

RIDGEFIELD AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes: 1/6/2021

Members Present via Zoom conference Call: Dave Goldenberg, Kent Rohrer, Kevin Brown, Sheryl Knapp
.Guests: Whit Campbell, Bob Hebert, Vinnie Liscio, Krista Willet

Meeting called to order 7:02 pm

Dave called the meeting to order and introduced Selectman Bob Hebert as a guest. Bob expressed interest in understanding the status of our committee.

AGENDA

1. Ongoing Projects

a. Affordable housing plan – Recent guidelines were released by the State of Connecticut providing guidance on completing an affordable housing plan for communities in Connecticut. It was observed that the suggested outline and structure was consistent with the previous Homefront plan which has been our current model. The study did suggest use of survey and charette style interviews. We would likely use the grant we are receiving to hire a consultant to assist in surveys, data gathering and analysis. Goal would be to turn the resulting output into a plan of recommended actions. There was also significant guidance on communication planning. This is an areas where our committee agrees we need significant focus. Dave suggested that we create a RAHC Facebook page such that future dissemination of information from our committee to the community can be issued from that source. Dave agreed to set up this Facebook account.

Motion; Kent motioned that we authorize Dave to take the lead to create an RAHC facebook page. Sherly seconded the motion. The motion passed with all members in favor. Primary goal is to disseminate information.

Kent suggested we put a formal plan/calendar in place for time completion of the upcoming plan. The plan must be in place by 2022 although we agreed we would like to see it done sooner and included as an update to the Town POCD. We should establish a timeline in our February meeting.

b. Ridgefield affordable housing overlay zone update (MADZ) - No update this meeting

c. Housing for adults with disabilities/St. Stephens – Lori reported that St Stephens appears to be in track to sell the property. No further action will be taken on part of this committee.

d. Prospect Ridge and Halpin expansion of Sunrise Cottage. It was noted that the Town has land and authorized it for use by and expansion for Sunrise Cottage. We discussed how we can assist in this effort for expansion through support of such aspects as community support and fundraising. Dave suggested meeting with the Sunrise organization. Dave and Sheryl plan to meet with them on next steps.

Prospect Ridge Expansion – we have requested grant over a month ago. Dave will check on status. Bob Hebert commented that while he doesn't oppose a study, he is concerned about community awareness and involvement regarding use of Town owned property. He offered the concept of a citizens committee as was done with the Schlumberger property as he believes other considerations could be given to the use of the property. He believes education and communication are key and he said he would prefer to

be an advocate. Bob had to leave the meeting at this time to attend BOS. Action - Dave and Kent will meet with Bob to get his more specific input on how we effectively communicate. Vinnie suggests working with Frank Coyle and Dave said that Frank was and will continue to be part of this effort as we move forward.

e. Branchville TOD. Dave and Kevin had previously spoken to Rudy. No update from last report and no Dave indicated he would follow up with Rudy on this matter.

f. P&Z 8-30g compliance/retention. No significant update since Whit's last report. Whit has compiled multiple lists of build and unbuilt units. He plans to visit sites on the list to gain familiarity. Karen Martin will be updating deed restriction registry and we will follow the progress. Dave suggested we may want to issue a press release on compliance once facts are known.

g. Housing trust fund. Dave and Lori continue to work on this matter.

h. Habitat site. Rudy has approved the press release. Kent will work with Fran to issue the press release.

i. Accessory units and 2-family houses promo. Kevin summarized regulations allow easy zoning approval as long as 1br and 900 sq feet with one unit being owner occupied. Ben Nneji is interested in middle housing. Dave and Kevin will follow up with Ben on this aspect.

2. Other new business - none

3. Approve previous minutes – Sheryl moved to accept, Kevin second. Approved

4. Adjourned at 8:02 pm

Meeting was adjourned at 8:37pm.

Prepared by Kent Rohrer