

LONDONDERRY, NH - Housing Task Force

Minutes of the meeting on June 7, 2007 in the Cable Studio Meeting Room

Members Present:

John Michels, Chairman/At Large; Rob Nichols; Jim Schwalbe; Mary Soares; Deb Lievens; Mike Speltz; George Herrmann; Earl Rossi; Jon Weigler, At Large; Giovanni Verani, At Large; Al Baldasaro, At Large; M.Bove Bove, Ex-Officio

Staff Present: André Garron, John Vogl, Cathy Dirsa

J.Michels called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

M.Bove made a motion to approve the minutes from May 3. G.Herrmann seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion 9-0-1 (R.Nichols abstained). Minutes are approved.

J.Michels announced that Stacy Thrall had to resign due to other personal business commitments.

A.Garron introduced Ben Frost from NH Housing Finance Authority

He gave a PowerPoint presentation (see attached).

Some of the questions asked were:

A.Baldasaro – We've heard some NH housing is being occupied by MA residents that work in MA, so it really isn't beneficial to the NH areas with these issues? Yes, it happens to a lot of areas that are commutable to MA.

John M - Do you see affordable apartments changing over to unaffordable condos? Yes, unfortunately.

M.Bove – Some communities have height limitations on affordable housing. Are communities struggling with that?

Ben - Yes. You want to preserve the assets of the town and permit things that fit.

B. Frost said he is hoping that he will leave this group with thoughts of keeping an open mind about the possibilities of affordable without compromising the town' integrity.

John M – An affordable home in this town averages about \$317,000. In your opinion, what type of family could afford this?

Ben - A family making about \$120,000/yr. (about 180%)

J.Vogl volunteered to put together a summary of affordable housing costs vs. yearly income.

A.Garron feels demographics plays a part in affordable housing. Is there any info re. this?

Ben - In the handouts there are examples of new housing construction and average school ages living in these homes. It was more like 5.5 per household. Number of kids per household is going down. People are having children later in life, which affects the numbers. Children of the "baby boomers" are passing through the school systems.

A. Garron said there is a wealth of information on the NH housing website.

John M asked if Ben had any suggestions who we could have as other guest speakers for future meetings.

Ben – Great idea and I will give Andre a list of names. I suggest you run the ordinance by developers.

M.Bove – Joe DeCarolis was a perfect example of this with his proposed affordable elderly housing on Stonehenge Rd. Originally he had proposed the development on a different piece of land, but it financially would not work.

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Website Information

J.Vogl said the website covers:
Datasources used;
US Census, dated 2000 (we need a better source of income)
Housing Website
Local accessing records (selling prices, April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2007)
John M asked Veranni if he could work with John V to get more recent data.
John M said it's been shown that people living in Londonderry, could not today afford to buy the home they have been living in through the years of housing inflation.
A.Garron said the average weekly income is \$774.
John V went through some of the tables for income vs. affordable housing (attached)
He also provided tables of employment vs. wages and housing sizes.
M.Bove said this demonstrates what everyone has been saying. Children that were brought up in the town cannot afford to live here when they become adults.
M.Bove - is anyone looking at statistics of MA residents selling their homes and moving into larger more affordable homes in Londonderry.
Ben - the Commonwealth MA is constantly looking at these statistics.
John M said at the next meeting we should discuss what we need to encourage.
R.Nichols said if there is some way we can correlate data. Might be worth looking at assessment data. Taking median and define true median, perhaps with dollar marks.
John M said one thing we should do is get this information to the different boards that members of our task force work on.
John M said we should look at what areas have water & sewer, because it might make those areas more affordable. It could possibly be rezoned.

Other business

Consensus was to hold future meetings on the last Wednesday of each month. Our next meeting will be July 25.

Adjournment:

John Verani made a motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 PM. Seconded by J.Weigler.
Meeting adjourned.

These minutes prepared by Cathy Dirsra, Planning Department Secretary.