

## RIDGEFIELD AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday February 28, 2024 at 7:00pm

Town Hall Small Conference Room  
400 Main Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut

Please note: these minutes are not verbatim.

**ATTENDEES: Present:** Debra Franceschini-Gatje (Chair), Lori Mazzola (Vice Chair), Jennifer Brakenwagen, Kevin Brown, Sharon Coleman, Sheryl Knapp (via teleconference), Kent Rohrer, and Krista Willett  
**Absent:** none

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

### AGENDA

1. Public comment (3 mins per speaker, up to 30 minutes)
2. Action Items:
  - a. Required use of town email
  - b. CHFA Zoom session for first-time buyers – March 25, 2024
  - c. Sustainable CT Assignment by Town Hall completion
  - d. Housing Trust Fund Research Check-in
3. Approve Previous Minutes
4. Public comment (3 mins per speaker, up to 30 minutes)
5. Adjourn

#### 1. Public Comment:

- a) **Craig Cerone:** Has been having financial issues related to an affordable unit he owns on Rte 7, deeded to perpetuity, which he rents out. A recent valuation for 8-30g purposes was lower than it was at purchase due to higher interest rates which are not factored in town valuations. He recommended that 8-30Z properties be managed by professionals on a larger scale, as opposed to individuals.

#### 2. Current Business:

- a) **Required use of town email** – Committee members should wait to receive an email regarding setting up a town email.
- b) **CHFA Zoom session for first-time buyers** – scheduled for March 25, 2024.
- c) **Housing Trust Fund Research Check-in.** The Committee reviewed the draft presentation included in the meeting packet. There was discussion about whether sufficient funds would be generated based on a fee of \$10/\$1000 in construction costs to make a HTF worthwhile. Jennifer to obtain further information from the building department, dating back to 2015, to address this question. A potential additional funding source for the HTF would be fees *in lieu of* under inclusionary zoning regulations. To revisit at March meeting.

#### 3. New Business:

- a) **Sustainable CT Assignment by Town Hall form completion.** Gillian Sheerin, the new Town Administrative Office Manager, requested that the Committee complete this form to assist the town in submitting information to Sustainable Connecticut. After much discussion, Kevin moved that the Committee Chair communicate back to Gillian that we believe that the Affordable Housing Plan, the Plan of Conservation and Development, and our town website, contain the information that is responsive to the questions that fall within the Committee's mandate, but the Committee is willing to address any specific supplemental question that Gillian or Sustainable Connecticut has. Kent seconded. Motion was unanimously approved.

b) **Other new business.** Kevin made a motion to discuss a meeting he and Sheryl had with Rudy to discuss the Halpin Lane property leased to Ability Beyond, as there appears to be conflicting information. Debra seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved. The project would be akin to what is what is on Rich Drive as opposed to Sunrise Cottage, supporting higher need adults with disabilities, but there appears to be uncertainty regarding whether and when AB can move forward due to funding issues and other factors. There was discussion about other potential uses of the property, and other properties, such as the fire and police stations and former cleaners on High Ridge, which could be potential sources of affordable housing. Potential funding options were discussed.

4. **Public Comment:** none

5. **Minutes:** Kent moved to accept the minutes from the January 24 meeting as written; Krista seconded. Motion was unanimously approved.

6. **Next meeting:** The next Regular meeting is scheduled for March 27, 2024.

7. **Adjournment:** Kevin moved to adjourn; Kent seconded, and the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:21.

Prepared by Sheryl Knapp, Secretary