analysis based on income guidelines that had just come out.

After listening to the presentation and recognizing that it was trying to serve two distinct needs, the Commission decided it would be more appropriate to meet with the Town Councilors on April 13 to answer their questions and then hold a separate public workshop at a date to be determined to address their concerns. The Commission also felt another Commission meeting was necessary to continue the discussion and finalize the April 13th presentation for the Town Council.

At the end of the meeting, Phil Kaplan and Richard Lo of Kaplan Thompson Architects made a brief presentation on their latest thinking for the architectural design of the development. The Commission agreed to spend more time at the next meeting to complete this presentation. It requested that digital images be distributed.

3. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be **Monday, April 6 at 6:00 in the Town Council Chambers**. The purpose is to finalize the Developers Collaborative presentation for the Town Council.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Lee Cheney