

## **Affordable Housing Committee Meeting Minutes July 10, 2007**

Present: Glenn Chalder of Planimetrics, Tammy Freeberg of CT Housing Coalition, Marcella Hyland of LISC, Alisa Morrison, Jim Kelley, Tom Hyland, Tim Murney.

Meeting began at 7 p.m.

Committee members discussed how we have secured funding for the Affordable Housing plan to update Marcella Hyland who was present to begin a supportive partnership between the Committee and Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) of Hartford, CT. She was told we have received \$5000 from the Bodenwein Public Benevolent Foundation, \$5000 from Webster Bank, \$5000 from Washington Trust and \$5000 from the Town of Stonington.

Glenn Chalder, Principal of Planimetrics, added to the update for Marcella and explained that his firm has been retained to develop an Affordable Housing Plan for Stonington for \$15,000+. He said he is behind schedule due to staff changes/shortages. When asked about a timeline, Glenn said everything would be delayed 60 days. He offered to e-mail to the Committee a new scope of work and a new schedule. Marcella asked Glenn if Planimetrics has done any Affordable Housing Plans before. Glenn said his firm did the Stonington 2004 Plan of Conservation and Development and has assisted Narragansett, RI with affordable housing efforts, but no he hasn't done any plans in CT. He said he is looking forward to setting an example/creating a model in Stonington for the rest of the state.

Marcella asked whether the Committee was already a 501c3 non-profit organization. We are not, but she was told the Committee used other 501c3 resources to secure funding. Marcella wanted to know what the next phase of action would be that required funding. Alisa Morrison said that after a plan is developed, the Committee intends to inform the public of the need for affordable housing and how it works. Marcella asked about any ongoing housing development in Stonington. Alisa pointed out there is a development in Pawcatuck which is not considered affordable or even intended for families.

Tammy Freeberg, with the CT Housing Coalition, asked how the plan would be implemented. Alisa explained the AH plan would become a part of the town's Plan of Conservation and Development.

Jim Kelley asked Marcella whether there was anything our Committee could do to help LISC help us. Marcella explained that LISC has traditionally worked in urban areas, but has begun working with the CT Housing Coalition on Housing to help small towns. They have worked so far with towns like Franklin, Old Saybrook, Kent and Cheshire. She said 157 of 169 towns in CT are considered to have too little affordable housing. She said LISC helps out with technical support and three forms of funding support: loans, grants and recoverable grants. LISC can provide town governments with technical support but not money. LISC works with housing authorities for instance and intends to facilitate upgrading of existing housing inventory. LISC does more of linking people to resources rather than giving out money. When it does, LISC can only give money to nonprofit organizations.

Marcella asked about the climate in Stonington for affordable housing. Alisa said there is a definite need for it. Glenn said the need would be detailed through research. However, the sense is that affordable housing is little understood and often confused with subsidized housing. He said Stonington is no where near the required 10% and the 830g state statute on housing is one option to create affordable housing. Currently, it acts like a stick to motivate towns to achieve state mandated levels of affordable housing, according to Glenn. He would like to craft an affordable housing plan that

would turn 830g into a carrot and encourage towns to make incremental progress and be eligible for exemptions from state penalties as an incentive for making an annual effort to comply with 830g.

Tom Hyland said the local Southeastern Connecticut Council of Government is getting behind affordable housing and pointed out that our state senator Andrew Maynard is a big supporter. Also, Dianna Urban, our state representative is a big supporter of affordable housing and often attends our committee meetings. There is some support from town government. Tom said proposed legislation modeled after the Home Connecticut initiative is a carrot. Marcella asked Tom about his organization, Thames River Community Service and his service area. She asked Tom to provide her with logistical (contact) information to begin the grant application.

Glenn Chalder will e-mail scope of the work to be done by Planimetrics with a phased breakdown and a new timeline.

Tammy Freeberg asked whether the committee could see how LISC can provide technical assistance. Tom Hyland said LISC can help with educational endeavors in general when the plan is done. Glenn Chalder said he would like to take advantage of LISC's technical assistance as it would be very helpful for a consultant, too. Tim Murney asked Tammy what are examples of "technical assistance". She said drafting community's needs based on surveys, provide requirements for senior housing financing, etc. Tammy asked the committee if we could actually see an affordable house being produce at some point in the future in Stonington. We all enthusiastically said yes.

Glenn Chalder said Planimetrics plan will help with public policy, directions and tools. He said he will be back to attend our committee meeting again in September. Marcella asked Glenn whether the public education campaign could be included in the plan. Glenn said it wasn't included in the scope of the work. Tom Hyland said the Bodenwein and town money would be spent first to pay for the plan. Jim Kelley said LISC could help us with the public outreach. Tammy said LISC could provide best practices such as small home gatherings. Jim Kelley said the outreach needs to be perfected before implemented. Alisa Morrison suggested \$5,000 for campaign development and \$5,000 for campaign implementation.

Marcella said that since the LISC application process doesn't need to be urgent, it will take about 3 months. She assured us that Stonington is at the top of the list and that it could be a model for other towns in Connecticut. Glenn said Stonington seems to be the only town going in this direction. Tom Hyland said having the plan will be nice, but that we want to see someone actually walking through the door of an affordable home. Briefly discussed town and community support. Marcella said LISC is here to help. The LISC/CT Housing Coalition team consists of: Marcella Hyland, Leslie Higgins-Biddle, Pat Spring, Tammy Freeberg

Meeting was adjourned at 9 p.m.

Minutes submitted by  
Tim Murney, Secretary