

RIDGEFIELD AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE

Meeting minutes 3/4/2020

Ridgefield Town Hall

Members present: Dave Goldenberg, Kevin Brown, Kent Rohrer Guests: Lori Mazzola, Whit Campbell. Susan Constantino joined briefly to introduce herself to the committee

Dave called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. Minutes of the prior meeting were slightly amended and unanimously approved.

There will be an April 15th meeting of FCHA. Kent plans to join that meeting. FCHA is expected to be a source of collaboration and assistance to our committee. It is expected to provide a template and access to data that we can use for the committee's update of the Homefront report. Kent will work to obtain firm commitments and dates at the meeting.

HOMEFRONT Status Interviews- complete, Survey – still seeking assistance to structure and conduct, Inventory of deed restricted - have, Land inventory – to be completed by Kent, Zoning review – in process by Kevin, Current housing availability – will pull date 2 mos prior to publication, Data Analysis – still seeking help. We concluded that we would target to publish the update to HOMEFRONT no later than 12/31.20. If desired outside assistance is not provided, we will develop internal alternatives

Susan Constantino, newly elected P&Z member, briefly joined our meeting to introduce herself and to offer her future support. She briefly discussed how towns could help influence potential changes to 8-30g via influence through our local representatives. She also offered information available about “clustering” of affordable housing in the Danbury section of Ridgebury. She expressed interest in having Planning and Zoning Commission learn more about “overlay zones” for affordable housing. Dave briefly discussed Branchville TOD and encouraged Susan to read and understand it. Susan was supportive of leading with alternatives to 8-30g as an effective approach.

The committee held further discussion on creating “overlay zones”. Given views expressed by Steve Zemo regarding how to structure the concept, Dave agreed to invite Steve to a future RAHC meeting.

The RAHC is invited to join the 7pm 3/18 BOS meeting. Dave will report on status of RAHC. We discussed the current Multi Family Development District (that was used to develop the Elms property) and the thought of adding an affordable requirement. The concept of a Housing Trust Fund is supported by the First Selectman. Lori previously agreed to look into this. The idea of supporting construction of a Habitat for Humanity Home someplace on town land was discussed. We agreed to request this at the 3/18 meeting. If can be done in honor of the upcoming 30 year anniversary of the Ridgefield founding of Housatonic Habitat for Humanity. We also agreed to reopen the proposal for Patriot Gardens. This would be a 100% affordable development on town property. It was previously proposed as an age 55 plus. We would like to look into a mix of family and senior housing.

Dave indicated the 24 unit affordable complex on Halpin and Prospect is reaching its 20 year affordable time restriction. The committee would like to investigate options to keep these units affordable.

Dave shared that section 8-2 is currently being reviewed in State legislature with an intent to strengthen the affordable content.

With no additional old or new business, the meeting was called to close at 8:55pm

Prepared by Kent Rohrer, Secretary