



Affordable Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: March 14, 2022

Time: 7:00 pm

Location: Remote

Attendees: Chairperson, Brian Keating; Clerk, Lora Woodward; Members: Tereze Stokes, Renee D'Argento

Guests: Jennifer Gingras, Pepperell Town Planner

- **Call to Order**
7:04pm by Chair, Brian Keating

- **Acceptance of Minutes of any previous meetings**
 - Tabled until next meeting

- **Regroup around Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) By-law per Planning Board request**
 - The committee discussed the complexity of an IZ bylaw within the context of Pepperell's existing zoning and the other bylaws that the Town Planner is currently working on developing.
 - Jenny Gingras shared that the Town is receiving technical assistance on a 40R analysis from Chris Hayes, Housing Planner with NMCOC. The areas being proposed for the 40R include railroad square and areas around it, down the Main Street corridor, and the former mill site; 40R entails 25% affordability, there is also a density requirement.
 - The 40R working group is going to meet on March 21st at 2pm.
 - Chris Hayes came out to the MUOD design charette because he wanted to get a feel for Pepperell and the community.
 - Chris says that we can include IZ bylaw, 40R, and MUOD as a package deal for the Fall Town Meeting; to be successful, we'll need to do a lot of public sessions to get input and buy-in; the three articles work well as a package deal rather than piecemeal because 40R and MUOD are specific to downtown and IZ is all over town; they incentivize developers to get more housing density bonuses by working within the downtown corridor
 - The committee discussed with Jenny whether Chris Hayes could roll the IZ bylaw into his technical assistance work for the Town as IZ, 40R, and MUOD work together, and it needs to be clear to the public how they complement each other.

- Based on feedback from the Planning Board, the committee discussed starting at “square one” with the IZ bylaw; it was decided that the 40R working group would also work on the IZ bylaw where Tereze Stokes and Brian Keating would represent the Affordable Housing Committee and Chuck Walkovich would represent the Planning Board; the committee needs to do more public outreach and research on the bylaw before drafting it; Jenny has feedback from developers and other housing experts on the article.
- 40R is a form of inclusionary zoning; the areas or districts where IZ is in effect; get into the larger parcels; Brian says we should be looking at 10,000 square foot lots
- Need to bring developers to the table, give density bonus, give special permit, get affordability requirements; also look at amending subdivision requirements; Consider spreading the affordability eligibility, see Westford
- Renee asked whether CPA money be used to pay for water and sewer infrastructure? That could be another carrot for developers. Jenny suggested asking Selectboard member Mark Mathews.
- The committee discussed Tereze and Brian taking the lead on the IZ bylaw since they will be part of the 40R Working Group and other members of the AHC doing their own research, so discussions could be held at AHC meetings.
- Jenny suggested that the committee ask towns with IZ bylaws, fees in-lieu, etc. how it works for them
- Jenny heard from Eric Salerno, Town Planner and Economic Development Director, at Tyngsboro that he suggested getting language from Mass Housing Partnership (MHP). So far in Tyngsboro:
 - i. No affordable housing has been created through the bylaw
 - ii. Highly recommend not having a fee-in-lieu because it can burn developers in the end; the cost is not equal; DHCD doesn’t take into consideration construction costs;
 - iii. Payment of fee-in-lieu is too low; easier for the developer to put in the unit; it’s more affordable for developers to donate land, then
 - iv. Eric plans to rewrite their IZ bylaw without fee-in-lieu and take out land swap
 - v. He did math on our area and recommended 16%
 - vi. There shouldn’t be a special permit process because your providing additional units by right
- Renee says that the intention of the fee-in-lieu was to collect funds to put in toward affordable housing; schedule that developers to work toward
- Jenny shared that feedback from the contractor she spoke to was that the fee-in-lieu would hurt them financially; Pepperell has smaller developments; they’d need 200 units plus to make the fee-in-lieu as currently written work
- Lora shared that we’re talking approximately \$40,000 per unit based on how the bylaw is currently written. That means having a developer pay up to \$160,000 before having to put in an affordable unit.
- Lora shared that the cart was before the horse on the whole bylaw effort and that it will be good to start at square one. She recommended the committee take up two motions.
- Brian says that we need to reach out to other developers; Al Patenaude is a good person to talk to; can Al be part of the 40R working group? Jenny thought that was a good idea.

- Jenny shared that Eric said that we should reach out to the Littleton and Dracut planners. Jenny doesn't know them; Renee has a contact on the Planning Board in Littleton and would follow up.
 - David Hedison shared with Jenny the development costs of one of his properties; Jenny suggested that the committee invite him back to a meeting and get insights on what it costs for them to develop properties; Brian cautioned against the idea because the Pepperell Selectboard is working with David Hedison on a possible affordable housing project and he didn't want multiple people in Town asking him for things; Jenny said that they'll only be working with him if the Adaptive Reuse Overlay District is approved at Spring Town Meeting; Renee offered to talk with David Hedison.
 - Motion: Lora makes a motion to move the IZ bylaw to Fall Town Meeting and take the bylaw off the warrant for Spring Town Meeting. Seconded by Renee; Vote 4-0; motion passes unanimously.
 - Motion: Renee makes a motion that Brian Keating and Tereze Stokes represent AHC at the 40R working group meetings; Seconded by Lora; Vote 4-0; motion passes unanimously.
 - Brian asked where we could find the GIS work that John has been emailing about; Jenny shared that GIS is on the Pepperell Town homepage
 - Lora asked Jenny to create a Google Drive folder for Affordable Housing documents.
- **Next Meeting**
Set for Tuesday, April 12, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.
 - **Adjournment**
Motion to adjourn made by Brian Keating; Seconded by Renee D'Argento.
Voted 4-0; Motion passes unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:58pm.