

WAYLAND HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Minutes – March 19, 2012

Submitted by Rachel G. Bratt

Approved unanimously

Attending: Mary Antes, Kathy Boundy, Rachel Bratt, Dan Brown, Marty Nichols, Betty Salzberg, Maddie Sifantus

Guests: Jerry Heller, Chair, Community Preservation Committee; John Sullivan, Conservation Commission

Meeting called to order at 7:47

1. Kathy moved to approve minutes of February 13, 2012; Mary seconded. Unanimous approval.
2. Mary provided a brief update on the Habitat project. A total of 46 blocks for the foundation have been sold. Dana Owens has met with Sarkis and is stepping in to represent the Worcester chapter, since Dana Owens is ill. Worcester and Lowell chapters received grants from Home Depot to launch a pilot project involving assistance to income-eligible veterans to renovate their homes –2 Wayland Veterans are slated to receive help. The grant terminates on May 1 and it is hoped that, in addition to helping a few veterans, it will provide publicity for Habitat, more generally. Worcester chapter will raise \$160K for Wayland project. There will be a fund-raiser at Neiman Marcus court, at the Natick Mall (April 29th). Money raised from attendees from Wayland will go toward the Wayland project. Habitat will have a table at Framingham Earth Day, April 28 and at Wayland Earth Day, April 30.
3. Marty Nichols reported on the problem related to the interior finish at Wayland Commons. Brian Boggia sent email to Marty that acknowledged that a complaint against the developer had been initiated and that the developer had installed the same central vacuum units in all the affordable units. One of the families had raised the issue that her unit did not have this amenity. The developer knows that his actions are being watched carefully.
4. Rachel reported on the Dudley Area Advisory Committee and indicated that they are trying to wrap up their report to the selectmen. There is still no agreement about a small number of affordable units being sited on the property. In addition, the Park & Rec representative has indicated that it is unlikely that they would agree on a transfer if affordable housing were part of the plan.
5. Next WHP meeting scheduled for April 16th at 7:45 p.m. April 9 is Town Meeting. We left open the question of whether we would hold an April meeting.
6. Jerome Heller, Chair of the Community Preservation Committee presented his reasons for opposing the reduction in the CPA surcharge, as proposed in Article 6. He is concerned about the atmosphere of reducing taxes “at any cost.” The proponent, Mr. Sherry, sees limited/no consequences of reducing the surcharge. He is also critical that only a small amount of CPA money has been spent/year. Jerry disagrees with all these points.

The CPC committee responds to proposals as they come forward; Jerry does not believe that they have ever turned down a proposal for funding. 21 proposals have been funded. CPA specifically allows towns to save money for large projects. This was the intention from the outset. For example, right now there is a possibility of the town purchasing a conservation restriction on 250 acres owned by Devens Hamlen. It seems that at least \$10 million would be needed for acquiring a permanent restriction on development. Right now, money set aside in the CPA fund is about \$4 million short of the \$10 million—a sum that could increase based on additional land appraisals, which have been requested by Hamlen. A lower CPA surcharge would have negative implications for the town's ability to raise any such shortfall, through issuing a bond.

Jerry also commented that the state currently provides \$.26 for every dollar of CPA funds raised by the town; this is a really good return on the investment, compared with an average savings of \$140/year for each household in town.

According to John Sullivan, the Conservation Commission has identified lots of land for potential restrictions or purchase.

There are other projects being considered by the CPC, such as a request by the fire chief that a sprinkler system, costing about \$800K, be installed at Cochituate Apartments.

Rachel indicated that she was concerned about discussing the \$10 million project too much; many in town may not feel that that is a good use of town money.

Jerry indicated that our committee can help defeat Article 6 by writing letters to the editor and speaking at Town Meeting.

Mary moved that the WHP vote to defeat Article 6; seconded by Maddie. All members voted in favor (i.e., in opposition to the article to reduced the CPA surcharge).

Jerry noted that a positive TM vote on Article 6 would have to be ratified by the town in a general election.

Betty volunteered to write a letter opposing Article 6, to be sent to Town Crier. Rachel will work on that with her.

7. Other business.

Mary and Betty attended meeting on the proposed Route 20 elderly development. Low turnout. Focus on the amenities that residents might want.

Wayland Forrest (near clock shop) apparently has a new name. Under construction; 16 units, with 4 affordable.

8. Mary moved to adjourn at 9:15; seconded by Betty.