

RIDGEFIELD AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE  
Meeting Minutes

10/25/2023 – 7:00 PM  
Town Hall – 400 Main Street, Ridgefield  
Small Conference Room, Lower Level

PRESENT: Kent Rohrer (Interim Chair), Debra Franceschini-Gatje (Acting Vice Chair), Jennifer Brakenwagen, Whit Campbell, Sharon Coleman, Sheryl Knapp, and Lori Mazzola

ABSENT: Kevin Brown and Krista Willett

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM.

**1. Public Comment:** None.

**2. Current Business:**

- a) **Review Changes to ADU promotional material.** Whit reviewed changes he and Krista made to the document reflecting regulatory changes over the years. Once the accuracy of the document is confirmed, it will be made assessable on the RAHC website. Whit will send to Committee members to review prior to 11/10, then it will be sent to P&Z Chair Rob Hendricks to review.
- b) **Update on next CHFA info session.** Debra spoke to the previous speaker, Pat McGredron, and he agreed to host another session in the evening, perhaps in a larger room at Town Hall. Debra wants the session to include more discussion regarding Affordable Housing. The session will be scheduled in January or February to allow for sufficient time for the Committee has time to market it. It will be open to anyone interested in learning more about CHFA mortgages in Ridgefield, including those from other towns.
- c) **Plan implementation updates from prior meeting.** The updated document was submitted and distributed to the appropriate parties. P&Z Chair Rob Hendricks to be invited to the November meeting to discuss those action items requiring P&Z input, such as deed restrictions on inclusionary zoning and moving forward on the Housing Trust Fund. Kent provided updates on a few items on the list, including the Halpin Lane. He reached out to John Loehr, who indicated it will be used for a higher care facility which has a unique level of state and federal regulatory issues. Committee members expressed concern that this intended may not be aligned with the intended use of the property, in terms of addressing where the greatest level of need is in Ridgefield and the walkability of the property. It also may not incite the same level of public support as would a project designed for individuals with lower levels of need. Sheryl to reach out to Jane Davis, the CEO of Ability Beyond, to share these concerns. See attached Report Card for additional details regarding the status of ongoing RAHC projects.

**3. New Business:**

- a) **General discussion about working relationship with RHA.** RHA Chairperson Vinnie Liscio discussed the priorities established by the RHA. He indicated that the new management company, Connecticut Housing Partners, is finishing up its first year and seems to have the knowledge and

resources to better meet the needs of those requiring affordable housing. Renee, CHP's CEO, is especially helpful and resourceful. Lori to check in with P&Z Director Alice Dew to get current figures on deeded affordable housing.

Jennifer reported back regarding her investigation of current affordable housing administrators. Local realtor and developer Mark Nolan goes by this title, as he can be designated to administer affordable housing rules for projects being developed. Jennifer learned from Mark that there is an accessible apartment without any rental assistance available that they have been unable to fill.

b) **Request from Ridgefield Social Services.** The town's Director of Social Services, Tony Phillips, reached out to share that he frequently hears from families of adults with disabilities who ask about affordable housing. He requested that we discuss ways the Committee can disseminate information to these families.

c) **Other new business.** None.

4. **Public Comment:** None.

5. **Review Previous Minutes:** Debra moved to accept the minutes from the 9/27/23 meeting as written; Lori seconded. Motion was unanimously approved.

6. **Next meeting:** The next Regular meeting is scheduled for 11/29/23.

7. **Adjourn:** Sheryl moved to adjourn; Jennifer seconded, and the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:31.

Prepared by Sheryl Knapp, Secretary

RIDGEFIELD AFFORDABLE HOUSE COMMITTEE					
Report Card/Status/Next Steps - UPDATED 10/26/2023					
		Evaluation/Status	Owner(s)	Priority	Next Step
REVIEW MULTIFAMILY OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH ZONING					
	Simplify multifamily zoning districts	P&Z has addressed	P&Z/RAHC	A	Monitor activity, discuss with P&Z
	Consider expanding “middle housing” and m/f conversions	some issues; largely			
	Encourage second-floor residential in business district	in their hands.			
	Form-Based Codes				
Adopt an inclusionary Zoning Regulation		Implemented	P&Z	A	Discuss term of deed restriction with P&Z
Develop additional assisted affordable housing units		Ongoing	RAHC/RHA	B	Review as properties come to our attention
Halpin Lane “Mixed Housing”		In process	Kent	B	Kent provided update. Sheryl fo follow up with Jane Davis
Promote Adaptive Reuse		Ongoing	RAHC	A	Review in December
Extending to Perpetuity		Ongoing	RAHC	C	Propose incentive options, perhaps tax incentives.
					Meet with P&Z
Creating a Housing Trust Fund		In process	RAHC/P&Z	B	Meet with P&Z
Transit Oriented Development		In process	Rudy/Debra	C	Pending outcome of WESTCOG study
CHFA Promotion and Assistance		In process	Debra	A	Debra to schedule in January or February
ADU Promotion and Assistance		Plan only	Whit/Krista	A	Committee to provide feedback to Whit by 11/10,
					Finalize in November meeting
Affordable Housing Web Page		Implemented	Debra/Sharon	A	Monitor to maintain currency; to update with new projects,
Increase Transportation Options		Plan only	TBD/Rudy	C	Work as part of TOD

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