

Final Minutes
Affordable Housing Commission – Monthly Meeting
THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2015 – 7:00 P.M.

Charlestown Town Hall, Annex Conference Room, 4540 South County Trail, Charlestown, Rhode Island

1. CALL TO ORDER. Meeting called to order by Chair Evelyn Smith at 7:25 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL. Chair, Evelyn Smith; Vice Chair, Sean White; Secretary, Sandra Puchalski; AHC member Ernest Morreira and Town Council liaison Tom Gentz. AHC members Faith LaBossiere & Brian McDonald were excused.

3. MINUTES. Approval of minutes: February 26, 2015 Regular Meeting. Copies of the minutes were distributed and members read over the minutes. Ernest noted in the 2nd paragraph would like to add that "data also indicates that Charlestown may not be as affluent as some perceive it to be." Motion made by Evelyn and seconded by Ernest to accept minutes with that amendment. Evelyn noted that she will send along a copy to Nancy Letendre for review as well. All voted in favor of motion. Motion carried.

4. COMMUNICATIONS. Communications Report. None

5. STAFF REPORTS on current Affordable Housing issues. None.

6. REPORT, TOWN COUNCIL LIAISON. None.

7. NEW BUSINESS:

a) Charlestown Comprehensive Plan. Evelyn passed out three worksheets for discussion of the Affordable Housing Strategy Review as initially proposed in the Housing and Demographics Element (2013 Draft 4, pages 18-26) of the draft 2013 Charlestown Comprehensive Plan Update. Evelyn noted that 1990 was the last time a full Comprehensive Plan was written and adopted. An update was filed in 2006, and a draft update was prepared by Ashley in 2013. The plan to be written now will have new rules for compliance at the state level. We have been asked to take a hard look at the Affordable Housing Strategy Review of the 2013 draft Housing element, and discussion began on Policy 3. AHC members discussed that the worksheets are the beginning and starting point for us to come up with comments and members went through the strategy review. Evelyn suggested that we skip over the Goals and Housing Policies for now, and go back to them after reviewing the Strategies summarized on the third worksheet.

Strategy 1: Adopting a Land Trust Model. (ref. p.18) It was agreed that our recommendations would be to partner with existing land trust groups and consider a Town held trust fund. AHC members also discussed and agreed to look at the rental housing land trust model. Tom thought we should also mention Edwards Lane and that the town has partnered with an existing land trust and that the partnership worked well and we have completed this project successfully. Evelyn discussed the successes from the bond funding and wondered if we could continue to fund projects through dedicated transfer fees and/or impact fees. Tom thought this funding source would be good strategy and it would also encourage private investment in rental property. Members thought the funding represented a new strategy and would add it to the strategies listed as **Strategy 9. Creating an Affordable Housing Trust Fund.** - to create a Town fund to assist in long term affordable rehab subsidy.

Strategy 2. Adopt Inclusionary Zoning. Members agreed that we could look more closely at a 10% mandatory inclusionary zoning for major and minor subdivisions, utilizing an affordable housing trust fund for in-lieu-of payments.

Evelyn noted that it was time to move on to the next agenda item, and that at the next meeting on April 16th we can finish up strategy worksheet.

b) Municipal Subsidy Ordinance. Members received the Town of Charlestown Ordinance Establishing a Municipal Government Subsidy Program for low and moderate income housing (Second draft: February 26, 2015.) Evelyn noted this discussion has been continued from February, when Nancy Letendre thought we were right on track with this. Members discussed 181-2 Applicability and that we should spell it out. It was agreed that the applicability section was too broad. A more clearly defined set of subsidies and more clearly

defined definitions should be included. It was agreed that this is more of a means of setting forth a process to determine applicability and end up with an enforceable set of affordability conditions. After review and discussion of the draft ordinance, it was agreed that Evelyn will sit with the Town Planner and make the suggestions that the commission has discussed on the ordinance for a recommendation to the Planning Commission. Members agreed this needs to be a precise ordinance and based on meeting with the Town Consultant Nancy Letendre, members want to be as precise as possible. The Commission chose to reserve judgment on the allowed income limits discussed in section 181-5.

8. OLD BUSINESS

a) Income-Restricted Accessory Dwelling Units. Continued.

b) Commissioners' Liaison Reports. None..

c) Special Projects List/Commission Assignments. None.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT. None

10. NEXT MEETING. The next regular monthly meeting is scheduled for April 16, 2015, at 7:00 p.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT. Motion made and seconded to adjourn at 9:05. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Karasuk Puchalski, Secretary

Approved at the _____ meeting of the Affordable Housing Commission.