

AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE – MINUTES

Meeting date: Wednesday February 7, 2019 6:30pm

Participating Council Members:	
Chair	Carol Bacon
Secretary	Jon Hughes
CPC representative	Alan Chaney
Member	Robert Nelson
Member	
Other Participants (Town Administrator, other committees, visitors, etc.):	
Massachusetts Housing Partnership	Susan Connelly
Chair, Board of Selectman	Leah Basbanes

Meeting began at 6:40

Review of Prior Minutes

- The minutes of the last meeting were unanimously accepted.

Discussion

- Led by Susan Connelly, expert on affordable housing development, site due diligence, feasibility.
- Challenges faced by responders of our RFP
 - o It is very difficult for developers to respond to having commercial development, ownership buildings and rental units all in one RFP.
 - o Small size of our project is also difficult; doesn't qualify for some tax credits, small scale of project (24 rentals, 16 ownership) for investment return is low.
 - o Dunstable's demographics don't support affordability eligibility criteria as well as other towns
- Alternatives to the challenges - discussion
 - o 'Friendly 40-B' development.
 - o 'Cottage housing' type development of 1 story owned homes. Existing example is in Westford behind new fire station.
 - o Would need to rezone this specific area (28-acre MUD district) for specific goals
 - o Could have an association to provide landscaping, upkeep, etc.
 - o West Newbury Cottage Zoning would be an example
 - o May choose to (and may not) aim at 55+ community with ability for 'local preference'
 - o Want to restrict to 1- and 2-bedroom apartments but need to meet 10% requirement of 3 bedrooms for apartments.
- RFP process needs to be preempted by an agreement by the town to sell the property for this purpose
- RFP needs to be preempted by a successful PERC test. (Completed, 62 bedrooms? Or need to be done again?)
- Decision for new criteria to create affordable housing in Dunstable, and to be the basis of a new RFP was decided as follows:

- Friendly 40 b
- No age restriction
- Rentals only
- Use PERC septic bedroom maximum to dictate amount of units
- Suggested goal of approximately 40 units
- Let RFP responders provide design ideas within our scope and guidelines
- Separate out decision for front lot commercial development
- Massworks grant will view these criteria favorably (no age restriction, all rentals)

Next Meeting:

- Next meeting TBD

Adjournment at 8:00PM