

FINAL MINUTES
Affordable Housing Commission – Monthly Meeting
THURSDAY, May 15, 2014 – 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 Chairman Smith. Evelyn introduced Joe Warner and wanted to entertain motion to move agenda item 7(a) to beginning of meeting as Joe was present. Ernest made motion and Sean seconded . Motion carried.
2. **Roll call.** Members present: Chairman, Evelyn Smith, Vice Chair, Sean White, Secretary, Sandra Karasuk Puchalski, Ernest Morreira & Faith LaBossiere and Building Official Joe Warner. Also present was community member Kevin Smith, an interested party in Agenda item 7A-

7 (a)

Income – Restricted Accessory Dwelling Units. The Commission discussed what interest we have had in this use and discussion of zoning and tax ordinances, existing and proposed. The objective is to determine what needs to be done to make the process workable.

Members reviewed Sec. 218-53.1 of the Zoning ordinance. Mr. Warner presented his office's summary of " Requirements for Income Restricted Accessory Dwelling Units." Twelve requirements were noted:: One income restricted accessory dwelling on property; no larger than 850 sq. ft interior; designed & constructed to maintain appearance of the lot as a single family residence, detached buildings being designed to appear as a barn or outbuilding; RI DEM change of use approval for septic system, which must also comply with Town Wastewater Management Ordinance; low water flow plumbing fixtures; year-round occupancy only, minimum 12-month lease; Special Use Permit required for conversion of existing structures that do not meet IRADU requirements; affidavit must acknowledge Zoning Ordinance 218-53.1 requirements prior to issuance of a building permit; **land lease or deed restriction approved by RIHMFC for a minimum of 30 years**; contract with an approved Monitoring Agency for pricing leases and income qualification of tenants; letter of eligibility from RIHMFC; Affidavit assuring occupancy compliance to be recorded in land evidence records for each new tenant. (Mr. Warner said that the 30-year deed restriction is usually the break of interest or performance by any applicant.)

Members discussed all the above with pros and cons, acknowledging that the deed restriction is the most problematic. Mr. Warner said they have had only one serious inquiry in 1½ years and three general inquiries. Mr. Smith explained he is in process of renovations, and had inquired on who is family member? Mr. Warner said there really is no way to check this.

Ernest, Faith and Evelyn commented on the income restrictions and letter of eligibility and problems that #9, 10 & #11 present. This led to members discussing the structuring of the Municipal Subsidy. Evelyn will ask the Town Planner and the Tax Assessor to come to a meeting to discuss the Municipal Subsidy. Without a Municipal Subsidy, RI Housing will not count the unit. Evelyn also thought it would be a good idea to have an agreement signed before the building permit is issued. Also that the Deed restriction has to be recorded prior to the Certificate of Occupancy. Sean brought up the Barnstable Massachusetts example. Evelyn has a copy to bring to next meeting. It is a registration program. Once enrolled into the program, the unit is protected by being registered. When not registered, the unit converts back. The consensus of the AHC is that the #1 problem is the deed restriction.

Members also discussed seeing a model contract from a monitoring agency. 3rd issue is the Municipal Subsidy Ordinance for Low & Moderate Housing. Evelyn said we should invite someone from Washington Trust for input on underwriting guidelines on mortgages. We need to see what the deed restriction does to the mortgage financing component. Members discussed that we also need to go over the legality of the Barnstable model.

Sandra noted the time. Ernest made motion to extend to 9PM. Sandra seconded. Motion carried. Mr. Warner had concluded his report and all thanked him and Mr. Smith for their input. Both left.

3. MINUTES. Draft minutes for the April 17, 2014, meeting were passed out. Evelyn will also email copy to all members. Evelyn suggested that the last sentence in Item 4 be amended to read, "They do have to report back to General Assembly." It was recommended that Faith's email address be taken out of the minutes in

#4. Motion made to accept draft minutes as amended. Faith made motion and Sean seconded. All voted in favor of motion. Motion carried.

4. COMMUNICATIONS. Communications Report. No communications report. This will be deferred to next meeting.

5. STAFF REPORTS on current Affordable Housing issues. Evelyn noted there were no reports.

6. REPORT, TOWN COUNCIL LIAISON. No Town Council Liaison reports. Tom was not present. .

7. NEW BUSINESS:

a) Income – Restricted Accessory Dwelling Units. (discussed above)

b) State Housing Study. Members were all presented with a colored copy of the draft plan. Barbara in planning made copies for all. There is also a copy for Tom Gentz and George Tremblay. A copy will also be emailed to members.

8. OLD BUSINESS . None to discuss.

a) Commissioners’ Liaison Reports. There were no reports to discuss.

b) Commission Goals: Commission to review the Barnstable Model. Evelyn will get copy for next meeting and place on Agenda.

c) Affordable H.O.M.E.S. Follow-up: None

d) Special Projects List/Commission Assignments. Ernest said we really have to have a consultant to do a needs based assessment for Charlestown. This is nothing we can do on our own. Ernest can talk to Statewide Planning and see what intentions they have and if it is possible for this type of research to assist our commission on a local level. If so, then we could take the findings and break down regionally and come to some generic conclusions. Evelyn thought Ernest could reach out to previous Town Planner Nancy Hess who is at Statewide Planning now. Ernest noted that the website is out of date. Wrong time on meeting. Evelyn will correct with Amy.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT.

10. NEXT MEETING. The next regular monthly meeting is scheduled for June 19, 2014, at 7:00 p.m..

11. ADJOURNMENT Meeting was adjourned at

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Karasuk Puchalski, Recording Secretary

Minutes approved as amended at the June 19, 2014, meeting of the Affordable Housing Commission.