



Affordable Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: June 23, 2020

Time: 7:00 pm

Location: Remote

Attendees: Chairperson, Brian Keating; Clerk, Lora Woodward; Members: Sean McCaffery, John Ladik, Ken Hartlage, Renee D'Argento

Guests: Andrew MacLean, Town Administrator; Jay Donovan, consultant from NMCOCG

1. **Call to Order**

7:01pm by Chairperson, Brian Keating.

2. **Acceptance of Minutes of any previous meetings**

Ken Hartlage makes motion to accept the meeting minutes, John Ladik seconded, Vote was 5-0, one member arrived after the vote.

3. **Web Page update & discussion - Review process for posting links to webpage.**

- a. Brian tried the link to post the agenda and it wasn't working on his end. Andrew clarified that meeting agendas are to be sent to agendas@town.pepperell.ma.us and it will appear on the town website within a couple hours. It is not an automatic process, the Clerk and/or IT office manual process each posting.

4. **Discussion / Action Items**

- a. *Final draft potential development sites with maps* - Jay Donovan shared that all of the maps that are part of the HPP Existing and Potential Sites have been updated to include the property (12 Bancroft Street) that was discussed at the last meeting; Andrew shared that the Senior Center Director and he are discussing the potential of adding affordable housing, potentially 20 units, to the town controlled area in front of the Pepperell Senior Center.
- b. *Review final draft Demographic section* – Jay Donovan showed the changes that he made based on the committee's discussion at the last meeting; Renee D'Argento brought up statistics on renter households are burdened and Jay said that housing burden is covered later; Ken Hartlage clarified a section on nontraditional households;
- c. *Review final draft Existing Housing Stock Analysis* – Jay Donovan reviewed the adjustments that he made to the document based on the committee's feedback; Renee D'Argento suggested adding a reference that the age of the housing stock in Pepperell is over 40 years old;

- d. *Review Draft Goals and Strategies* – Jay Donovan reviewed the adjustments that he made to the document based on the committee’s feedback; Renee suggested adding a strategy that prioritizes creating rental housing by incentivizing developers, but it was felt to be redundant; Renee D’Argento suggested that we require/encourage universal design principals in all housing development and the committee agreed to add its encouragement; Renee D’Argento suggested the addition of providing housing education on housing rehab and it was added; Ken Hartlage suggested adding back in striving for the 10% housing production goal;
- e. *Review Draft Affordable Housing Production in Pepperell* – Jay Donovan reviewed the document including three scenarios for reaching the 10% goal within 5 years; Andrew MacLean pointed out a discrepancy in the number of units in 2020; Jay Donovan clarified that he took the 2010 units and added what was permitted to get the 2020 number (180 units added in last 10 years) and offered to look at the numbers again; Andrew MacLean suggested adding 2010 numbers to the top of the row then from that extrapolation show the 2020 numbers and then the next 5 years using the 10 year annual average permits (18 per year if JDs number above is correct); Ken Hartlage pointed out that the first model is a “business as usual” approach and the others are more aggressive and we should be trying to go for something more aggressive; Renee D’Argento brought up that we would not reach the numbers listed for 2020 in the first model and Jay is going to show the model 2021-2025; Andrew MacLean clarified that the model doesn’t protect us from developers, the development of affordable housing does; Jay Donovan suggested getting the HPP in as soon as possible; the committee is to send additional comments on this document to Jay.

5. New Business

- a. Brian Keating asked the committee, “What do we do next after HPP is done?” And encouraged the committee to do something this time. He said that affordable housing can be a third rail in towns. He asked, “What is our philosophy for getting Affordable Housing in Pepperell? Defense or proactive?” He shared that his sense was that everyone on the committee wants to build affordable housing and that it is important to start making those plans while finishing up the HPP. It will be important to have the Board of Selectman, Zoning Board, and other committees on the same page as we are. We need to start having the conversations. Sean McCaffery brought up not being sure how people will react. Brian Keating asked, “What is the pulse of the town?” Ken Hartlage brought up the master planning meetings – affordable and senior housing were ranked five and six on the list of 30 priorities. The surveys are on the town website and include feedback on how difficult it is to age in place in Pepperell; all of this was brought up in the master planning phase. “The wind is behind us on this one.” Brian Keating shared that for the next meeting the committee will begin to figure out a path forward. Andrew MacLean says that once the committee decides to go forward then it can figure out how. The senior center is appealing because the town controls the land, the Peter Fitzpatrick location is another example where the Town controls the land. Support from the Affordable Housing Committee, the Economic Development Committee, perhaps the Planning Board, and others will help move affordable housing forward. The commitment of the committee would be a great first step and Andrew asked the committee to consider endorsing town sponsored affordable housing on town-controlled land. The AHC should move forward with the HPP and creating an Affordable

Housing Trust is also important. Lora Woodward suggested conversing with committees that we might be affiliated with. Brian Keating says that it is a PR job moving forward.

- b. Next on the agenda from Jay will be three more sections – both Planning Board and Board of Selectman need to accept them before they go to Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).
- c. Brian shared that there will be two focus areas moving forward: housing production plan and housing production.

6. Next Meeting

Set for Tuesday, July 21 at 7:00pm.

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by: Renee D'Argento, Seconded by: Ken Hartlage

Voted 6-0; Motion passes unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:01pm.