

Minutes

North Stonington Affordable Housing Committee

March 27, 2014

Members Present: Tim Pelland, Mary Ann Ricker, Jim Scaramozza, Tina DuBosque
Kristen Comstock

Guests: Christine Devine, Mark Donahue, Juliet Leeming

Location: Wheeler High School Media Center

Meeting was called to order by Co-Chair Mary Ann Ricker at 6:10 PM.

By motion, the February 27, 2014 Minutes were unanimously accepted as written.

Public Comments: Selectman Donahue thanked the Committee for its efforts and progress that led to interviews between the Board of Selectmen and potential grant writers this month. Final contract details between Lisa Low and Associates are under discussion. This firm is experienced working with small towns and HUD programs. It would write the application for a \$400,000 HUD grant under its Small Cities Housing Rehabilitation Program. If NS receives the grant, Lisa Low and Associates collects its fee from the HUD funds. If the grant is not approved, Lisa Low and Associates does not bill NS for its fee. Lisa Low must have the signed contract 4/4/14 in order to complete the grant application and meet HUD's April submission deadline.

J. Scaramozza requested that the possibility of deed restrictions under the HUD grant be rechecked. Could they be added to the program? Without them, will the town make any progress on its inventory of units classified as AH?

M. Donahue distributed a "Simplified Project Plan Outline" being provided to all committees to facilitate communications with the Selectmen. Applicable sections provided to the BOS prior to, or at the time of, oral committee reports will assure that both parties have the same information.

J. Scaramozza noted AHC is appointed by, and its charge comes through the BOS. That responsibility cannot be reversed.

M. Donahue agreed. The outline is supplemental to the oral report, a "tickler" for follow-up, and an aid to timely response as the Selectmen track requirements of numerous significant issues.

J. Leeming suggested outlines be connected to POCD goals. It could foster cooperation /support between commissions and town organizations

T. Pelland suggested taping additional meetings, such as a meeting with Lisa Low, to inform citizens of programs, progress and opportunities.

M.A. Ann Ricker noted property foreclosure communications need improvement. NSAHC should be informed early to determine if a foreclosed property could serve an affordable housing purpose.

M. Donahue noted tax collection policy is being reworked. NSAHC could be included in the procedure.

J. Leeming stated the protocol exists; follow-through is needed.

J. Scaramozza added that foreclosure procedures are lengthy. NSAHC could be informed early and have ample time to assess a situation.

Old Business:

Incentive Housing Regulations: J. Leeming has completed the RFP draft for a pre-development grant to write these regulations. There is a program 3/31/14 at the Lyceum in Hartford on the subject. Notify J. Leeming if interested in attending.

Meadowcourt: No report

“White Board” Event: Partnership for Strong Communities (David Fink) was pleased with the taping of eleven NS participants. Editing to fit time slots is in process. It can be aired on Comcast free at different times of day.

The NSAFH needs funds to purchase equipment so the video can be placed and viewed at other town locations. We will use the new BOS “Simplified Project Plan Outline” to provide definitive information and answers to prior questions.

NS farm needs for AH for workers: At present farmers interviewed do not see it as necessary. They meet their needs by hiring local residents who already have housing.

New Business:

NSAHC Committee needs two new members. Several names were suggested and will be contacted to see if they are interested.

CEDS Plan: To qualify for funding, projects must now be listed on this plan.
Three of NSAHC’s initiatives will be listed.

NEXT MEETING: April 24, 2014 at 6:00 PM: Wheeler High School Media Center

Agenda completed, without further new business, a motion was made, seconded and approved to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting was dismissed by the Chair at 7:40 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen A. Comstock,
Recording Secretary, Pro Tem