

Lenox Affordable Housing Committee

November 26, 2007

Minutes

Members present: Dave Klausmeyer (DK), Chair, Roscoe Sandlin (RS)), Theresa Ahrens (TA), Jo Anne Magee(JM), and Olga Weiss(OW).

Also in attendance: Deborah Burke (DB), Trinity Church Representative and Mary Albertson (MA), Town Planner.

Patty Quinn (PQ) absent with notification. Kate McNulty-Vaughan (KV) absent.

DK opened the meeting at 5:15 PM. Members reviewed the minutes and offered corrections. Members voted unanimously to approve the minutes with corrections.

DK asked about the Peer to Peer application. MA said that DHCD approved the request and they are working to find a "peer". It is noted that most "peers" are live and work in the "495 Area" and we might need to be flexible about working with a peer who cannot attend meetings in Lenox. It was agreed that most of the work could be complete via email and telephone conversations.

The sub-committee members offered a report regarding their work on preparing the plan. TA distributed information tables she prepared based on the Bolton Plan. Members discussed the towns she used as comparable communities. Discussion ensued and members agreed these were appropriate comparable communities. She needs to prepare three additional tables. MA will forward information regarding building permits so she can complete the tables. Members discussed other information tables such as Hispanic population. Members agreed to review the tables and offer input at the December 10 meeting. Members thanked TA for all her hard work.

RS suggested that the members should consider trends in the housing market. He noted that Lenox is exclusive instead of inclusive because of the high real estate costs. Lenox has an aging population but is there a need for over 55 affordable housing. Currently, there are units available at the housing authority and traditionally there is a waiting list.

DK would like to see affordable housing units updated on a yearly. He would like to see new affordable units for families. OW suggested that a numbers of people who rented properties in Lenox bought properties after 9-11. RS noted one can determine second home owners because they pay personal property tax.

DK noted that the committee has been asked to comment on the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) Plan. The CPC is required to address community housing. RS explained that 10 % of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds must be dedicated to community housing. It was noted that the CPA legislation calls for community housing not affordable housing. RS suggested that community housing should receive approximately \$45,000 per year once the state match is available. He went on to explain

that the CPC is preparing the plan and application as soon as possible so the committee can consider funding request recommendations to Annual Town Meeting. DK asked the maximum percent that could be dedicated to community housing and RS said 75%. Discussion ensued and members agreed that given the tight timeline, that the goals listed in the *Affordable Housing Task Force Report* be used for the CPC Plan. Members also suggested that project specific projects be removed. The plan should address general projects for faith-based and not-for-profit housing projects.

Members discussed establishing an Affordable Housing Trust Fund and the and waiving sewer and water connection fees for affordable housing projects and suggested that these goals be listed in the Planned Production Plan. MA will determine if the town can waive sewer and water connection fees.

DK asked for a volunteer to serve as Vice-Chair just in case he cannot attend a meeting. JM volunteered. Members thanks JM for agreeing to serve as Vice Chair.

RS asked if members had an opportunity to review the email he sent regarding changes 40 B regulations. RS agreed to review the proposed changes and report back to the committee. He said he would not be at the December 10 meeting but will try to email his comments to the committee.

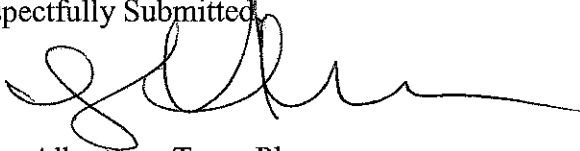
DB offered an update on the Trinity Church project.

DK suggested it was time to wrap-up the meeting. He suggested that there are two themes from our discussion this evening. First, preparing a plan that meets the planned production requirements. Second, preparing a plan that will be a good working document for the town.

Members discussed future meeting dates. Members agreed on January 14 & 28 at 5:15 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 PM

Respectfully Submitted,



Mary Albertson, Town Planner

Approved: 12/10/07