

WAYLAND HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Minutes – August 8, 2012

Submitted by Rachel G. Bratt

Unanimously Approved September 10, 2012

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

Meeting called to order at 7:35

1. Mary moved to approve minutes of May 14, 2012; Kathy seconded. Unanimous approval.
2. Rachel noted that Maddie Sifantus has resigned from the committee, due to other obligations. She had mentioned the need to do so on several occasions. She said that she would try to find a replacement from the clergy association. Rachel will be in touch with her to see if any progress has been made.
3. Committee members also discussed two other openings on WHP—conservation and selectmen. Betty would be willing to be named the representative from conservation, if that were OK with both that board and the Planning Board, which she currently represents. Then we would need a Planning Board representative. Kathy noted that there is a new family at the Nike housing; perhaps someone there would be interested in joining our committee.
4. Rachel reported that, at Brian Boggia's request, she had signed the form that the town will send to DHCD, which requests that the 12 affordable rental units being built as part of the Town Center project be counted as part of the Subsidized Housing Inventory. According to Brian, the maximum monthly rental price can be \$1300, which he acknowledged sounds quite high. If the units cannot be rented at that price, the developer will need to lower the price. Rachel and several members voiced their ongoing concern about the desirability of these units. It was noted that the WHP's vote opposing the plan that allowed for affordable units to be built over stores was the correct position.
5. Mary provided an update on the Habitat project. The Planning Board has approved the project and it is now going to the ZBA. Approval could come as early as late August, but it may not happen until September. Without full town approvals, very little can occur on the property. Perhaps some trees can be taken down, but that's likely about all. There is still a hope that both foundations can be laid before the winter and that at least one house could be "buttoned up" so that interior work could begin after the New Year. This would allow Minuteman Tech students to work on plumbing and electrical systems in the spring 2013 semester.

There is a new Habitat director for the Worcester branch, Tim Firment. There will be a wine and cheese fundraiser at Russell's, late afternoon on Saturday Oct. 20. Churches are slowly getting involved and the possibility of involving students from the Middle School will be explored in the fall. Plan to sell the Styrofoam blocks at Town Landfill.

6. Rachel reported that the Dudley Area Advisory Committee has not met since late May; Kathy attended that meeting since Rachel was out of the country. Kathy indicated that the issue of the affordable units continues to be opposed by neighbors. Mike Lowery presented a plan that seemed to include affordable units only if the route 20 elderly housing proposal does not materialize. Rachel has continually stressed to DAAC members that the two issues are separate and that Dudley units should not in any way be linked to that project. Kent Greenawalt, the representative from the Planning Board, apparently resigned from the sub-committee that is trying to draft a plan. A compromise solution is appearing less and less likely.
7. Other projects: Mary noted the group home near the Vokes theatre is going up, with HUD funding. It will be a 5 bedroom facility and all of the "units" (i.e., bedrooms) should count on Subsidized Housing Inventory.
8. Jackie Ducharme, new member of the Wayland Housing Authority, is very interested in the town buying foreclosed properties, rehabbing them, and then selling them or renting them as affordable units. Question of where the funding would come from leads to a discussion of trying again to get an Affordable Housing Trust Fund enacted by the town. Apparently, Jackie would like to see a committee formed that would start with the plan that a prior committee worked on, but did not agree to. Betty had been on that committee and was opposed to the plan that emerged, since she felt it was too restrictive. Specifically, the proposal would have required the Trust to go back to Town Meeting for approval for any development that would involve more than one unit. This would tie the hands of the new Trust committee, and would not allow them to move quickly on a bigger project.

Betty and Mary suggested that it would be good to start by looking at the state's guidelines for an Affordable Housing Trust, and go from there, rather than starting with the prior committee's draft, which had not gotten approval. Betty believes that the state's guidelines do not require the Trust to go back to Town Meeting for approval of a possible project. Betty will send a draft of the old Trust proposal and of the state's guidelines to Rachel.

Several members indicated the importance of representatives for a new Housing Trust committee coming from all sections of town, without any one neighborhood having disproportionate representation. Kathy and Marty did not rule out being on the committee. But, in the meantime, Rachel will call Sarkis to get more information about who is putting the committee together, how it will select members, and what its likely charge will be.

DHCD is sponsoring an Affordable Housing Trust workshop on Oct. 10 in Framingham. Mary is paying \$25 out-of-pocket to attend.

Mary feels that any new trust fund should be structured so that it is optimally cost-effective. How can you get the most housing for the least amount of money? Presumably, the funds for the Trust Fund would come from annual set-asides from the CPA. Also, it is possible that about \$45K that is currently in an Affordable Housing Fund could be transferred to the new Trust Fund.

Once the Town Center condos are sold, there will be an additional contribution by the developer, which could also go into a new Trust Fund.

It was decided that we would postpone having a meeting with the Community Preservation Committee to discuss opportunities for using that fund for affordable housing, in view of the ongoing discussion about the Housing Trust. We will devote our next meeting to a discussion of the Affordable Housing Trust issue.

9. A question was raised about the status of Devens Hamlen's Covered Bridge project and, specifically, whether there are any new rules about the town's willingness to accept in lieu payments or off-site houses, in order to fulfill the inclusionary zoning by-law. Rachel will ask Sarkis about this. Apparently, Devens has purchased a number of properties that, presumably, he is willing to swap for the on-site commitment under the by-law.
10. Next meetings will continue on the second Monday of every month at 7:45pm, except when that day falls on a holiday.
Fall schedule: September 10, October 15, November 12, December 10.
11. Marty moved to adjourn at 9:05; seconded by Dan.